UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION 2006

TITLE OF PAPER:	**INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMPUTING**
DEGREE AND YEAR:	DCOM I
COURSE NUMBER:	BA 112/IDE
TIME ALLOWED:	TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B)

       2. THE CASE STUDY SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY

       3. ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS FROM SECTION (B)

Note MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AND FOR ORDERLY PRESENTATION OF WORK

THIS EXAMINATION PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

SECTION A

FINDLEY AUTOMOTIVE PARTS COMPANY

Findley Automotive Parts Company is a wholesale automotive parts distributor that sells auto parts in a large metropolitan area. The company has one warehouse for its parts, located in the same building as its office, and employs 14 salespeople who spend most of their time in the field calling on retail stores and auto parts shops in a metropolitan area that contains many cities and towns. When salespeople call on customers, the salespeople complete sales order forms for the merchandise the customers want to buy, and then drop off the sales order at the office at the end of each day. At the office, four order entry clerks use key to tape machines to key in the sales orders data dropped off by the salespeople the previous day. On some large orders from important customers and on rush orders, the salespeople will telephone the orders in to the order- entry clerks directly. The tapes produced by the order entry clerks are mounted on tape drives and read into the computer system on the day following their entry. At the same time, the original orders are sent to the shipping department to be filled.

This system, however, is not working well at Findley. For example, salespeople complain that they have to spend too much time traveling to the office to deliver sales orders. Generally, salespeople end their sales day early to drop off the orders, or they drop them off in the morning of the second day. They feel that their time could be better spent selling. The order entry clerks complain that they often have trouble reading the sales orders completed by salespeople.
Conversely, salespeople complain that there are too many errors in filled orders. That is, there are too many orders filled with the wrong amount or type of merchandise. Also, salespeople report that customers are complaining that it takes too long for their orders to be delivered, and they find that too often the goods they order are out of stock.

a) What are the features of the current system that might lead to customer's complaints of slow deliveries and stock outs? 12 marks

b) What are the features of the current system that might lead salespeople to complain about order errors? 18 marks

c) What changes in procedures and what hardware changes might improve the order entry process at Findley? Specifically, what could be done to reduce errors in sales order entry, increase the efficiency of salespeople, and speed up the time needed to deliver orders? 10 marks

d) Your firm wishes to develop a system that will process sales orders and update inventory. The programmers in your IS department wish to use assembly language to write the programs for this system. Is this a good idea? Discuss 10 marks

SECTION B

Question 1

A) List the four generations of programing languages. What two key characteristics separate each generation from the others? 8 marks

B) What is a time-sharing operating system?

How does a time-sharing operating system seem to run more than one program at the same time. 5 marks

C) List and describe the steps you might take in selecting microcomputer software and hardware. 7 marks

D) I. What does GUI mean? 2 marks

   II. What advantages does GUI provide to the manager? 3 marks

Question 2

Themba is a sales manager with CTM He has a desktop computer system that is connected to a LAN in his office. He is on the road quiet a bit and would like to connect his notebook computer system to the LAN in his office while he is away.

a)   Describe two methods that he might consider using to connect his notebook computer to the office LAN. 5 marks

b)   Describe in general the hardware and software Themba would need to buy for each method.   2 marks

c)   What is document processing? How does it differ from data processing?   3 marks

d)   Identify and describe at least five business applications for which data communications systems are appropriate.   5 marks

e)   Described the four different processing modes in information systems design?
          5 marks

f)   What is database management system.   5 marks

Question 3

Sipho is the owner of a small furniture firm. He is considering purchasing a word processing software package for the firms's microcomputer system to enable him to computerise document
preparation, such as form letters, reports and memos. He is trying to decide between purchasing Quicktype, a simple word processing programme, and Secretariat, a complex word processing programme.

a)   What questions would you ask of Sipho to help him decide? 6 marks

b)   Describe the main parts of a CPU Explain what it does?   8 marks

c)   What are the advantages of an expert system?   6 marks

d)   What is the difference between on-line and batch processing.
        5 marks