

CLASS PROJECT: GENERAL INFORMATION SHEET

INDE499B: Information Systems

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In this class, you will work with a team to complete a term-long project. Specifically, your team will explore issues in the design and development of a valued customer information system for a selected sales environment. This document provides general information about the project.

THE PROBLEM – DESIGN OF A VALUED CUSTOMER INFORMATION SYSTEM:

Many retail environments have implemented valued customer information systems. Examples of such systems include airline frequent flyer systems and the Safeway “Club Card” program.

In such a system, customers identify themselves as valued customers at the beginning of a purchase and receive benefits for being a valued customer. For example, in Safeway’s Club Card program, customers identify themselves as valued customers at the beginning of a purchase and then receive automatic sale prices on store items. According to the Safeway website, valued customers can also earn frequent flyer miles through a special promotion. For a time, whenever valued customers total purchases reached a specified dollar value, they received coupons for 10% discount on the next purchase. At the same time, customers are not the only ones who benefit -- the store also benefits because it can track the purchases for individual customers.

In essence, the goals of such systems include (but are not limited to) the following:

- To improve sales by enticing shoppers via a sense of savings and special treatment.
- To improve sales by providing the company with data on shopping patterns of individual customers.

In order for the system to accomplish such goals, a number of users are involved in different ways – including (but not limited to) customers, cashiers/sales representatives, and managers.

In this project, you and your team are going to think through the design and implementation of a valued customer information system, for a retail environment of your team’s choosing.

ISSUES FOR YOU TO CONSIDER:

Forming teams: Teams for this project should consist of three students (two with special permission). In forming your project team, you should take into account the following – the project will involve Microsoft Access work, creative elements, and writing. You may wish to ensure that your team has those skills.

Choosing the sales environment for your project: Many types of sales environments lend themselves to having a valued customer information system – grocery stores, drug stores, restaurants, film processing sites, movie theaters, video rentals, office supply stores, home supply stores (Home Depot), or even a company that supplies to other businesses. Perhaps, the only realistic constraint is that customer be expected to make frequent purchases (i.e., most of us buy few cars). Your team will need to choose the sales environment that you wish to support.