

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER 2012/2013

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMPUTING

COURSE CODE: BA112

YEAR OF STUDY: B.COM 1 (FULL TIME), DIP COM 2 (IDE)

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1. This paper consists of sections A and B.**
- 2. The case study question – Section A, is compulsory.**
- 3. Answer any three 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

The Swazi Brake Company is a small Matsapha manufacturer of brakes, brake linings, and other parts of braking systems. It sells approximately 100 different sizes and varieties of brake products to garages and retail outlets of motor vehicle products in all four regions of the country, with a workforce of 150 employees and 12 managers. Swazi Brake generated sales revenues last year of E1.5 million. Moreover, Siphos Shandu, the owner and manager of Swazi Brake, foresees rapid growth in sales during the coming years. Mr Shandu has become aware that the firm is having difficulty in processing the increasing number of sales orders and delivering orders to customers by promised dates. When customers inquire about the status of their orders, clerks often must spend hours tracking down the answers. Critical parts and materials needed in manufacturing the ordered products are frequently out of stock. Losses from bad debts have been increasing at an alarming rate. The firm is also having difficulty in meeting the weekly payroll and in preparing the required state and federal payroll tax reports.

These problems led Mr. Shandu to seek help from Jeff Sibeko, the firm's public accountant. After a careful investigation, Jeff recommends that the firm acquire its own computer system. On agreement from Mr. Shandu, he investigates further and proposes 10 microcomputer systems, which should be linked to form a local-area network (LAN).

Required

- a. Describe the hardware components that appear to be suitable for the LAN. (10)
- b. After installing the LAN, Swazi Brake acquires software application packages that perform general ledger accounting and that process sales orders. What other essential types of software packages should Swazi Brake purchase in conjunction with purchasing the accounting software? (10)
- c. Describe other software application packages that would aid Swazi Brake in solving its current and future problems. (10)
- d. After the LAN has been running smoothly, would you recommend that Swazi Brake implement a client/server computing system? Explain your answer. (10)

SECTION B

ANSWER ANY **THREE** QUESTIONS FROM THIS SECTION

1. a. Explain the importance of standards in hardware purchase. (12)
b. What other issues does an organization have to consider in purchasing hardware? (8)

2. a. Why do organizations prefer databases over file-oriented systems of managing data? (12)
b. What can prevent the benefits stated in (a) above from being realized? (8)

3. Explain the following concepts and their importance in computing.
 - a. Computer Telephony integration (5)
 - b. GUI (5)
 - c. Dynamic Data Exchange (5)
 - d. Data mining (5)

4. Discuss the major issues to consider in database design and the alternative formats that databases can take. (20)