

Department of Marketing and Consumer Studies - University of Guelph
Information Management: MCS*2020
Sample Assignment Topics

Topics for the Debate Assignment

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) and consumer privacy

Students must weigh consumer privacy issues against the promise of improved business efficiencies provided by RFID.

Corporate espionage vs. competitive intelligence

Students must decide whether or not to acquire information from a competitor's employee.

Data breach and the need for notification

Students need to decide whether or not they should notify customers when the company database is breached.

Loyalty card programs

Students need to determine if implementing a loyalty card program would increase consumer loyalty, or if keeping prices low would be a better strategy.

Collaborative commerce

Integrating information systems with suppliers can improve the supply chain, but students need to decide if it exposes the company to too much risk.

Employee monitoring

Students need to consider whether employers should monitor employee behaviour using information technology (e.g. email and monitoring, GPS tracking, etc.)

Biometric payments

The next generation of payment systems relies on personal biometrics (e.g. fingerprints, retina scans, etc.). Students need to decide whether consumers will accept this new technology.

Topics for the Business Report Assignment

Selling customer information

Should companies sell the information they collect in the customer database, or do they have an obligation to consumers to keep such information private?

Corporate blogging

Should companies allow employees to freely use blogs, wikis, and other Web 2.0 tools, or should they impose restrictions?

Location-based marketing

Should companies take advantage of GPS or other location technologies and beam advertising to consumers' mobile devices (e.g. cell phones, PDAs, iPods, etc.)?

Virtual worlds

Should companies set up shop in virtual worlds (e.g. Second Life), or is this a passing fad?

Reputation management

Should companies actively manage their online reputations (e.g. monitor the company's Wikipedia entry, watch consumer forums, etc.), or is such a strategy merely wasting effort?

M-commerce

Mobile payments (e.g. through a cell phone) are common in Europe, but should North American retailers adopt and encourage such a payment system?

Cashless society

Futurists have promised a cashless society for decades, will this be a reality in the future, or will there always be need for physical currency?

Portable media devices

Should companies prohibit personal media devices (e.g. iPods) because they can be used by employees to download sensitive corporate information?

Click fraud

Online advertising is becoming increasingly popular, but recent accounts of click fraud have some companies second-guessing. Is it worth the risk?

Instant messaging

IM can be an effective way for employees to collaborate, but it may encourage lack of productivity or cause a security risk. Should companies encourage or discourage IM?

Outsourcing

The manufacturing industry has outsourced jobs for years, but recently companies are also outsourcing their I.T. projects. Is outsourcing Information Technology jobs a good strategy?

Information Technology as competitive advantage

Should companies invest money in the latest technology to ensure a competitive edge, or should they wait until technology matures to invest?

Open innovation

Should companies involve experts outside of their company in the research and development process in open collaboration or keep innovation in-house?

Digital rights management

Should content publishers and providers implement DRM to protect intellectual property?

Patent trolls

The current patent system has led to the rise of the patent troll. Are these "trolls" a threat to large companies, or have they been wrongly characterized by big business?

Industrial espionage and corporate spying

Do corporations need to participate in shady information gathering practices to remain competitive in the market?

Internet monitoring

Should companies rely on technology to monitor their employees' internet habits? Or, should employers use a policy-based approach that relies more on appropriate management techniques and trusting their employees?