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# Problem-based Learning and Learning Assessment in Information Strategies for HTM Students

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# Problem-based Learning and Learning Assessment In Information Strategies for HTM Students (GS175)

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GS 175 Information Strategies for Hospitality & Tourism Students is a required course for all incoming students. The course is designed to increase the students' Information Literacy skills. The desired outcome is to find quality information for papers and for improved decision-making in business situations.

A variety of assignments are used throughout the course. The focus is on making the assignments applicable to problems they will face in other courses and in the workplace. Assignments are designed to be problem-based and involve learning assessment.

## Persona Assignment

The Persona Assignment is a team-based assignment where each team is given a specific a specific 'real world' problem to research. The objectives are to identify possible solutions, present the team's findings, and to make a recommendation on which solution the team will pursue.

The assignment involves a variety of deliverables.

Future iterations may include more detailed persona scenarios and a more competitive structure with teams being given the same persona scenario.

## Persona Scenarios

The hotel you manage is located in a city that has been identified as having a major bed bug infestation. Potential customers are wary of staying at any hotel in the city that is not actively removing bed bugs. Identify tactics you can take to remove any bed bugs that may be in your hotel. Also identify techniques for marketing your hotel to overcome this customer fear. Make a recommendation to upper management as to the best options for each issue.

You are starting your own restaurant in a smaller city residential area. Unfortunately you are in a city/demographic market that cater to mainly chain restaurants with affordable pricing. The plan for your restaurant is to provide more specialized cuisine at a higher price range. In order to survive you will need to have a niche in the market over the chains. Create a plan of action for how you will resolve this issue. Identify strategies that will help create and grow your potential market.

You are the owner of a resort that caters to a multitude of international tourists and families. Your resort historically has not been marketed or managed as a sustainable tourist site. However with rising costs and pressures from environmental groups you are being prompted to look into ways of minimizing waste and reducing environmental impact. Create a plan of action for how you will change and market your resort.

You are the director of marketing for a major cruise line company. Recent events have negatively impacted the cruise industry, specifically numerous terrorist events, health scares and medical emergencies. It is crucial that you become aware of the current situation and identify possible best practices to attract travelers back to your cruises. Create a plan of action for how you will now market your cruises to overcome this negative error and health perception.

You are hired as a consultant for new casino/hotel in Las Vegas. The developers are interested in making their establishment stand-out from the multitude of hotels and casinos by targeting tech-savvy travelers. The developers desire is to be on the cutting edge of technology throughout the hotel & casino. Create a plan of action that assesses the current situation of technology in hotels and casinos. The client is interested in knowing what are the potentially successful features to add in the beginning to draw a tech-savvy customer.

The Final Project consists of an individual assignment that requires the creation of an information portal using the Web tool NetVibes.

Students are expected to identify quality sources on a specific market and subtopic. The expectations and rubric are shown below.

A key facet of the assignment is a summary of the challenges during the assignment and how the earlier course sessions applied to the final project. Also included is commentary on how the course overall will help them in the future.

You will select a topic/market from a list that will be provided in class. You will then find and evaluate resources with the following approximate expectations:

- 2-3 Scholarly journal articles
- 3 Trade publication articles
- 2-3 Newspaper articles
- 2-3 Market research report
- 1-3 Govt resources (national or international)
- 1-2 Books
- 2-3 Trade organization web sites

Thus you will provide a MINIMUM of 12 unique sources. (Certain topics do not lend themselves to some of the above resource types. Adjusting for this is possible and can be handled on a topic by topic basis.) You will include a one page summary discussing your project strategies and any problems or frustrations you may have encountered during the information seeking process.

This will all be compiled and submitted as a NetVibes web page.

Final Project Rubric  
Total points: 50

Descriptive Paragraph(s): 10pts  
1-2 paragraphs discussing your project strategies and any problems or frustrations you may have encountered during the information seeking process.

Resources: 25pts.  
A minimum of 12 resources across the 8 resource types listed above.

Citation format: 15pts.  
Accurate citation format where expected. Use APA citation format.

Quality of Resources: 10pts.  
The resources should provide valid, timely, and appropriate information on your topic/market.

## Final Project Topics

Hotels/Resorts	Events Planning	Restaurant/Bar/Casinos	Tourism
Customer service issues	Economic impact	Customer service issues	Economic impact
Economic impact	Growth markets	Economic impact	International issues
Management issues	Trends	Management Issues	Trends
Trends		Trends	Climate Impact

The collage displays a variety of digital content related to geotourism. Key elements include:

- National Geographic Article:** A central article titled "Geo-tourism (n.) Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents." It discusses the emergence of geotourism and its role in sustainable development.
- Scholarly Journal Articles:** Several academic papers are featured, such as "The Emergence of Geotourism and Geoparks" by Dowling, R. (2008) and "The Potential Power of Geotourists - Their Interests and Attitudes" by Arizona Office of Tourism (2011).
- Government Resources:** Links to official government sites like the Geological Survey of India and the Arizona Office of Tourism.
- Trade Organization Websites:** Websites from the World Tourism Organization and the California Travel Association.
- News and Media:** Various news snippets and social media posts, including one from Twitter about geotourism and another from Facebook about a travel agent.
- Trade Publications:** Articles from industry-specific journals like "Travel Weekly" and "Geotourism Takes Off".
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