



## STAGE 4 PROJECT

AUGUST 2011

### Indigenous SME's – The Way to Go

#### Introduction

Small firms often suffer from a lack of resources to explore and exploit markets. Thus small firms have to apply marketing in a different way commensurate with their resources and knowledge. This is a key element for SME survival in the current business landscape.

#### The Project

- Identify an enterprise of your choice. Avoiding the big names (international/multi-nationals/global enterprises), concentrating ideally upon indigenous SME's. Detail clearly, with supporting material, why you believe this enterprise to be the most appropriate, keeping in mind the theme of this project. Identify and critically assess the current marketing efforts being exercised by your enterprise. **(15%)**
- Prepare a comprehensive analysis of the relevant industry sector you have chosen. You should pay particular attention to assessing how other enterprises within this industry are coping with the current changed landscape. **(25%)**
- Now, focusing specifically upon the enterprise which you have chosen, complete a thorough Strategic Marketing Plan using the information gleaned from your research (secondary and primary). Pay particular attention to the theme of the project. Not to engage in relevant, properly prepared, executed and evaluated primary research will result in a poor project and a poor grade for you). Your views must be substantiated by relevant material. **(45%)**
- You are expected to prepare a piece of work to professional standard. Cognisance will be taken of the overall impact of your project: layout, logical flow, relevant references (evidence of which can be seen in the body of the project), ability to critically analyse the material discovered and presented). Therefore **15%** of total marks are awarded for:
  - Appropriate use of citations & bibliography **(6%)**
  - Effective presentation/structure **(6%)**
  - Accurate syntax, grammar and spelling **(3%)**

## Additional Briefing Notes

- (a) You are to include a soft copy (on disc or memory stick) of your finished work, this can be attached to the final submission, making sure you have your Student ID clearly marked on the disc.
- (b) In your soft copy, do not present several files with different chapters/sections of your project in each. One file with full project is required. Please remember to place your student number on your disc/memory stick, or what ever means you use to store your material.
- (c) Your attention is drawn to the requirement to engage in secondary AND primary research activity. The latter can involved, for example:
  - *Mailed questionnaire to a targeted cohort, an explanation of how the questions were arrived at, and why the particular questions used were deemed to be the most appropriate for the task at hand.*
  - *A series of personal interviews is quite acceptable. Avoid just doing 2 or 3 you will need to get a more balanced perspective. Do not present a “transcript” of the interview, you must evaluate the material gleaned by you in the interview and present it to the reader in an integrated manner (with your project, and what it is trying to do).*
  - *Focus groups are also a good idea, as long as the cohort used is truly representative.*
  - *Any combination of the above. The important thing is to realise that you must include well thought through and relevant primary research. You are advised to re-read your notes from previous studies dealing with Market Research activities (you are encouraged to include a section in your project explaining the “Research Methodologies” used).*
- (d) It is a good idea to get someone to read your document BEFORE you give it the examiner. In the past some fine work was ruined by a simple lack of attention to detail. A friend does not necessarily have to know anything about the topic (it is often best that s/he does not). The task might be to see if there is a logical flow to what you have written.
- (e) Avoid any temptation to present a “lecture” on the topic. This manifests itself as “padding” and usually adds very little to what you should be trying achieve in your project.
- (f) While you are encouraged to use the material studied in the course of all your studies, do not be tempted to “shoe-horn” in material for the sake of it. This will not impress the examiner (the impact is quite the opposite!). Insert material that accentuates what it is you are trying to say in your project.

# PLEASE READ THESE RULES CAREFULLY

1. This project is an exercise in investigative study. Because it is not being prepared under examination conditions, style and presentation will be taken into account as well as content.
2. The primary purpose of this project is to assess the candidate's ability to apply marketing principles to the topic under investigation and to structure research findings using the marketing concepts available.
3. Candidates are strongly advised to review past Examiners' Reports prior to embarking on this project – [www.mii.ie/exampapers](http://www.mii.ie/exampapers)
4. The project must be typed on A4 paper. It should be presented in a folder or loose binder. Your name, Student ID and your project title must appear on the title page. The pages should be numbered and there should be a Table of Contents. Candidates are **NOT** to submit their projects in individual page plastic covers.  
**Such projects will be automatically awarded a mark of zero by the examiner.**
5. A one-page abstract forms part of the completed project. This abstract should be a brief description of the **objective** to be achieved by the project, the **methods** used and the **conclusions** reached.
6. We would envisage that you would not be able to do justice to the topic in less than 8,000 words. On the other hand you should not exceed 10,000 words. A word count **MUST** be included as part of your Contents Page.
7. You must acknowledge all your sources; not to do so is **plagiarism**. Acknowledgement involves naming your source (report, textbook, website) in brackets at the relevant point in the text, and appending a bibliography at the end of your text. This should be in alphabetical order and should include the author's name, the title, the publisher and the city and date of publication. Web references should be as detailed as possible, not just the home page. The examiner will conduct a systematic phrase search to ensure the integrity of information downloaded from the internet. The quality of your bibliography is an important element in the overall assessment of your project.  
**See section on plagiarism on website – [www.mii.ie/projects](http://www.mii.ie/projects).**
8. This project will be assessed and marked like the other subjects in **Stage 4**. You will not have passed **Stage 4** until you have passed the project.
9. The project is due by **AUGUST 22, 2011**. As time management is a major feature of the discipline of report writing, projects submitted after the due date will not be accepted. *Students should, therefore, start work on the project immediately as excuses relating to mishaps (poor health, computer failure, typing) in the final week will not be accepted.*
10. Since the project is treated as an examination subject, The Marketing Institute staff **cannot** assist you with the interpretation of the brief or sources of information.
11. The same sanction applies to copying and to plagiarism: all subjects in the sitting are deemed to have been failed and the candidate may not register as a student with The Marketing Institute thereafter.
12. The attached statement must be signed and incorporated it into your project after the bibliography.



**STATEMENT**  
**STAGE 4 PROJECT**  
**AUGUST 2011**

I hereby certify that:

- I have read and understood the rules on the back of the project outline.
- This project is my own work prepared as part of my marketing examination.
- I have not made this project available to another student.
- I have fully acknowledged all my sources and I have read the section on plagiarism on The Marketing Institute website - [www.mii.ie/projects](http://www.mii.ie/projects) - and understand the consequences as outlined.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_