COURSE CODE BA112 (S) 2007

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION PAPER 2007

YEAR OF STUDY: D.COM (YEAR 1/IDE YEAR 2)

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMPUTING

TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. This paper consists of section A and B.
2. The case study question – 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 (Compulsory)

You are the owner of one of the largest liqueur distribution companies, called SMC distributors, which is based in the Matsapha industrial site. You have just made a decision to automate the accounting and distribution activities. SMC had no one on its staff with computer expertise, so you have just hired Mandla Mavuso, who was a system programmer at the Manzini City Council.

After being on the staff for a week, Mandla comes into your office and is very upbeat. He has learned that Swaziland Brewers is upgrading its computer system and will be disposing of its old system, a mainframe computer. The system is equipped with multiple hard drives, proprietary systems software, several terminals, a tape drive for archiving purposes, and a high speed printer. Mandla feels that he probably can obtain this system very cheaply, and the system should be more than adequate for whatever applications SMC may develop. He strongly recommends that SMC make a bid for the computer system so that he can start developing applications for the company.

Questions

(a) Discuss the concerns that you might have with his recommendations?

(15 marks)

(b) Describe the steps he should have taken to obtain a computer system?

(15 marks)

(c) If there was an option of buying new hardware from vendors, instead of acquiring old and used hardware, what hardware acquisition issues must be taken into account? Discuss (20 marks)

SECTION B

Answer any **two** questions from this section.

Question 1

Discuss each of the following:

(a) Task switching	(5 marks)
(b) Software	(5 marks)
(c) GUI	(5 marks)
(d) Cache memory	(5 marks)
(e) Computer system downsizing	(5 marks)

Question 2

(a) Outline five essential features of a word processing programme. (5 marks)

(b) Excel is an example of a spreadsheet program. What is a spreadsheet and what are its typical capabilities? Give three capabilities. (5 marks)

(c) Define fourth generation languages and list seven categories of fourth generation tools. (10 marks)

(d) What is the difference between multi-programming and multiprocessing operating systems? (5 marks)

Question 3

(a) Describe why it is important to make backup copies of data files stored on magnetic media. (7 marks)

(b) Describe the power of the central processing unit. What additional characteristics of a complete computer system should be examined when comparing the power of one system to another? (10 marks)

(c) Briefly describe the four operations that are necessary to transfer data from a direct access storage device to main memory. (8 marks)

Question 4

(a) What is the difference between a data line and an analogue line? Which one is faster in terms of data transmission? (7 marks)

(b) Identify three basic approaches to developing application software and discuss the pros and cons of each. (12 marks)

(c) What is PBX? What are the advantages and disadvantages? (6 marks)