

1996

INFORMATION PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

TRIAL CAT 3

CHEMISTRY ASSOCIATES

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INFORMATION PROCESSING AND MANAGEMENT

Common Assessment Task 3: Structured Questions

Reading Time: 15 minutes
Writing Time: 2 hours

QUESTION BOOKLET

Structure of Booklet

<i>Number of Questions</i>	<i>Number of questions to be answered</i>
10	10

Directions to students

Materials

Question booklet of 12 pages.
One or more script books.

The Task

Please ensure that you write your **student number** in the space provided on the front cover of the script book(s).

Read the case study contained in this question booklet and then answer questions 1 - 10.

Answer **all** questions in the script book(s) provided.

Each question is of equal value. Students should spend approximately the same time answering each of the ten questions.

All written responses should be in English.

At the end of the task.

Place all other script books inside the back cover of one of the used script books and hand them in. You may retain this question booklet.

Case study

Able and Baker Pty Ltd is a chain of 15 Real Estate Offices with head office in Melbourne and branches in suburban Melbourne and in country Victoria. At the beginning of 1996, each branch was issued with a Sonic brand computer with CD-ROM drive.

At present, each branch operates independently of the other branches. When a client lists a property for sale, that property is listed at the branch which the client visited. The relevant details together with photographs of each property are stored in files held in filing cabinets which are available to sales staff. Some properties are listed for sale in the window of each branch. Paper files have proved to be bulky and difficult to store and it has sometimes proved difficult to find details of a particular property. The present system has meant that each branch competes with the other branches for sales. Some clients have multi-listed properties with other real estate companies causing sales to be lost.

The Managing Director, Charles Delta, has recently said that it is important that the company aim to operate as a single unit rather than as a group of competing branches. Rather than each branch selling different properties, and perhaps competing for customers, Charles Delta has suggested that all branches of Able and Baker sell from a multi-media property list on CD-ROM created on a monthly basis which would allow both customers and sales staff to browse properties for sale. This would involve the Head Office using multi-media authoring software together with a Sonic CD-ROM recordable drive, able to write CD-ROM disks. Recently the head office had software demonstrated for creating multimedia presentations called **CD-Present** which provides 'compiled' presentations which can be freely distributed. CD-Present costs about \$1700, is difficult to learn to use, and each user requires approximately 20 hours of training before he/she can use it effectively. Each CD created costs approximately \$10 for the disk blank and takes about 20 minutes to write.

Under the proposed system, when a client lists a property for sale with a branch, that branch would forward details of the property and a photograph to the head office. Then, on the first of each month, a copy of the property list on CD-ROM disk would be mailed from the head office in Moonee Ponds, a suburb of Melbourne. The head office in Moonee Ponds has a scanner and it is proposed that a copy of a scanned photograph should be included in the property list on CD.

A Director of Able and Baker, Edith Smith, claims that this system would be too cumbersome and slow. "It may take a month to circulate details of some properties to all branches," she told Charles Baker. Edith thinks that it would be a good idea to make their property list available on the Internet rather than use CD-ROM. She says that an Internet service company, Webmaster, could put their property list onto the Worldwide web and maintain it for a fee of \$10,000 per year, with property details updated daily by Webmaster. This would allow members of the public, as well as Able and Baker branches, to access the property list. Edith has been told that suitable access software for the Internet is available for little or no cost, all that would be required is for each branch to purchase a modem and to install a dedicated phone line. The existing Sonic computers are excellent for Web browsing.

Charles Delta has suggested that using the Internet may not be a good idea. He has heard of problems with 'hackers' and a quote obtained by him has suggested that it would cost approximately \$2500 per year for each branch to obtain a semi-permanent Internet connection for 60 hours per week.

Question 1

If Able and Baker decided to put their properties on to CD-ROM, describe how the following phases of information processing would be affected.

- i. storage
- ii. retrieval
- iii. manipulation

Question 2

In which ways would the proposal for putting details of property for sale onto CD-ROM help Able and Baker to achieve its organisational goals? Make sure you fully explain your answer.

Question 3

In the event that the Able and Baker decide to put details of the properties for sale onto CD-ROM, what sort of procedures and strategies would be needed to be designed in order to implement this system?

Question 4

What economic and social implications for the staff may there be for Able and Baker if they adopted the Internet proposal?

Question 5

Which of the two proposals listed in the Case Study (CD-ROM or Internet) do you think that Able and Baker should adopt? Make sure that you fully justify your answer.

Question 6

If the CD-ROM proposal is adopted, what factors need to be considered when purchasing the necessary hardware and software?

Question 7

Describe methods for testing the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the information system if Able and Baker implemented the CD-ROM proposal.

How would Able and Baker test the procedures involved in implementing the new system?

Question 8

Recommend appropriate strategies for dealing with the training needs of Able and Baker if they adopted the CD-ROM proposal outlined in the Case Study.

Question 9

Describe the documentation needed to support the CD-ROM system.

What factors need to be considered when designing the documentation required to support the implementation of this new system.

Question 10

In the event that the CD-ROM system was implemented by Able and Baker, how and when would you evaluate whether or not the implementation of the new system was successful?

**END OF QUESTIONS
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