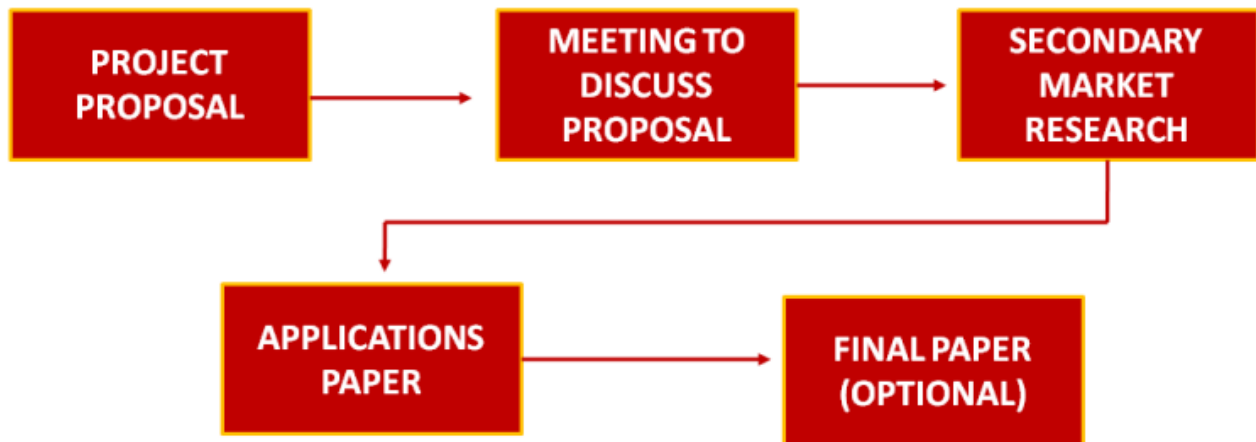


## PROJECT GUIDELINES

Topic	Page
<a href="#">Appendix D: Project guidelines</a> .....	16
<a href="#">Project description</a> .....	16
<a href="#">Proposal</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Library Database Resource List</a> .....	18
<a href="#">Applications Paper</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Option #1</a> .....	19
<a href="#">Option #2</a> .....	20
<a href="#">Final Paper</a> .....	21
<a href="#">Appendix E: Quality of sources used in research</a> .....	22
<a href="#">Appendix F: Notes on quotations, paraphrasing, and citations</a> .....	23
<a href="#">Appendix G: Indicators of superficiality: Avoiding hyperbole, clichés, ambiguity, and empty “buzz words”</a> .....	24
<a href="#">Appendix H: Using Turnitin to Submit Assignments</a> .....	26



## Appendix D PROJECT GUIDELINES

For your project, you will be asked to complete a project proposal, one Applications Assignment on one of three options, and one final paper on the potential for introducing one of the following:

- A new product or service not currently in existence;
- An existing product or service that has potential to be targeted to a segment or type of consumers that currently does not use the product;
- An existing product or service that could achieve significant additional sales if distributed through a new channel; or
- An existing product that is sold in one or more countries and can be introduced in another specific country where it is currently not widely used

**A new product or service not currently in existence—e.g.,**

- *A traffic decision support system* that tells drivers when it is safe to switch lanes and make other changes in dense traffic.
- *Secular values training and leadership programs for children of busy parents not involved in organized religion.* Many church groups and religious organizations such as the Boy Scouts provide values training for children. However, many parents who are not actively involved in religious groups might be uncomfortable with this. At same time, such parents may face time pressures that make it difficult for them to devote as much time as they would like to working with their children to develop good values. This type of program could involve fun activities, making it popular to children, which may make the participants more receptive to the message provided.
- *Discipline consulting services.* Many parents today have limited time to discipline their children and also feel uncomfortable making the children feel bad. They may view certain disciplinary practices as being outdated, but yet not know of clear alternatives and the likely consequences of different choices. A consultant may help parents set up a discipline program that weights the parents' values while adding in the experience that can be related by the consultant. An alternative would be a program to train "certified discipline consultants" who would then provide the services.
- *Carry-on suitcase with notebook computer tray.* In most airport lounges, there are seats but few if any tables in the flight boarding areas. It would therefore be handy for many travelers to have a tray on their carryon suitcases that could be pulled out when the suitcase was standing up, serving as a small table for the computer.

**An existing product or service that has potential to be targeted to a segment or type of consumers that currently does not use the product (or has very low usage rates)—e.g.,**

- *Video games marketed to senior citizens* (who want to preserve mental agility and/or play with their grandchildren)
- *Ergonomic clip-on earrings for toddler girls.* In recent years, technological advances has made it possible to create non-pierced earrings that are relatively comfortable to wear. These are currently quite expensive and are being bought mostly by professional adult women. At the same time, many girls today are having their ears pierced at an increasingly early age. Creating a comfortable

alternative may allow the girls to hold off having their ears pierced until they can make a personal informed decision.

- *Noise cancelling headphones for children vulnerable to distraction.* Many children (and adults) suffering from attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and related conditions are very vulnerable to distractions in the environment. Currently, Bose makes some very high end noise cancelling headphones that are typically used by high income professionals and executives during travel. Many families may not be able to afford the current price of several hundred dollars, depending on the model. However, if the marginal (variable) cost of producing additional units, once the product has been developed, is relatively low, it may be possible to create a cheaper version for children. Making this set bright pink or orange would discourage the original segment from choosing this cheaper version.

The product may need to be modified (e.g., senior citizens may not like violent or explicit video games).

**An existing product or service that could achieve significant additional sales if distributed through a new channel.** This channel must be realistically available—i.e., retailers, wholesalers, and other intermediaries must want to carry it—e.g.,

- *Mobile manicurists* who show up at a customer's home or work site;
- *Financial planning programs sold through churches, synagogues, or mosques.* Many individuals fail to plan and save adequately for retirement and large expenses such as their children's college expenses. Some people may not trust any financial advisors and others do not get around to seeking one out. However, an advisor screened by the religious organization is likely to be more credible. If appropriate, issues of financial planning, as they relate to the religion, could be discussed during services to increase motivation to seek out appropriate services.
- *Groceries being delivered to car pool or van pool departure sites.* Many consumers with long commutes have difficulty finding the time and energy to go grocery shopping. There are services that deliver groceries to people's homes, but this is difficult when the consumer is not home during the day time, especially when perishable products are being involved. Some communities provide parking lots where people drive locally, park, and join a car or van pool. Orders could be taken in the morning for delivery at that same location in the evening. For car or van pools that pick and drop off passengers directly at their homes, a brief stop could be made at a pick-up site.
- *Native American crafts sold through catalog as fundraisers for organizations whose members distribute the catalogs and take orders.* Many Native American crafts are produced on reservations that are often far from densely populated areas. Different tribes or groups in different regions are also likely to produce products of different styles. By offering a catalog that featured a large number of different products from different regions, consumer choice would be greatly increased. Various organizations that seek to raise revenue and participate in socially responsible activities at the same time may find this type of arrangement attractive.

**An existing product that is sold in one or more countries and can be introduced in another specific country where it is currently not widely used—e.g.,**

- *Fortune cookies, which are actually not used in Mainland China.* These might be positioned as something Western.

- *Colored nail polish in China.* Although sales of makeup in China have grown at very high rates for the last decade, very few Chinese women wear colored nail polish.

PROJECT COMPONENTS		
Component	Description	Due date
Proposal	An electronic form will guide you through a description of your proposed venture, the value intended for customers, and a number of practical and logistical issues. You will need to come to the instructor's office for a scheduled appointment to discuss your proposal. This visit should be scheduled online through the link on the "Projects" page of the course web site.	2/9
Library database resource list	Using library databases discussed in class, you will be asked to find at least fifteen quality articles relevant to making decisions on whether and how to launch the proposed venture.	3/2
Applications paper	A paper which applies selected course ideas to the proposed venture	3/23
Final paper (optional)	An executive summary, response to questions raised either by the instructor or other individual of your choice and a tentative assessment of the prospects for the venture. If you choose not to do this assignment, your applications paper will be weighted in its place. If you do both the applications and final papers, you will receive the more favorable of the two scores.	4/27

The applications paper should not exceed ten double spaced pages in length. Although quality is more important than quantity, it is expected that typical applications papers will run from 7-9 double spaced pages and that the final project will run 5-8 pages. **Conciseness and the use of bullet points, when appropriate, are highly encouraged.**

The library database resource list, the applications paper, and the final paper should start with a brief statement—no more than five lines—reminding the reader of the proposal. For example:

**PROPOSAL:** SeniorVideo would offer video games for senior citizens who wish to maintain their mental and sensory motor agility.

### Library Database Resource List

For this assignment, you should use the library databases discussed in class—e.g., ABI/Inform and Lexis-Nexis—to find *at least fifteen quality articles*, books, or other legitimate publications relevant to the venture you are proposing. Please turn in:

- A list of the sources
- A one paragraph discussion of the implications of relevant information you have found in these articles.

Please note that your information search may need to be done on an industry categorization that is broader than your specific product. For example, if you are interested in introducing odor eliminating jogging wear, you may need to research athletic wear in general. In some circumstances, you may need to do your research on a related industry. For example, if you are interested in introducing “environmentally friendly” ammunition that avoids lead contamination, you may want to research the handgun and/or hunting rifle markets, as appropriate.

You may use any reasonable format, but your citation should, at a minimum, include:

- The author’s or authors’ name(s), if available.
- Title of article and periodical, or title of book or other publication.
- Year of publication.

It is fine to “cut and paste” article citations from an online database listing. If you use databases that have a different format, that is fine, too, so long as the required information is present. **Please do not spend your time “prettying up” a bibliography.** This is a task that can be delegated in industry. You should focus, instead, on *substantive* issues.

It is irrelevant where you retried an article—“Lexis-Nexis” is or the hyperlink address for the article found within a periodicals database—is not part of the citation.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** You should use legitimate books and articles found through library databases. Ordinary web sites usually do *not* qualify.

## Applications Paper:

### Option 1—Secondary Market Research

Based on the sources that you identified for the Library Database Resource List assignment and/or other books and articles you have identified since, please discuss the significant issues you see from your research. You should cite at least fifteen sources. Relevant issues will vary among ventures, but some issues that may be of interest are:

- Characteristics, resources, and potentials of direct or indirect competitors for your venture;
- The extent of dissatisfaction with the current situation or offerings among members of the target market;
- The ability and willingness of the target customers to pay for the product;
- Societal and/or other environmental changes that may favor or complicate the proposed offering; and
- Issues of technological feasibility.

Your discussion should emphasize issues of managerial importance—considerations in whether and how you might introduce this product. The [managerial implications](#) should be discussed explicitly.

**CHECKLIST:**

- ✓ The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- ✓ The research is based on legitimate books, periodicals, and other quality and objective materials. Most web sites not associated with quality periodicals are *not* acceptable.
- ✓ At least fifteen sources have been cited.
- ✓ All sources are clearly cited. A citation includes at least the author(s)' name(s), if available, the year of publication, and article title (if applicable). **A hyperlink is NOT a legitimate citation!**
- ✓ [Managerial implications](#) are highlighted.
- ✓ Reasoning for conclusions is clearly articulated.
- ✓ Any assumptions are clearly identified.
- ✓ The term "etc." (or other ambiguous terms) is *not* used.

A draft of the evaluation form for this assignment is available on the course web site but is subject to revision.

**Option 2—Customer Analysis**

**For products and services aimed primarily at consumers**, this option involves a discussion (based on reading, consumer observation, and/or interviews) of issues in consumer behavior that have implications for the success of the venture—e.g.,

- Consumer information search strategy
- Level of category involvement in the decision making process;
- Typical characteristics of the shopping occasion;
- Consumer product category knowledge;
- Social influence on product choice and/or selection;
- Means-end associations with the product;
- Consumer attitudes toward the product category and/or brands involved;
- Family member influences and roles; and
- Situational influences relevant to the product category, target market, and distribution channel.

**For products and services aimed primarily at businesses or other organizations as end customers**, this option involves a discussion (based on reading, consumer observation, and/or interviews) of issues in organizational decision making and practices (as discussed in Chapter 6 of the text) that have implications for the success of the venture—e.g.,

- Strategic alliances
- Relationship marketing
- Demand types
- Buying practices (e.g., reciprocity)
- Types of purchases
- Buying centers

- Evaluative criteria
- Buying situations

In your discussion, you should be sure to highlight [managerial implications](#) of the consumer behavior or organizational buying issues that you raise. You may want to discuss ethical issues—e.g., consumer decision making approaches for certain low involvement products that make them vulnerable to deceptive or confusing marketing claims.

If you perform primary research (e.g., interviews or surveys), you should clearly state your procedure and the sample size involved.

#### CHECKLIST:

- ✓ The paper starts with a brief reminder of the proposal description (no more than five lines).
- ✓ The analysis emphasizes [managerial implications](#) of your reading.
- ✓ Any assumptions are identified.
- ✓ Any sources used are cited.
- ✓ Any primary research performed is clearly documented.
- ✓ The term “etc.” (or other ambiguous terms) is *not* used.

A draft of the evaluation form for this assignment is available on the course web site but is subject to revision.

## FINAL PAPER GUIDELINES

The final project is an opportunity to synthesize the issues that you have analyzed in your project papers throughout the term.

**Please note that papers containing the term “etc.” are likely to be viewed with considerable skepticism!**

The paper should contain three sections:

1. A brief **executive summary** (no more than one double spaced page) in which you summarize the contents of this report. This summary should help a busy reader decide whether it would be useful to read the entire report. Although you may choose a different approach, the executive summary might take the following form:
  - a) Brief discussion of the venture.
  - b) A brief statement of your tentative assessment as discussed in section #3 below.
2. Replies (no more than three double spaced pages in total) to substantive comments (as appropriate) and questions raised in the project proposal and/or your applications paper. This includes both responding to outright questions and to comments such as “It is not clear....” If you did not receive significant comments on the proposal and applications paper, you can “make up” reasonable questions that you suspect that a reader may have.
3. A tentative assessment (no more than three double spaced pages) of the prospects, contingent on specific findings of the research discussed above, for your venture. Some “prototypical” conclusions might be:

- a) "Based on everything seen so far, it appears that the venture has strong potential for the following reasons.... [Discussion] Questions remain about the following issues, which would need to be assessed through research.... [Discussion]."
- b) "Although the product would appear to fill a serious need and may have good commercial prospects, the feasibility of the product is subject to the following very serious limitations and/or complications.... [Discussion] The following research is needed to help assess prospects, problems, and complications...."
- c) "Although the product seemed a promising idea when proposed, the following complications suggest that the idea is not feasible (in the current market or with current technology for the following reasons...." [Discussion].

A draft of the evaluation form for the final project is available on the course web site but is subject to revision.

## Appendix E

### QUALITY OF SOURCES USED IN RESEARCH

#### Sources That Are Likely to Be of Higher Quality:

- **Books**
- **Periodicals**—can be found through library databases such as Lexis-Nexis and ABI/Inform
  - **General news** (Note: These sources are sometimes available online and it is fine to use any online version).
    - **Newspapers**—e.g., *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*
    - **Magazines**
      - **Business oriented**—e.g., *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *Forbes*, *American Demographics*.
      - **General**—e.g., *Newsweek*, *Time*, *Economist*
      - **Specialty magazines**—if appropriate and relevant—e.g., *PC Magazine*
    - **Trade publications**—e.g., *Air Cargo World*, *Ice Cream Reporter*
- **Reference materials published by a reputable source**—if relevant and appropriate—e.g., encyclopedias and almanacs
- **Directories**—e.g., *Best Customers*
- **Government publications**—e.g., *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*
- **Selected web sites from credible sources**: U.S. Government, United Nations, World Bank. (Note: Most other web sites are not appropriate).

#### Sources That Are Likely to Be of Low Quality and/or to Be "Suspect" in Some Way:

- **Most web sites**:
  - **Private sites**. The person who wrote this may not be qualified to discuss this issue, may have done a sloppy job, or may have a special interest. This includes sites hosted on ".edu" domains unless the writer is clearly identified as a professor or researcher. If the source is credible this way, you must identify this fact in the citation.
  - **Company sites**. These are glorified advertisements for the firm and are intended to make the firm look good. Accuracy may be less important to the firm than coming across well!

- **Trade group sites.** These are supposed to make the industry look good. See above!
- **Foreign government sites.** Many of these are intended to make the firm look good. Some countries do not have the resources to collect accurate information. Much of the information contained may represent wishful thinking rather than reality.
- **Political, social, or organizational sites.** Sites run by religious groups, social or ethnic groups, political groups, or other groups that exist to promote one kind of viewpoint, policy, or “truth” cannot be taken at face value.
- **Company advertisements and annual reports.** Selected objective and audited information may be useful, but management opinions and claims are suspect.
- **Trade group brochures.** Again, the publisher has an agenda!

Yes, it is easier to try to find things through search engines such as Google rather than consulting a reputable source. It is also easier to guess! Neither approach is acceptable.

## Appendix F: NOTES ON QUOTATIONS, PARAPHRASING, AND CITATIONS

**Quotations and paraphrasing.** Generally, it is better to *paraphrase* statements made in articles and other documents. A direct quote of more than a few words should ordinarily be used only under exceptional circumstances—e.g., when it is exceptionally succinct, insightfully phrased, ironic, otherwise forceful, or revealing, as appropriate, of a significant player’s personality, predisposition, or strategy.

Note that occasionally using just a few judiciously selected words from a quote may add a nice flavor. For example:

John Smith, lead petrochemicals analyst at Arthur Anderson & Co., remarked that it is “quite unlikely” that Nigeria will be able provide a “sufficiently dependable” supply of benzene for major industrial customers.

Frequently, direct quotes tend to be longer than a good paraphrase, and the reader will not be spending time thinking about what kind of point the direct quote was intended to make.

If you do decide to use a quote, it must be *introduced* in some way—e.g.,

According to Jack Intrascopolus, a leading authority on “raponomics” (the economics of rap music), “The prospects for rap music in the Middle East, at the moment, appear to be....”

**Citations.** In all papers, you must cite your sources in the body of the text and provide a complete bibliography at the end of the paper. You must cite a source when you use information from it even if you do not quote directly. For example:

It appears that rap music has so far met success in North America, Western Europe, and certain more affluent Asian countries, with penetration in Latin America and the Middle East so far being quite limited. (Intrascopolus, 2005).

(The author's last name and the year of publication are put in parentheses at the end of the sentence). The source should be listed completely (author, title, publication, date, and, if available, page numbers) at the end of the paper. E.g.,

Interscopulus, James Q. (2006), "Rapping Against a Cultural Wall," *International Journal of Rappology*, 4(2), 423-450.

### Appendix G: INDICATORS OF SUPERFICIALITY: AVOIDING HYPERBOLE, CLICHES, AMBIGUITY, AND EMPTY "BUZZ WORDS"

The following are examples of statements made in cases that will tend to prejudice an educated and thoughtful reader against the writer.

#### MEANINGLESS AMBIGUITY

- "StarMedia should focus on the community it offers, which Latin Americans seem to be demanding, to maintain their early mover advantage."
- "... StarMedia needs to, nonetheless, persevere and to establish itself as a leader in developing and tailoring the market to appeal to Spanish speakers. However, the company must be careful to steer clear of stereotyping and must always be educated and ware of the complexities and the uniqueness of the region."

**HYPERBOLE**—general statements that at best represent exaggerations and ambiguity—e.g.,

- "[StarMedia] need only continue the following programs for prosperity in the future." [First of all, unless the "programs" in question have been specified very precisely, the statement is not meaningful. Secondly, the term "prosperity" is not a business term and is overly vague. Thirdly, there is authority or compelling reasoning to suggest that the programs will continue to work in the future.]
- "Having all these partnerships make it difficult for StarMedia to lose overall market share..." [In truth, losing market share (unlike body weight!) is very easy. A more meaningful statement might be that these partnerships might "help ameliorate threats to market share."]
- "Everyone has been trying to get a piece of the Spanish-speaking Internet market."

**CLICHES**—"over-worn" phrases or "dime-store philosophy"—e.g.,

- "... has grown by leaps and bounds."
- "Time will only tell what will become of StarMedia..."

**EMPTY "BUZZ WORDS"**—fancy terms mean very little when it is not demonstrated that the writer fully understands what they mean and how they apply in the respective context—e.g.,

- "Here are three factors that would allow StarMedia to succeed:
  - "Leveraging technological capabilities. [There is no indication that the writer has thought of how the term applies here—but it sounds fancy and profound!]
  - "Forging corporate partnerships early on. [When exactly should these happen? The firm has been in operation for some time now—is it too early, too late, or about time now? What kinds of partnerships should be forged?]

- Collaborating with customers." [How?]
- "StarMedia should compete in Latin America and the U.S. by being aggressive and leveraging its brand names, advertisers, and strategic partners." [Easier said than done! Some relatively specific suggestions are needed for this mouthful to have any value.]

**STATEMENTS WITHOUT ARTICULATED OR ADEQUATELY IMPLIED LOGIC** [Note: Some of these conclusions might have had merit if supporting evidence or reasoning were to follow immediately after their assertions.]—e.g.,

- "[StarMedia] is the leading Internet site in Latin America, with many dependent customers, so it will continue to grow."
- "[StarMedia] has developed seven different versions ad... This is why StarMedia has survived and why it has been so popular, and why it will continue to be."
- "One way for StarMedia to generate more revenues is to advertise more."
- "With a low stock price, but with strong future annual reports, more investors will begin to invest." [What is a "strong annual report" and how do we know that these will occur in the future?]

**OVERLY GENERAL OBSERVATIONS**—e.g.,

- "[It] would be more advantageous for Maytag to pursue entry into the Japanese market in conjunction with enterprises that are well entrenched in the market and can bring considerable knowledge and experience to the partnership. Simply, these partnerships should share complementary strengths in business, brands, and products."



## Appendix H USING TURNITIN TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS

The project proposal, applications paper, final paper, and any makeup assignments should be uploaded to the Turnitin feature of Blackboard.

To upload a document to Turnitin:

1. Enter Blackboard at <http://blackboard.usc.edu> .
2. Select this course from the courses listed on "My USC."
3. Go to the "Assignments" section.
4. Select the assignment in question (i.e., proposal, applications paper, final paper, makeup assignment).
5. Specify your name and select the file to be uploaded.
6. Double-click on "Submit."
- 7. On the next screen, please be sure to click the icon to verify the submission.**
8. If you do not receive an e-mail receipt from Blackboard within twenty-four hours, please notify me so that I can check that the assignment was uploaded.

The Provost's office has asked that the following statement be sent to students in courses where Turnitin is used:

"USC is committed to the general principles of academic honesty that include and incorporate the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. By taking this course, students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. All submitted work for this course may be subject to an originality review as performed by Turnitin technologies (<http://www.turnitin.com>) to find textual similarities with other Internet content or previously submitted student work. Students of this course retain the copyright of their own original work, and Turnitin is not permitted to use student-submitted work for any other purpose than (a) performing an originality review of the work, and (b) including that work in the database against which it checks other student-submitted work."