

Social Media Practices Project

Scenario: Your team has been contacted to analyze the web presence of a local company and to propose changes to their online strategy (e.g., adjusting Facebook, Twitter, or website content or engagement with customers). You have been asked to compose two documents: (1) a memo in which you summarize your analysis of the company's current social media practices, and (2) a proposal that provides recommendation(s) for modifying the existing system.

Project Work: Proposals are inherently persuasive documents. One of the primary aims of this project is to introduce you to the differences between:

- (1) Writing as a subordinate where you present information (analysis memo) to a decision maker, and
- (2) Writing from a position of authority where you make specific calls for action (proposal)

To collect information for the report and proposal, project teams will conduct both primary and secondary research.

Professional Collaboration: A key component of your work in this project is learning how to work with, i.e., collaborate, with other individuals to achieve specific ends. To that purpose, some project deliverables will be graded collaboratively (i.e., team members will receive the same grade). Professionalization grades will be figured individual and based partially on the feedback of individual group members. Through this project, you will begin developing a language and framework for thinking about what it means to collaborate as a professional, both as an individual and as a team member.

Project teams will consist of 4-5 team members. As part of the individual professionalization assessment, team members will be asked to submit feedback regarding their own and their peers' involvement in the project throughout the sequence of the assignment.

Overview: Working as a team, identify a target company (of your choosing) and conduct an analysis of how that company uses available social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Yelp, etc. to interact with current and potential clients/customers. You may also consider the company's website and how they engage with potential clients/customers and with the public at large. Write a proposal for a social media strategy in which your team suggests changes to the company's web presence.

Continuing our emphasis on ethical concerns in the workplace, you might also integrate a discussion of how the company can use social media ethically as well as the changing relationships of online customer service and familiarization with web-based marketing strategies.

Deliverables

Analysis Memo(s)	150 points
Proposal	250 points
Professionalization	100 points
Individual Project Summary	50 points
Presentation	200 points

Analysis Memo: Drawing from the data and information collected from primary and secondary research activities, project teams will compose an analysis memo (alternatively, a short report) that synthesizes your primary and secondary research findings regarding the target company's social media practices. Your team's primary goal is to provide information to your client that positions them to understand the nature of the issue as a whole and prepares them to consider a variety of options for modifying their social media presence.

Proposal: Drawing from the findings in your analysis memo, project teams are responsible for preparing a proposal (5-7 pgs.) that outlines and proposes a specific plan for modifying the company's social media activity. Your goal in the proposal is to advocate for a specific course of action for developing and implementing a change in practice. You are not only presenting or positioning information for decision makers; you are also presenting a persuasive case about developing and implementing your specific plan.

Presentation: For the presentation, project teams are to assume that they are presenting their proposal to the client. The time limit for presentations is 20 minutes—up to 15 minutes of speaking and 5-10 minutes for questions and answers. Please note that all group members must participate in some way during the presentation; however, it is not required that all group members speak for equal amounts of time. As part of their presentation, project teams are responsible for preparing a visual aide to support their presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezi, video, etc.).

While planning for their presentation, project teams need to be mindful of the situation in which they are presenting. Thus, it is each team's responsibility to capture the audience's attention in a meaningful way and then maintain that attention through specific analysis and description of their various recommendations. Ultimately, each team's job is to "sell" their idea to the target company. That is, it is not your group's responsibility to report on your *research process*; you are "selling" a *specific plan of action* that your team believes is best suited to the company.

Project Summary Memo: When writing your Project Summary, you should assume the role of an employee reporting to his/her supervisor who has asked for an accounting of the work that took place in the project. In particular, you are describing the successes and shortcomings of the work and providing an initial assessment of the documents you created. In addition, please comment on the collaborative efforts of your team and positive and/or negative experiences with individuals during the project.

Regarding the format of the project summary, you will compose a memorandum (1-2 pages) with appropriate sections, headers, and use of design components that facilitate the reading process. While you have a broad range of freedom in terms of what you write about in the reflection, your memorandums should conform to the general guidelines for composing memorandums, i.e. your memorandums should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion that describes the status of the work (next steps, the project is completed, etc.). Overall, you could imagine the memorandum as a cover sheet that will accompany all of the deliverables you are responsible for submitting in the project. If you choose to write your memorandum in this manner, be sure to account for the project deliverables as attachments to the memorandum.