NBA 600 Strategic Role of Information Technology
Assignment 1

Handed out: Tuesday Jan 28, 2003
Due: One printed copy and one electronic copy. Handed in before class Tuesday February 4, 2003 (electronic copy to dph2@cornell.edu with subject: assignment 1, printed copy either at my office, 346 Sage, or the classroom).

You have a choice of two topics in this assignment. Regardless of which topic you pick, your write-up should:

1. Be 2-3 pages in length overall, not counting references or figures.
2. Be crisp and concise. Make sure that your main points are made in the first 2/3 of a page.
3. Make reference to any sources you have used. Note that in particular if you quote or paraphrase something, you must make an appropriate citation wherever you do so. Copying or paraphrasing other works without proper attribution is plagiarism and will not be tolerated.
4. Support your position(s) or argument(s) with facts or examples. Do not simply state something, back it up.
5. Assume that the audience is a businessperson to whom you are making a recommendation or for whom you are doing an analysis.

You are expected to work alone on this assignment. To the extent to which you discuss the assignment others, and end up using ideas or points that they have raised, state so at the end of your write-up. Treat this as an assignment from your manager where your ability to synthesize and analyze, not just parrot what others have said, is highly important.

**Topic 1:** Would you recommend that a mobile telephone service provider in the United States make a large investment in SMS (short text messaging) services? In your analysis, consider that in Japan and some European countries SMS is a large source of revenue for mobile providers. Be sure to consider Internet penetration in the US versus these other countries, as well as what impact you believe Internet trends will have on the utility of SMS offerings in the US over the next 3 years.

**Topic 2:** Pick a particular industry and argue about how important the Internet is to business strategy in that industry (in terms of Porter’s 5 competitive forces). Draw on the course readings from this week, as well as other sources. Be specific, indicating what structural changes you see currently, can predict, or believe will not occur in that industry as a result of the Internet over the next 3 years. Consider what change(s) would pose the largest threat and/or opportunity if they were to occur. Note: For this topic, do not consider “digital content” such as movies or music. There are a number of technical and legal issues we will consider later in the course that are important to any analysis here.