UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL

MID-TERM TAKE HOME EXAMINATION

UGBS 609: MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (3 Credits)

Lecturer: Dr. Richard Boateng

INSTRUCTION:

ANSWER all questions in Section A and B

TIME ALLOWED:

Submitted in by 5.00pm 16th October 2012 [Submit to the OMIS Office RT-13, UGBS]

SUBMISSION:

1. Answers should not exceed more than 4 pages. Should be typed.
2. No plagiarism.
3. Students are required to complete the assignments and submit on the submission date (above).
4. Each question is to be answered in 70 - 300 words.
5. Each assignment should be presented with a cover page which should state out the name, index number and email address of the student.

SECTION A

CASE STUDY 1: Coca-Cola Company Innovation

The Coca-Cola Company is the largest manufacturer, distributor, and marketer of nonalcoholic and beverages, concentrates, and syrups in the world. Coca-Cola owns and maintains more than 450 brands, including Coke, Fanta, Sprite, Minute Maid, and Dasani water, some of which were obtained through acquisitions. The company's corporate headquarters are in Atlanta, Georgia, but Coke has operations in over 200 countries worldwide. Much of the company's success is a result of its highly recognizable and trusted brand. The Coca-Cola brand is often considered to be the most valuable brand in the world. The brand also holds a unique and important place in American culture. The Coca-Cola brand gives the company a large competitive advantage in the nonalcoholic beverage market. Coca-Cola both sells its own beverages as well as concentrates and syrups to its bottling companies. Healthy partnerships with bottlers are critical to the financial well-being of the company. Of the 53 billion beverages consumed each day, 1.5 billion of those bear the Coke trademark. The company earned $28.8 billion in revenue in 2007, with more than 70 percent coming from outside the United States.

However, Coca-Cola's continued success isn't a forgone conclusion. Threats to Coke's future profitability include growing health concerns regarding sweetened beverages and their implications for obesity, water scarcity in multiple regions worldwide, potential inability to expand into developing areas, ongoing relationships with bottling partners, and unfavourable economic conditions both in the United States and global markets. New CEO Muhtar Kent, who took the chief executive position in July 2008, faces all of these challenges as he takes over for prior CEO Neville Isdell. Kent worked closely with Isdell on many initiatives and is poised to steer the company through difficult times. Coke has held up better than many companies during the economic downturn, but profits have been tougher to come by in the United States and the rest of North America.

Even in periods of strong economic growth, the nonalcoholic beverage market is fast-moving, fad-driven, commodity-influenced, and difficult to control for very long. In order to maintain its status as a titan within the treacherous market, Coca-Cola must continue to use its brands, its financial strength, its strong distribution system, and its global reach to remain competitive and foster growth. Another critical objective for the company is to focus on innovation and collaboration with its customers, employees, and partners. For a global company like Coke, this objective is especially important and requires a considerable investment of time, energy, and resources.

For Coke, some of the changes that most effectively fostered innovation and collaboration have come in the form of new information systems. One prominent example involved an overhaul to the company's 'digital asset management'. As Coke continued to expand its global presence, a growing amount of digital content was scattered in an unorganized fashion. Employees had to spend considerable time searching through a growing mountain of content regarding market demographics, sales figures, images, videos, and cultural information, as well as grapple with disorganized recordkeeping. Coke's strength is built on images, messages, and marketing savvy, but sales and marketing teams around the globe lacked simple access to this information. So Coke used IBM's Content Manager software to create an online image library and digital archive containing images, documents, and videos, accessible by all employees via a standardized platform through the Web.

The company and its bottlers have both made a concerted effort to upgrade their infrastructure to reach their goal of more effective collaboration. In March 2008, Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE), the company's largest bottling company, announced it would begin using Microsoft collaboration tools, including SharePoint Online for ad hoc team collaboration and content management, LiveMeeting for Web conferencing, and Office Communications Server Online for unified communications. Until then, the company had used nonintegrated collaboration tools. The integrated Microsoft products enhance communication and collaboration across the company. Executives are able to broadcast live video to all of the company's knowledge workers. Employees can schedule LiveMeeting Web conferences using Microsoft Outlook or engage in a chat session using Office Communicator's instant messaging tool and turn it into a phone call. SharePoint provides a platform for a new intranet featuring industry news, video and audio content, executive blogs, and employee polls. CCE eventually wants to extend collaboration capabilities to mobile devices used by its 30,000 employees who stock trucks and replenish vending machines.

Coke's partnership with its bottlers is important to its success, but sometimes the relationship between the bottlers and the parent company can be strained. Coke relies mostly on independent, local bottlers, which is a boon to the communities of which the bottlers are part. Coke has significant investments in many bottling companies and even owns some bottlers outright. But because Coke owns a controlling stake in only a fraction of the total number of bottlers it uses for its products, it can be a challenge to get all of the approximately 300 bottling companies Coke deals with onto the same platform for the purpose of sharing information.

Coke's Project Scale was implemented to standardize the way Coke communicated with its bottlers and vice versa. Coke surveyed its largest bottlers and discovered that 90 per cent of their business practices were shared, as well as that most bottlers had planned software upgrades in the upcoming several years. So Coke developed the Coke One bottler model, based on version 6.0 of SAP's ERP platform. Coke One supports 650 business processes common to all bottlers, who were eager to implement the model because they were hoping to upgrade their software anyway.

The fickle tastes of consumers represent an ongoing challenge for Coca-Cola as it continues to pursue growth and profitability. To that end, the company created Mycokerewards.com: a social network that acquires members by appealing to their tastes in sports, music, entertainment, and beverages. The site is an interactive showcase for Coke products and a place where drinkers of any Coke-trademarked beverage can redeem points for items that interest them, in addition to networking with other Coke drinkers with similar interests.

Coke is also innovating within existing social networks like Facebook to market their products. Burn Energy Drinks, a Coke brand developed by Coca-Cola Europe, launched a groundbreaking application, Burn Alter Ego, which combines existing Facebook friendships, avatar mashup photo technology, and party storytelling.

All of these initiatives to foster innovation and richer collaboration between Coca-Cola employees figure to help the company remain competitive going forward. But competing industry giant Pepsico has gained market share while Coke has lost ground in the past few years. Like Coca-Cola, it has expanded into faster-growing markets for non-carbonated beverages and health drinks, and it is a formidable challenger. Other smaller companies like Cadbury Schwepps threaten to chip away at Coke's dominance in the market. Hopefully, Coke's investment in innovation and collaboration should stand the company in good stead in the years to come.

Using Case Study 1, answer all questions in this section:

a. Identify **Two** activities of either the Porter's value chain **OR** competitive forces model and use the selected **Two** activities to analyze Coca-Cola's business strategy. (Do not write on both value chain model and competitive forces model, select only one of the models).

(30 marks)

QUESTION 2

Reflecting on your case report you are currently carrying out during this semester, state the **title** of your case report and give a brief description of the **purpose** of the report and how you intend to **collect data** to write the case report.

(10 marks)

SECTION B

ANSWER All QUESTIONS

QUESTION 3

a. Though many people know how to ride a bike, explaining or writing down exactly for others to follow would be problematic. Using concepts from Knowledge Management briefly explain why many people find it difficult to explain what they know.

(10 marks)

b. Organizations consists of individuals who left unattended will largely achieve individual goals. One may therefore ask a question is there any real difference between collective knowledge and the aggregation of individual knowledge? State your viewpoint and discuss using an organizational setting as a typical example.

(20 marks)

QUESTION 4

a. If Nike ID.com and Amazon.com are both considered as digital firms, what is a digital firm?

(9 marks)

b. The local waakye seller in your community wants to leverage the internet to sell to the Internet generation (18 – 34 years) in Ghana. **Discuss** three strategies that you can use to achieve this objective using a combination Facebook, mobile phones and radio.

(21 marks)

QUESTION 5

CASE STUDY 2: Stanford Hospital blames contractor for data breach

Stanford Hospital & Clinics this week blamed a third party billing contractor for a data breach that exposed the personal data of some 20,000 patients. Stanford release a statement blaming the contractor just a week after it was hit with a $20 million lawsuit related to the breach, which the Palo Alto, Calif. health care provider disclosed in September. The lawsuit was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court Sept. 28 by one of the affected patients, Shana Springer, who is seeking $1,000 per compromise record, or $20 million.

Stanford last month disclosed that a spreadsheet being handled by a third party billing contractor, Multi Specialties Collection Services (MSCS), was somehow posted on Student of Fortune, a website that lets students solicit homework help for a fee. The spreadsheet contained names, diagnosis codes, account numbers as well as admission and discharge dates of about 20,000 patients who visited the hospital's Emergency Room in 2009. Stanford Hospital claimed that it encrypted the data sent to MSCS, which was to use it for "permissible hospital billing support purposes." However, the statement contended that MCCS decrypted the data, used it to create a spreadsheet and then illegally gave it to a person not authorized to handle it. That individual then posted the data on a student homework website in an effort to find help in his or her effort to create a bar graph and charts.

In a statement, the hospital maintained that it had acted in accordance with all requirements to protect the confidentiality and blamed MSCS for improperly sharing it. "This mishandling of private patient information was in complete contravention of the law and of the requirements of MSCS's contract with SHC and is shockingly irresponsible," the statement said.

The MSCS contractor, identified as Frank Corcino, said he had received the information directly from Stanford, then decrypted it and put it into a spreadsheet. Corcino told the Times he then handed off the spreadsheet to a job applicant as parts of a skills test. According to the newspaper, Corcino said the applicant was unaware the spreadsheet data was private and posted it on the homework help site in Sept. 2010. The data remained on the site until August 22, 2011, when it was discovered by a patient. Corcino blames Stanford for sending him unnecessary data and MSCS for not having an appropriate training and audit system for such data, according to theTimes story. He also claimed that MSCS allowed him to use the title of executive vice president.

Source: computerworld.com

Using Case Study 2,

a) Briefly **discuss** three possible security threats which can occur as a result of this security breach.

(15 marks)

b) **Outline** three immediate strategies the hospital can use to address the security threats.

(15 marks)