Updated August 18, 2017.

Company: BrandPort WiFi, Dubai, UAE, www.brandportwifi.com

Webinars: To provide students with an opportunity to learn more about the company and receive feedback on their suggestions, we organize live webinars with company representatives.

- Webinar 1: TBA, 10 am New York time
- Webinar 2: TBA, 10 am New York time

Questions: If you have further questions, please direct them to admin@X-Cuture.org. Your questions will be directed to the company representatives.

COMPANY DESCRIPTION

BrandPort WiFi specializes in customer analytics for hospitality and retail businesses, such as restaurants, malls, and hotels. The technology allows to track in real-time customer behavior, collect information about customer interests and prior behaviors and use it to pitch product promotion offers, coupons, and use for other commercial purposes.

The company utilized the WiFi technology provided by Purple WiFi out of the U.K. The system allows businesses like restaurants, malls, and hotels to offer free (or for pay) WiFi to their customers. When the customer logs in, the system searches for customer public profile on the Internet, such as age, gender, interests, and so on.

The system also tracks all customers who have their cell phones on them, even if they are not using WiFi. This allows to track customer movement in real time, produces heat maps, and informs the business of when and where the customers are.

Essentially, BrandPort WiFi allows businesses to get service similar to Google Analytics, just for physical spaces.

The information can be used to better understand customer behaviors and preferences and adjust business processes accordingly. Some of the obvious applications are staffing planning for particular hours, sending sales offers to the customers that match their interests and current location, and much more.

THE CHALLENGE

The service is cloud-based and is easily scalable. BrandPort WiFi already operates in a number of cities throughout the Middle East and is ready to expand to new locations around the world.
Accordingly, the company is seeking your help with identifying new promising markets and developing a market entry strategy.

Specifically, the company seeks help with the following:

Block I. Industry and Market Analysis

1. **Competitive Position Analysis**:
   What are the main technologies available for restaurants, hotels, and malls to track customer profiles and behaviors and use the data for dynamic marketing and promotions and optimization of business processes? Who are the main competitors of BrandPort WiFi?
   How do BrandPort WiFi product and pricing different from that of the competitors, and what are the company's strengths and weaknesses compared to the competition? What opportunities and threats arise from these differences, strengths and weaknesses?

   When assessing the UnicCheck's competitive position, you may find this short guide and this 5-min video on SWOT analysis helpful.

2. **Identify New Promising Markets**:
   What are the market characteristics that are necessary for the service to sell well?
   What specific markets meet these criteria? Where the demand is the highest, supply the lowest and the product is likely to be successful?

3. **Market Analysis:**
   Once the most promising market(s) is identified, research and review the consumer tastes, cultural, economic, and political factors that must be taken into account when operating in the market.
   A more in-depth review of the competition in this particular market may be useful, too.

   Optional:
   Survey of the potential clients. Interview one or more potential clients, such as restaurant/mall/hotel managers:
   - Are they currently using customer analytics systems? If not, why? If yes, which one and why?
   - Who makes the procurement decisions?
   - What would it take to convince them consider switching to BrandPort WiFi?
   - What would be an acceptable price for this sort of service?

Block II. Promotion and Marketing

4. **Promotion Channels**:
   Who makes the purchasing decisions about the product in question in the proposed market?
   Are there cheap or free promotion channels that allow to reach the decision makers, such as mailing lists, social media groups, professional associations, expos and trade fairs, industry periodicals, or similar channels that are not as expensive as TV, but allow to get directly to the decision makers?

5. **Marketing Strategy**:
   What is the best way to convince the decision makers at the potential client companies to use BrandPOrt WiFi services?
   How the marketing campaign should be designed to be inexpensive yet effective (message, vehicle,

slogan, packaging, budget and expense allocations)?

Many Internet resources can provide guidance on marketing budgets in different countries. One useful resource is provided by entrepreneur.com.

6. **Pricing Strategy**:
   Develop the pricing strategy that will result in the highest profits in the proposed market, including the optimal price point, as well as the way the price should be charged (fixed per service price, subscription, bulk pricing, retention bonus, repeat customer discounts, financing, etc.)

   This blog and this article offer a good overview of some of the available pricing strategy options.

Block III. Financial and Personnel Management

7. **Finances:**
   What is the best way to collect payments and move money across border when doing business in the proposed market, particularly with respect to transaction fees, currency exchange, and taxes?

8. **HR:**
   Would it be necessary to hire sales representatives, agents, managers, or other personnel? If so, what is the best way to recruit them, what compensation level and system will ensure the optimal balance of motivation, retention, and cost? Other personnel management tips?

Real-life test of the proposed expansion strategy: Get a contract for your client

To make the project more realistic, gain further business experience, and to put to a real-life test the claimed demand for the product in the new proposed market, teams are encouraged to try get a real B2B contract for the BrandPort WiFi services. You can try to do it individually or as a team.

If you succeed at securing a B2B contract for BrandPort WiFi, you will receive a prize commensurable with the amount of 15% of the contract value, offered as a gift or post-market commission (after the deal is closed and the customer pays for the product).

If you would like to try it, please do the following:
1. Find potential customer (*shopping center, restaurant, hotel*).
2. Share information about *BrandPort WiFi* with the potential client.
3. If the client shows interest, connect the potential client with the BrandPort WiFi. Be prepared to assist in the negotiations between BrandPort WiFi and the prospective buyer with respect to the terms of the contract, price, and support options.

This part is optional and your decision to try it or your success or failure if you try will have no effect on your evaluation in this project. However, we encourage you to try to secure a contract and facilitate its execution as this will not only offer you a unique, very real and very practical international business experience, but will also lead to tangible rewards and a much stronger resume in the case of your success.

Report Structure and Formatting Guidelines

Structure:

- Include an Executive Summary (300-400 words, bullet-list format preferred) that provides a short review of your key findings and recommendations. Please remember, the busy company owners and executives will not have the time to read hundreds of the reports, so they must be able to get a quick summary of the content of your report from the Executive Summary. Most managers will make a decision on whether to continue reading the report if the Executive Summary catches their attention. Therefore, make sure this important part makes it easy to see your key recommendations.
- At the beginning of each report section include a bullet list of the key recommendations and figures presented in the section (2-4 bullets, each 4-10 words long). Again, when presented with hundreds of the reports, busy executives must be able to get key figures and recommendations from these summaries.
- The Title Page must contain team number, client company name, names, emails, and countries of residence of all the team members and a short summary (5-15 words) of the role and work completed by each team member. If any of the team members dropped out or did not contribute to the report, please still list them, but add a note "Did not participate" by their names.

Evaluation of the Executive Summary
7 - Short but gives a very good idea about the key ideas presented in the business proposal or corresponding section
4 - Gives some idea about the key suggestions, but some points remain uncertain; a bit too long; not to the point.
1 - Not possible to figure out the key ideas of the business proposal from the summary, too short or too long

Formatting:

- The report must be 20-35 pages (5,000-8,000 words) including the title page, executive summary, and references. Each section should be 1-3 pages long. Generally shorter is better, so be as concise and focused as possible.
- Number all pages in your team report.
- Margins should be 2.5 cm (one inch) at the top, bottom, and sides of the page.
- Font type should be 12-point Times New Roman throughout the report.
- Double-space all body text.
- Indent the first line of a new paragraph.
- The text should be left-aligned.
- All citations used must be cited in the text and in a reference list at the end of each report. In-text citations should include only the name of the author(s) and the date of the publication. Full references should be provided at the end of the report. Please use APA reference style.
- A picture is worth a thousand of words, so use of figures, graphs, pictures, as well as tables is encouraged. It is recommended these are included in the main body of the report.

TASKS AND DEADLINES

Each week, you will be asked to fill out a short survey to report your team's progress, evaluate the performance of your team members and provide other information we need to better understand why some teams perform better than others. Please see the informed consent form at the end of this document for more details.

Important: Participants who receive peer evaluations below 2.0 (out of 5.0) will first receive a warning. If their peer evaluations stay below 2.0 two weeks in a row, they will be automatically excluded from the team.

Important: Occasionally emails with invitations to take a survey are filtered into the Junk/Spam email folder. Please check your Junk/Spam email folder (search for messages with "X-Culture" in subject line) if you don't receive a survey invitation message around the date specified in the table above.

All deadlines are set for 11:59 pm (23:59), New York time.

1. Pre-project Readiness Test

Due: Any time before the official project start

Before the project starts, all participants must review project materials and take a Readiness Test. The test will include questions about the project and online collaboration tools, as well as questions about your prior international experience and background. You must successfully pass the Readiness Test (80% or more correct answers) to participate in X-Culture. If your semester starts after the official start of the project or you do not complete the Readiness Test on time for another reason, do so as soon as you can – we will continue adding new participants for about ten days after the project start.

Official Project Start, Teams Formed

Monday, August 21

As long as you successfully completed the Readiness Test, you will receive the names and contact information of your team members on this day. Please reach out to your teammates immediately to establish contact. Introduce yourself, and start working on the project. Students whose semester starts later will be added to the existing teams once their semester starts, so it is likely an additional student may be added to your team in the first two weeks.

2. Establish Contact With Your Teammates

Due: Thursday, August 24

By this date, you are expected to have exchanged at least a few messages with your teammates. If some teammates are not responding, you are expected to send at least three email reminders to them by this date. Team members who fail to establish contact with their teams will be excluded from the project. Your communication starts via email, but once the initial contact is established, your team can use any means of communication.

Deliverables: A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with your personal weekly survey link. The survey will ask you to report whether or not you have communicated with all of your team members. Team members who fail to establish contact with their teams may be removed from the project.

Note:

This and all other weekly surveys will also ask to evaluate your team members' performance and provide other information we need to better understand why some teams perform better than others. Please see the informed consent form at the end of this document for more details.

3. Meet and Greet Your Teammates

Due: Sunday, August 27

Once contact is established, please learn as much as possible about your teammates (background, interests, hobbies, experiences, etc.). Research shows that spending a little time on getting to know team members greatly improves team dynamics. It is also strongly recommended that you try a live video call (e.g., Skype). Finding a time that works for all team members may be a challenge, but studies show it is well worth it.

Deliverables: A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with your personal weekly survey link. The survey will test how well you got to know your team members. It will contain a few questions about your team members, such as their background, interests, etc. The acquaintanceship test will not be graded, so do not feel obliged to reveal any personal information to your team members or insist that your team members reveal their personal information to you. However, try to get to know your teammates as much as you can.

4. Select the Client Company

Due: Sunday, September 3

By this date, your team is expected to review all available challenges and select your client organization.

Deliverables: A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with your personal weekly survey link. The survey will ask you to report the name of your client organization, as well as ask a few questions about your progress so far.

5. Industry Survey

Due: September 10

Conduct a research and try to learn as much as possible about the industry your client operates in: Who are the main players? What the most popular products and technologies? What new technologies and approaches are likely to dominate the industry in the future? Is the industry regulated by the government and how? What are the differences in different regions of the world? How does your client compare to the competitors? What are your client's strengths and weaknesses?

If your challenge instructions require that you interview potential customers or decision makers, spend this week trying to conduct those interviews. If each team member interviews 2-5 people, you will have a good international sample and very useful first-hand information that will help you better understand your potential clients' thinking and behavior.

Take this part of the project very seriously. The better you understand the industry, the better you are equipment to develop a winning business strategy for your client.

You can and should continue conducting your research and interviewing more people as the project progresses. However, try to do as much research as possible in the first week or two of the project to have a solid foundation for your subsequent work.

Deliverables: The weekly survey will ask you to report the results of your research so far and ask the usual questions about your team member performance and team climate.

6. Initial Brainstorming

Due: Sunday, September 17

By this date, you are expected to conduct the initial research and brainstorming of all questions pertaining to the challenge. Spend some time doing a little research on how the industry works, who the main players are, how your client compares to the competitors, review all challenge questions and record your initial ideas.

Deliverables: The weekly survey will ask you to provide a bullet-list of the viable ideas your team has considered with respect to each report section (e.g., all strengths and weaknesses if your client, all new markets you have considered, and so on for each report section). You will be asked to present all your ideas as bullet-lists, just the main ideas or numbers, no explanations at this point.

Every team member must submit the same text and figures in this weekly progress survey so make certain you record all viable options you team is considering and share the consolidated file with all team members.

7. Initial Decisions and Choices

Due: Sunday, September 24

By this date, your team is expected to make your initial decision and choices with respect to each question. That is, from all the possible ideas your team considered so far, select one for each question that appears most viable. You can and should change these ideas later, as you better understand the situation

Deliverables: The weekly survey will ask you to provide your initial suggestions with respect to each report section. For each of these you will be asked to provide only one or a few words, no explanations or details (e.g., Country: Canada; Entry mode: exporting; Price: $100; etc.).

Your team is encouraged to continue debating your recommendations throughout the project and you can change your recommendations if your analyses suggest a better recommendation.

Every team member must submit the same text and figures in this weekly progress survey so make certain you all discuss and agree on your recommendations before submitting your work.

8. Extended Outline and Explanations

Due: Sunday, October 1

By this date, your team is expected to have a more finished list of your key recommendations with respect to each report section and brief explanations for each of them. You do not have to have a complete report sections yet, only the list of main points you are planning to include in the report (recommendations, reasons, figures, etc.).

Deliverables: A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with your personal weekly survey link. The survey will ask you to provide an extended outline of your business proposal. Please include your key recommendations and very short explanations for each of them (e.g., Country: Canada and a short explanation why it is the most promising market; Entry mode: exporting and a short explanation why it is the optimal choice, and so on). Your explanations should be only 1-2 sentences at this time. A bullet-list format is preferred at this time. Focus on listing all key points and recommendations rather than providing detailed explanations.

Your team is encouraged to continue debating your recommendations throughout the project and you can change your recommendations and explanations if your analyses suggest a better recommendation.

Every team member must submit the same text in this weekly progress survey so make certain you all discuss and agree on your extended outline before submitting your work.

9. Rough Draft

Due: Sunday, October 8

By this date, your team is expected to have a very rough draft of your business proposal. It can still be in a form of an extended outline or bullet list, but it now must contain all key points, recommendations, figures, and explanations.

Deliverables: A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with your personal weekly survey link. The survey will ask you to provide the initial rough draft of each of the section of the business proposal. It does not have to be a finished report and it can be only a few pages long. The explanations can still be very short, sentences unfinished, references and figures missing, but it now has to start looking more like a report rather than just a bullet list of your key ideas.

Your team is encouraged to continue debating your recommendations throughout the project and you can still change your recommendations and explanations if your analyses suggest a better recommendation.

Every team member must submit the same text in this weekly progress survey so make certain you all discuss and agree on your extended outline before submitting your work.

10. Complete Draft

Due: Sunday, October 15

By this date, your team is expected to have a complete draft of your report. It does not have to be a finished report, but it should be as complete as possible, including Title Page and an Executive and Chapter Summaries, and correct formatting throughout the document.

Deliverables: **One team member** should submit the draft via TurnItIn.com on behalf of the entire team (see step-by-step submission guidelines below). After your document is submitted, TurnItIn will generate a plagiarism report that will show you if any parts of the report have been plagiarized (takes several hours to produce). Usually, up to 20% similarity is acceptable, provided that copy-and-pasted materials are properly referenced. If plagiarism is detected, your team will have until the Final Report deadline (see below) to fix the problem and submit a plagiarism-free final report.

This draft will not be graded and the plagiarism statistics will not be shared with your instructors. This is only for your information. You should continue editing the report until the final deadline and you can still make any changes or additions.

However, it is strongly encouraged that you submit as complete a document as possible, You will be able to submit your draft and check it for plagiarism only once, so the more complete the draft, the less the chance that the final report will contain plagiarism.

Also, **every team member** will be asked to submit your usual weekly progress survey. A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email with the usual questions about your team.

11. Final Report

Due: Friday, October 20

By this date, your final report must be submitted via TurnItIn.com (see Submission Guidelines below). Please note, the plagiarism statistics for final reports will be generated by TurnItIn and shared with the instructors, but the plagiarism report will **not** be shared with the students.

Only one team member must submit the final document via TurnItIn.com on behalf of the team.

11. Post-Project Survey

Due once report submitted, but no later than: Sunday, October 22

A few days before the deadline, you will receive an email invitation with a link to your post-project survey. This is the **most important** survey.

The survey will ask about your experiences in X-Culture and evaluate the performance of your teammates. Your answers are extremely important and will help us improve the project in the future.
Every team member must complete the survey.

Submission Guidelines

The report draft and the final report documents must be submitted via www.TurnItIn.com. Only one team member must submit the documents on behalf of the entire team. The team member who will be submitting the draft and final report must follow these steps:

Part 1. Create a TurnItIn account (time required: 60-90 seconds).

1. On www.turnitin.com and click on the link "Create Account".
2. On the next window, under the "Create a New Account" heading, click on the "Student" link.
3. Enter the Class ID. Note the Draft and Final report submissions have different Class IDs:
   Class ID: **15943958** (password xculture)

Note: if you already have a TurnItIn account, simply log on using your "old" login information, click on the "Enroll in Class" tab on the top, and repeat step 3.

Part 2: Submitting the paper (time required: 60-120 seconds)

4. Once the account is created, you can log into your account. Your home page will list your classes.
5. Select the correct class and click on the "Submit" button.
   Make certain to select "Draft" assignment for the report draft and "Final Report" for the final report.

6. Choose Single File Upload.
   Make certain the file name only contains your team number.
   Wrong: "~~Final report 123.pdf~~", "~~Team Report.pdf~~", "~~Team 123.pdf~~", "~~John Smith.pdf~~"
   Right: "123.pdf"

7. Click on "browse" to locate the paper saved to your computer.
8. Click on the file and click "open".
9. Click the "upload" button at the bottom.
10. Click "submit" to confirm your submission. Once the submission is finalized, you will see "Your submission was successful" on the top of the page. If you wait a few hours, you will see your "originality report" that shows how much and what parts of your report have been plagiarized.

Consent to Act as a Human Participant

Project Title: International Student Collaboration Project: Dynamics and Performance in International Virtual Teams
Project Director and Principal Investigator: Dr. Vasyl Taras.

One of the requirements of your International Business course is to complete an international collaboration exercise. You will be teamed up with several other students who are enrolled in similar International Business courses at universities around the world. Working as a team, you will be required to develop a business plan for an international company.

To help you better understand and interpret your experiences and to give you a chance to compare your own experiences with those of other students participating in the exercise, data about your prior international experiences and perceptions about international collaboration will be collected before and after the exercise. In addition, you will be asked to provide peer evaluations once the project is over, and the quality of the team reports will be evaluated by the instructor. A summary will be presented to you at the end of the project, so you can see how your experiences compare to those of other students, how attitudes and perceptions about international collaboration have changed, on average, over the course of the project, and how team composition and prior international experiences tended to affect group dynamics and performance.

Once the project is over, all personal information will be deleted from the dataset, and the data will be completely unidentified, making it impossible to match responses with the names of the people who provided them.

Most of the data will be collected online. Absolute confidentiality of data provided through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished, so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

The risks associated with your participation in the study are minimal.

Please note the data collected during the project may be used for the purposes of research, the results of which may be published in scholarly journals. Any publication will contain only a general summary of the results. No personal information will be reported or shared.

Because your performance in the exercise is counted towards your course grade, the research project is treated as one of the required course exercises/tests. You have the right to refuse to participate or to withdraw at any time. Your grade in the course will be adjusted accordingly, just as it would if you chose not to write a test or complete a homework assignment. If you choose to withdraw, you may request that any of your data which has been collected be destroyed unless it is in an unidentifiable state.

While participation in the project is required as part of your course, it is your right to disallow the use of the de-identified data you provide for research-related purposes. If you do not object that the data you provide during the project can be used for research-related purposes, and the results of the study can be disseminated through scholarly publications, keep this consent form for your records. If you object to the use of the data you will provide during the course project, please indicate so at the bottom of this form. Return the form to your instructor, and your data will not be used for any research-related purposes. The results of the study based on the data you provided will not appear in any resulting publications. Your decision to allow or to deny the use of the data you provide during the project for research related purposes will have no effect on your grade.

If you have any concerns about your rights, how you are being treated or if you have questions, want more information or have suggestions, please contact Eric Allen in the Office of Research Compliance at UNCG at (336) 256-1482. Questions, concerns or complaints about this project or benefits or risks associated with being in this study can be answered by Dr. Vasyl Taras who may be contacted at (336) 256-8611 or v_taras@uncg.edu.

If significant new information relating to the study becomes available which may relate to your willingness to continue to participate, this information will be provided to you.

For a copy of the approval letter from the Office of Research Compliance of the Institutional Research Board, please visit www.vtaras.com/11-0260_IRB_Approval.pdf

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I do not grant the right to use the de-identified data I will provide during the project for research-related purposes or disseminate the data through a publication in scholarly journals or in any other form. I understand that my decision to not allow the use of the data for scholarly research will have no effect on my course grade.

Name: ______________________

Signature: ______________________