Final Report

Group 1b. Software Evaluation

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July 23rd 2003
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Management System software developed in the Spring 2003 IPRO targets medium-sized family businesses. Research finds that most midsized companies do not have a strategic plan. (Final Report, 2003) The SMS software incorporates critical factors, such as the customer, the internal process, and the learning and growth of the business, in addition to the financial aspect that midsized businesses are primarily concerned with.

Our teams focus was the development of a super software template. The future members of the IPRO team will use this template to develop the next version of the software. This team plans to complete a strategic market review of the various strategic management software available today. The team has come up with a criteria list that was used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the software that were reviewed. This criteria list also became the source of the SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity and threat) analysis that was done for each of these companies. The continuous evaluation of the position of the SMS software in the market place is important in order to identify new trends and upcoming challenges. The strengths of other systems were identified, and will soon be used to enhance the performance and applicability of our own system. A majority of the time spent by the group was in developing an acceptable criteria list and then subsequently ranking the software by this list.
1. Introduction & Background of the Project

1.1 Balanced Scorecard (BSC)
The Balanced Scorecard is a concept proposed by Robert Kaplan and David Norton. It is a performance measurement and management system using objectives to measure in four inter-related perspectives – financial, customer, internal process, and learning and growth. (Kaplan & Norton, 1996) The BSC enables companies to track financial results while simultaneously monitoring progress in building the capabilities, and acquiring the intangible assets needed for future growth. The BSC is not a replacement for financial measures; it is a complement. (Kaplan & Norton, 1996)

There are five important principles that help execute strategy rapidly in BSC. According to “The Balanced Scorecard” an article by Kaplan and Norton, the first principle is ‘Mobilize change through executive leadership’. This principle encourages the executive team to recognize the involvement in the project. The second principle is ‘Translate the strategy into operational terms’ that puts emphasis on translating strategic objectives that are organized from four perspectives: financial, customer, internal business processes, learning and growth (refer to Figure 1). Another principle is ‘Align the organization to the strategy’. This principle means that BSC helps to define the strategic linkages that integrate the performance of multiple organizations. ‘Make strategy everyone’s everyday job’ is the next principle. For instance, in order for everyone to contribute to the organization, there are three processes required: using communication and education to create awareness, aligning personal objectives with the strategy, and linking compensation to the scorecard. Finally, the last principle is ‘Make strategy a continual process’. This means that strategy should be linked to the budgeting process, and the organization should also have a management meeting to review the strategy on a timely basis.
1.2 Strategic Management System (SMS)

Since the development of BSC by Robert Kaplan and David Norton, many strategic management softwares have implemented the BSC as part of their strategy framework for instance the Kalidonis Model, a strategy developed by George Kalidonis with the capabilities of the BSC as a framework for implementing and managing strategy, in addition to the Kalidonis model the Strategic Management System(SMS) was developed. Besides the four inter-related perspectives used by the BSC, the SMS software includes vision and mission (refer to Figure 2). Led by Dr. David Pistrui, the SMS Software aims at small to medium-size family businesses in the Chicagoland area that have between 20 to 500 employees with value greater than $10 million. (Final Report, 2003)

The biggest advantage of the SMS is that it is free, and can be accessed anywhere with username and password as long as one can access to Internet. With its web-base capabilities, company management can lay out their future planning even at home late at night, whenever wherever. With the newly added Spell Checking ability over the spring, and a well define glossary, help can be obtain easily.

This semester, the SMS software is going to be made more user-friendly to customers. Therefore, users without any technical background or business background will find this software easy to use.
Figure 2 Kalidonis & Pistrui SMS model

2. **Team Goals**

The following are the major goals that have been set for the Software Evaluation Group:

- Identify, organize and evaluate a series of different software systems
- Analyze and create a rating system to benchmark and rank product/service offerings
- Develop and present examples of how different software systems can be integrated and applied to practice

On further examination the following sub-goals were identified to help the team complete the primary goals listed above.
What are the primary and secondary concerns of the user of a management system, and how do we evaluate such a system from the users’ point-of-view

Compile a list of our competitors in this area

Make a ranking system and use it to rank the strength and weaknesses of our competitors, preferably using a matrix that can visually depict these aspects

Create an outline of a super software comprised of the identified strengths of the competitive software

Do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis of the competing software systems

Help Mappware in identifying its target market

3. Market Analysis

3.1 Market Research

Small and medium-sized businesses are at the beginning of great expansion, according to the research of respected industry trade journals. However, they are also experiencing a great dilemma. A report from American Family Business Survey (AFBS) by Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company and the Raymond Institute stressed the lack of strategic planning in family businesses. It found that 60 percent of family businesses do not have a formal strategic plan for their business. Those that do have a strategic plan are sabotaging themselves by not communicating it effectively throughout the company. Aside from this, another problem family businesses face is transition of ownership. Of 40 the leadership that is expected to retire within the next five years, only 43% have chosen their successors. (Final Report, 2003) The companies that have no formal strategy plan and are on the edge of leadership change are the primary target market of the SMS software.

According to Pulse Online magazine, small and medium-sized companies are looking to expand their current computer software. However, the expenses associated with the purchases of business software, as well as the technology and staff required to maintain it, is a major setback. Hence, application service providers (ASPs) have become popular. “Application Service Providers (ASPs) are third-party entities that manage and distribute software-based services and solutions to customers across a
wide area network from a central data center”. (Webopedia.com, 2003) In a research done by the Gartner Group, it is estimated that the ASP market will grow from $2.7 billion in 1999 to $22.7 billion by 2003. (Final Report, 2003) In view of the expected growth in small and medium-sized businesses, along with the need for business software, there is a definite potential market for SMS.

3.2 Market Analysis

According to Small Business Administration and 1998 Business Reference Guide, the size of a company is defined by the number of employees and/or amount of businesses. Size is divided as follow:

- Small: any business with 20 to 100 employees and/or priced at less than $1 million
- Medium: any business with 101 to 500 employees and/or priced between $1 million and $20 million
- Large: any business with more than 500 employees and/or priced at more than $20 million

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Business</th>
<th>Number of Businesses in Chicagoland area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>16,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>3,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Division of businesses according to the number of employees

![Target Market Division](image-url)
The target market of SMS consists of small to medium-sized, family- and closely-held enterprises, and non-profit/educational business in the Chicagoland area. Non-profit and educational businesses include hospitals, universities, schools, and chambers. According to the Census reports of 2000, there are 3,820 businesses out of 20,921 in the Chicagoland area that fit into our target market. (Final Report, 2003)

4. Competitor Analysis

4.1 Competitor Comparison Guide

The method that was used to analyze the software is presented below as a flowchart. The way we chose to pursue the analysis was to first analyze the target market the software was focusing on since the major part of the software construction is the user (i.e. the target market). The main classifications we focused on in the target market are the customers and the users. The customers are the buyers of the software, and the users are the actual people who use the software. In small companies both the user and the customer can be the same person, but in midsized companies the users are the people who utilize the software and enter data while the customer is the person who makes the decision to purchase the software.

The next step we took was to take a look at the marketing aspect of the company and the software. These included the aesthetics (visual appeal), branding (meaningful name), advertising, complimentary products and services, pricing and the online demo. The pricing has to be broken down for the user to understand where his or her money is being spent. The online demo was a major part of how we gathered information. We assumed that if someone was in the market for such software they would use the online demo to find a suitable software.

The product aspect was vital since most of the technical elements of the software are included in the category. Things like simplicity, ease of use, whether or not it is role based, and minimum system requirements are all important features that a user should consider while trying to find a suitable software. These aspects are not easy to determine as different systems can be easier for one set of users and can be totally different for a separate set of users.

The customer aspect of the software basically determined how well the company handled its customer relationship management. Good customer service is a very important aspect for users to consider when purchasing software and we believe that any company that has good customer service will be able beat its competitors based on its behavior towards them. Additionally warranty and service bundle are important factors by which to rank a software. The service bundle offered along with the
purchase of the software can lead to better levels of customer satisfaction, and a warranty makes users more comfortable with system.

For a detailed criteria list, and an evaluation each software, refer to Appendix C & D.

Below is a flowchart which shows how we analyzed each competitive software.
4.2 Software Review Guide

Our group, with the recommendation of Randy Rollinson of Mappware, has identified seven competing software: Mappware, ithink, Strategymap, iDashes, Virtual CEO, Elevator, and Active Strategy. We identified some of the characteristics of the software based on the criteria list that is attached at the end of this report (see Appendix C). The following is a review for each software including company information, and product overview, which is based on the criteria list. Overall ratings for each software are calculated through mean scores, and a graph with the mean score can be referred to in Appendix E. Print screens are also available to allow users to have a clear view of each software.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Info</th>
<th>IPRO 357 Spring 2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No logo available</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stuart Graduate School of Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suite 420 556 W. Adams Street</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL, 60661</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (312) 371-8190</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:pistrui@stuart.iit.edu">pistrui@stuart.iit.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product(s)</td>
<td>Strategic Management System Version 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Market</td>
<td>Medium-sized closely held enterprise, Fortune 1000 companies, not-for-profit organizations, small companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Overview</td>
<td>The SMS was developed by a group of IIT students, and is based of an enhanced version of the Balanced score card system. The software, at the moment, is free and is available at the following website <a href="http://www.stuart.iit.edu/faculty/kalidonis/sms/">http://www.stuart.iit.edu/faculty/kalidonis/sms/</a> The software has many interesting features and its target market is an area that is neglected by other management software companies, and therefore is potentially a very profitable enterprise. The software itself is easy to use and does not require a high-end system. It has two basic views, the first being a strategy map and the second being the strategy view. It is web based, and thus has a portability advantage for users. This software also has a very up to date and complete glossary. The main weaknesses of the software are the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lack of graphics in the output and unreadable format of the reports
Below are three screenshots of IIT SMS software:

*These screenshots were taken from the IIT SMS website available at http://www.stuart.iit.edu/facaulty/kalidonis/sms

Current Customers are those persons or businesses who have purchased your products or services during their last buying cycle. Note buying cycles could be daily, weekly, monthly or even annually or longer (think newsletter or e-mail).

Who are the current customers? What are the current markets? What are the current customer needs? How are customers currently meeting their needs? How does your current or proposed product/service meet those needs?

Can you sufficiently describe the demographic of the current customer to define the scope and stratification of the customer market? If not, conduct a random sample descriptive survey of current customers collecting demographic information and customer needs or value proposition confirmation.
Strategy map with no data entered
Strategy view

LBL Strategies
LBL STRATEGIES, LTD.
8700 W. Bryn Mawr Avenue
Suite 800 S
Chicago, IL 60631

Phone: (773) 714-2370
Fax: (773) 774-1954
Email: info@ lblstrategies.com

Product(s)
Mappware
Target Market

Medium-sized closely held enterprise, Fortune 1000 companies, not-for-profit organizations, small companies (based on company strengths)

Product Overview

The Mappware software is robust and effective and was created to help companies focus on strategic management. Although it is a very well made software, it suffers from some flaws that prevent it from reaching its true potential. The strengths of the software are that it incorporates a multiple user environment to get data and uses anonymity to encourage users to input data. The software also supports hierarchy, as is present in any company, by dividing users into different categories. The categories being group leader, team member, and guest. The group leader can manage and see the user input. He can also make this information available to guests. The team members can anonymously enter data, and guests can view the data made available by group leader.

The main weakness in the software is the lack of a glossary. Another weakness arises from the fact that the company has not been able to identify its target market yet, and thus is not focusing its marketing to any particular group. The company also lacks a vision and a mission, which are vital to the future development of the software. The company has three pricing packages, but there is no breakdown of the prices to justify the cost to the customer.

Although the company provides tutorials on request, it does not offer any online tutorials to its potential clients. This could be a major area of improvement for the company as it could easily place a limited working demo of their software online for customers.

Below are two screenshots on the Mappware software:

*These screen shots were taken from the LBL strategy website demo. They are available on http://www.mappware.com/mappware/demo.asp
**Team leader’s main page**

MAPPware has more than 3 dozen reports that allow the Team Manager, team members and guests to keep abreast of the state of the planning & management process.

This report shows the first part of the Prioritized SWOT: as each member of the team ranks their top five opportunities and threats, MAPPware calculates a score that reflects the consensus of the team’s priorities. Very high scores show strong consensus; low scores show weak consensus.

**Opportunities and threats analysis**
ithink Strategy

ithink Analyst

NetSim Creator 2.0 (complementary)

Target Market

Business related fields (i.e. profit and non-profit organizations)

Product Overview

The *ithink* software comes in two permutations. The simpler version is called *ithink* Strategy. The more technical version is called *ithink* Analyst. *ithink* Strategy provide a very broad set of features that will enable users to develop and communicate high-quality simulation models. *ithink* Analyst has the capabilities to deliver more advanced features while *ithink* Strategy provides a good deal of basic functions that can help users build an informative flowchart strategy map.

The flowchart that is used to build the strategy map gives the user the flexibility to create any possible scenario a company could face, and see a simulated flowchart diagramming the aspects of the organization that are affected as a result of the scenario. Users can input other non-physical factors, such as weather and human, into the model for a more complete scenario.

The flexibility, however, comes with a price. It is no easy task to learn to draw a complete model that makes sense. The learning process can take up as much time as a one-semester class, and not to mention the user manual that is as thick as a textbook. Overall, it will take too much time to learn to fully utilize this software. It could only be used in classrooms, or those executives who are willing to spend the time to learn this software.
Product(s) StrategyMap™
Refocus™
ScenerioMap™

Target Market Midsized to large corporate companies

Product Overview StrategyMap first uses Refocus™ to help define strategies for each company’s needs, and then uses StrategyMap™ to create a strategy map which gives the company a clear view of where they are heading. If a company leader wants to plan for a possible scenario, ScenerioMap™ can help simulate it and predict what will happen.

The biggest strength this software has is the flexibility the company provides to its users. The software can be customized in areas of:

- Monitoring
- Performance Management
- Customized Products
- Data Acquisition
- Project Tracking

Unlike Windows, Linux users can change the layout of the whole system according to personal needs. In addition to this, the company provides training sessions on how to tweak the software, thereby increasing the user-friendliness of the system. However, due to lack of information on the actual software, we cannot determine how the actual software really works and the flaw in it.

Below is a screenshot of the StrategyMap software:

*The screenshot were taken from StrategyMap.com’s website available at http://www.strategymap.com
Basic strategy map overview

*This layout can be customized according to each company’s need and interest

iDashes, Inc.
1169 Pittsford-Victor Road, Suite 200
Pittsford, NY 14534

Phone: (585) 387-0070
Fax: (585) 387-8997
URL: http://idashes.net

Product(s)
- ExecDash
- econDash (complementary)
- projectDash (complementary)
Target Market

Large corporate companies, consulting firms, small companies (ExecDash Basic)

Product Overview

All three products, ExecDash, econDash, and projectDash, combines into a package that will be sufficient for any organization that need to do strategic planning. While strategic management is the focus of ExecDash, projectDash layout responsibilities and deadlines in an organized and easy to track format. Finally, econDash can be used to find the latest information relating to United States’ economy, in particular, focusing on critical performance data. ExecDash Basic, a run-down version of ExecDash, is available to small companies. The most amazing aspect about ExecDash is its graphs. Ranging from a dashboard that summarizes one of the company’s critical elements to line graphs that plot out trends, ExecDash outrun all the other softwares in terms of visual representation of data. The layout of ExecDash can best be explained in one word, levels. The user can select the Master Dashboard to view the company’s overall score for all its critical elements or he/she can go more in-depth and choose to see numerical data based on business transactions, inputted yearly, monthly, daily, or hourly. This makes the software very easy to use and simple to learn. It should be noted, however, that the user could be information-overloaded if he/she is not used to so much graphs at once. While ExecDash do provide numerous graphs, the software requires Microsoft Office 2000 to support all this. This is a requirement that our target market would not be able to fulfill.

Below are two screenshots from the iDashes-execdash software

*These screenshots were taken from a personal demo and can be acquired upon request from the company.
Monthly overall analysis

Subject: Volume
Date Initiated: 1/23/2002
Date Due (mm/dd/yy): 12/23/2002
Date Completed (mm/dd/yy): 
Send Pre-Notification: 4 days prior to due date.
Action Item Description: Create new system for tracking actions.
Updated By: ThePresident, Robert
Assigned To: Harper, Dan
Supervisor: Roy, Mike
Status: update - all is looking fine

Action Item History

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date Updated</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Assigned To</th>
<th>Supervisor</th>
<th>Updated By</th>
<th>Date Closed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/27/2002</td>
<td>12/23/2002</td>
<td>Create new system for tracking actions</td>
<td>update - all is looking fine</td>
<td>Harper, Dan</td>
<td>Roy, Mike</td>
<td>ThePresident, Robert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Description of assigned strategic objective(s)
Virtual CEO, Inc.

Contact Info
Virtual CEO
27128A Paseo Espada,
Suite 1521
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

Phone: (949) 248-2404
Fax: (949) 248-2413
URL: [http://www.virtualceo.com](http://www.virtualceo.com)

Product(s)
Virtual CEO

Target Market
Large corporate companies, non-profit, government agencies, educational, consultants

Product Overview
Time is money from a businessman’s point-of-view. In this case, Virtual CEO hits the bull’s-eye right on the spot. The user need only to fill in a bubble survey, with choices like not applicable and strongly agree, and then bar graphs are created with numerical analysis and explanation on the side. This time saving assessment is possible due to the structure of the bubble survey. The questions within the survey are based on 234 best-practice statements, and are measured against a seven-point interval scale. The responses are then processed through the Virtual CEO diagnostic program resulting in mean scores. These mean scores are then used to output graphs, as well as determine the organization’s position in various areas. Thus, the bubble survey does not only save time, it is also very easy to use.

In spite of this, Virtual CEO’s weakness is that it is not role-based. Role-based is a crucial factor in a software like Virtual CEO because it allows the people who have expertise in a certain aspect of the company, for example the operations supervisor, to contribute their knowledge and experience. Due to Virtual CEO’s non role-based characteristic, the assessment thus becomes biased by one person’s limited perspective of the company.

Below are two screenshots from the Virtual CEO software:

*These screenshots were taken from a personal demo and can be acquired upon request from the company*
### Assessment Statements

1. Our company focuses on a primary point of differentiation as a key factor in formulating our strategic plan.  
2. Our company’s competitive advantage is clearly understood by all our primary stakeholders.  
3. Our employees clearly understand how their performance supports our competitive advantage.  
4. Our company understands how to create a clear competitive advantage or point of differentiation within our market.  
5. Our company has clearly defined the buying characteristics of our target customers.  
6. Our company has clearly identified all issues that would discourage customers from purchasing our products or services.  
7. Our company has defined the ideal methods of distribution that our target customers prefer when buying our products or services.

% Complete
Submit and Continue >>

---

*Copyright 1999-2002 Virtual CEO*
Contact Info

4FL
Fourth Floor Consulting, Inc.
625 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 2100
Chicago, IL 60611

Phone: (312) 787-4004
Fax: (312) 787-4180
URL: www.fourthfloor.com

Product(s)

Elevator™

Target Market

CEOs and executive teams of the Global 1000, large middle-market companies
Elevator, like SMS, is a service-oriented software that depends mostly on the consulting services. It has a very good multiple-user support, and a very good role-base function (see Table 2). The administrator, in which most of the time is the company’s CEO, can easily set the accessibility of information for each user. This is extremely important because it involves a company’s security and confidentiality.

The setback, however, is that FourthFloor consultants always have to be present in the meetings, where they sit with the top executive managers to come up with a customized Progress Window. Progress Window is the dashboard for Elevator, where strategies and business commitment are laid out. Customizing the whole software to fit the company normally takes a few weeks or more. The applicability of strategies is low because company’s success is based on the task completed, not on how strategies are implemented.

The pricing that comes with Elevator can be costly, depending on how many meetings are set, and how long it takes to come up with the customized software. The layout of the software can be a model for SMS.

Below is a screenshot of the Elevator software:

*The screenshot was taken from the Forth Floor Consulting website available at http://fourthfloor.com*
## ActiveStrategy

### Contact Info
ActiveStrategy, Inc.
190 W. Germantown Pike
Suite 200
East Norriton, PA 19401
Phone: (610) 239-8005
Fax: (610) 239-8004
E-mail: info@activestrategy.com

### Product(s)
- ActiveStrategy Balanced Scorecard Dashboard Edition
- ActiveStrategy Balanced Scorecard Deployment Edition
- ActiveStrategy Balanced Scorecard Enterprise Edition

### Target market
Large corporate companies
Product Overview

ActiveStrategy is currently the best software out of the eight software that we evaluated. They have a very unique software layout with graphs constantly presented beside the data. They have a navigation bar with a space for user name, and depending on the user, certain priority is given. And with the navigation bar, users can start from where they stop, or even go to any part of the strategy map. ActiveStrategy’s target market is large corporate companies, with this, they charge customers ranging from $55,000 to $1,000,000. They constantly upgrade their software (twice a year) to keep up with this ever changing market and customers’ needs. Despite the graphs and convenience of browsing the software, quite a lot of time is needed to complete the whole strategy map. This is, however, a common weakness among strategic management software (see Appendix D under Time Commitment). And part of their pages cannot be printed out according to the users’ need.

ActiveStrategy provides seminars and trainings, and also tutorials to assist new users to better utilize their software. Demos can be requested online through email.

Below is a screenshot from the ActiveStrategy software:

*The screenshot was taken from a personal demo and can be acquired upon request from the company.*
Graphs with explanations
4.3 Super Software Template - Perfect Management Software

To develop the best possible management software we looked at the software that were commercially available, and listed down their best attributes. At the current time we consider that a combination of the best aspects of these software would be the best way to make a super software for strategic management. Listed below are the features and the names of the companies that have applied them. Utilizing the information given below, we should be able to come up with a revision to the software in the next IPRO that has most of these features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Software</th>
<th>Software Aspect</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Strategy</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Advertised in magazines and newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active strategy</td>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>The name adds values to the software package</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Strategy</td>
<td>Service Bundle</td>
<td>Has the most comprehensive service package.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iDashes</td>
<td>Applicability of strategy map</td>
<td>Strategy map is easy to use and work with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iDashes</td>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Most comprehensive tutorial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iDashes</td>
<td>Visualization</td>
<td>Best Visualization of data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ithink</td>
<td>Glossary (layout)</td>
<td>Best layout of the glossary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevator, Mappware</td>
<td>Multiple user support</td>
<td>Many users can use at one time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevator</td>
<td>Role Based</td>
<td>Different levels of accessibility of information (for confidentiality purpose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mappware</td>
<td>Warranty</td>
<td>Warranty is offered on the software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Glossary (content)</td>
<td>Most comprehensive Glossary present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>Update versions</td>
<td>Constantly being updated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>StrategyMap</td>
<td>Strategy map customization</td>
<td>Most customizable output.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual CEO</td>
<td>Bubble survey</td>
<td>Efficient way to get data from user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual CEO</td>
<td>Esthetics</td>
<td>Best overall look to the software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual CEO</td>
<td>Promotion</td>
<td>Advertised in magazines and newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual CEO</td>
<td>Time commitment</td>
<td>Least amount of time spent to get out put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual CEO</td>
<td>Tutorial</td>
<td>Comprehensive tutorial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Super software template
Besides these features, the perfect software would have a minimum system requirement of Windows 95 and needs little hardware support. We would like it to run on a Pentium 1 machine with 64 Mb of ram and dialup connection to the internet. Online demo of the software would be highly attractive to customers, but it is also the easiest way to have the software plagiarized. This however, can be turned from a threat to an opportunity (see product overview of the competition review section). A good mix between information provided and information withheld would be the most advisable approach to developing an online demo of the software. At the same time excessive paranoia is not beneficial and will prevent the company from reaching its true potential.

StrategyMap appears to have the best strategy map customization available to the users. This allows the user to see multiple formats of the data output by the system thereby making it easier for different members of the organization to get at the information they need in a format they feel comfortable with. StrategyMap provides some special training to teach their users on how to customize the whole software according to each company’s needs.

ActiveStrategy has good promotion & branding of its software. It advertises in magazines that are widely read by CEO’s and management consultants, and thus gets its name out in the market very efficiently.

iDashes has a very simple strategy map that can be implemented in the easiest way. It makes the process of understanding the strategy map very simple, and therefore effective. This software also uses very high end visualizations to get information to the users. Besides these features, the tutorial layout is very well done. (for further information see screen shots in the Product Overview)

Elevator has the best role based approach of any of the software reviewed and it emphasizes multiple user support. Its multiple users’ flexibility is the best among the software we evaluated.

Mappware is the only company that we know of that has a warranty service along with the software. We feel that this helps the customer fell more secure while purchasing the software. Besides that, Mappware ties with Elevator in providing multiple user support.

The current strengths of the SMS is that it is constantly being updated and therefore is getting better every semester. Besides this, it has the most complete and up to date glossary of any of the software reviewed.

Virtual CEO is by far the best software reviewed, and is a prime example of how a strategic management software should behave. The bubble survey it uses is the easiest way to get information from users, and it also cuts down on the amount of time the user has to spend on the system making it a very efficient tool. They have a very good tutorial available making it easy for a potential customer to decide whether or not the software is appropriate for their company. This software also does a good job in utilizing graphics to enhance its look, although making it harder for slower machines to respond well to it.
5. Proposal for Next IPRO Team

In its current position SMS is primarily used as a tool by the consultant to get feedback from the client company. It does nothing more than taking the data from the company and reproduces it in a report form. The process of collecting data is the task that is accomplished by the software. The main focus of the service is the consulting. Without the service, all the SMS does is to lay out what the user typed in under each category e.g. products, services, internal R&D, etc. and present it in a table form. What the user sees is only the text he/she typed in, no processed feedback what so ever is presented.

During the first part of the semester the software evaluation group thought that the SMS software should move towards giving processed feedback to the users. Our current team thought that this could easily be done over the course of a semester. But recent insight into the process of analyzing data and giving feedback has made us realize that the development of such a software would take a longer time then justified by the profitability of the outcome. Most of the companies that we would compete with if we to create such a software, already have been in this area for a very long time and they have highly evolved software. Competing against them would be a very difficult task indeed. The opportunity we see for the SMS software is that most of these evolved software’s do not require consultant services and therefore are not attractive for the consultants to use. A client company would ideally buy a software packet from these companies and use it to identify and fix problems within the company itself. Our software has the opportunity to get the human element back into this consulting cycle, giving both the software and the consultant equal opportunities to profit. The strength of this system is that the client benefits both from the continuous presence of the software and the experience and guidance of the consultant.

The software evaluation team feels that the whole consulting package should be offered to the client companies and not just software. This way we can maximize the learning and growth potential for all the parties involved. Software has not yet evolved to the point where it can understand the dynamics and hierarchy within a company and therefore it cannot give a comprehensive analysis or solution to a company’s problems. We feel that the SMS software should focus more on how to help consultants identify problems within a company. We also feel that the development of the software should be focused on developing a user-friendly and robust system. We should try to make the system more secure and give the user more options of viewing the input data. What we should not do is try to make the software do complex evaluations of the input data. This should be left to the consultant helping the company identify and find solutions to the problems. The main issue that we see with this is that the software will then be only as good as the consultant who analyzes the data from it. This is problem with no easy solution but another way to look at it is that the software is also as good as the data input by the user. So in either case we cannot hope to solve the problems by software development. The solution to these problems will have to be based on the user and the consultant.

What SMS should do in the future will be try to make the software more customer-oriented. The interface of the software should be visually pleasing. The website should be easy to use, and important features should always be easily accessible. Besides being very user-friendly, the layout of the report should be changed for easier reading and
understanding. If possible, the output should be represented in graphs (e.g. flowchart) and rank the importance of each category in terms of impact and performance. However, to give this output, we would need to reconstruct the structure of the system. After producing the flowchart, we can use *ithink’s* capability to work out a list of scenarios to help the user to predict the future, and thereby coming up with the best strategy that may change future threat into opportunities. (For more information on the best aspects of the evaluated software please see appendix D)

6 Bibliography


Brazukas, Michael, Director of Marketing, ActiveStrategy, telephone interview, July 1st, July 8th 2003

Fabish, Mark, CEO of StrategyMap.com, Inc., telephone interview, June 26th 2003

Fabish, Mark, CEO of StrategyMap.com, Inc., email, June 28th 2003

Greco, Guy, Co-Founder of Virtual CEO, email, June 24th, 2003


Rollinson, Randy, President of LBL Strategies, June 9, 2003.


Weniger, Ted, Correspondent for iDashes, Inc., email, June 26th, June 30th 2003

# Appendix A - Full Contact Information

## Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. David Pistrui</td>
<td><a href="mailto:pistrui@stuart.iit.edu">pistrui@stuart.iit.edu</a></td>
<td>312.371.8190</td>
<td>Stuart Graduate School of Business</td>
<td>Suite 420 565 W. Adams St. Chicago, IL 60661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Team Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>School</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kae Bin Tan</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tankae@iit.edu">tankae@iit.edu</a></td>
<td>Illinois Institute of Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tak Man Wong</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wongtak@iit.edu">wongtak@iit.edu</a></td>
<td>Illinois Institute of Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jihae Yoo</td>
<td><a href="mailto:yoojiha@iit.edu">yoojiha@iit.edu</a></td>
<td>Illinois Institute of Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syed Husain</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Husssye5@iit.edu">Husssye5@iit.edu</a></td>
<td>Illinois Institute of Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Companies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Email</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dwain K. Speese</td>
<td><a href="mailto:dspeese@latinamericanchamberofcommerce.com">dspeese@latinamericanchamberofcommerce.com</a></td>
<td>773.252.6300</td>
<td>Chicago Minority Business Development Center</td>
<td>3512 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60647</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix B – Activity Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Output &amp; Deliverables</th>
<th>Hours Spent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/2/03</td>
<td>Introduction/Overview Introduction to BSC &amp; SMS software</td>
<td>Course Syllabus, Evaluation, Guidelines, Reading, Demo</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/4/03</td>
<td>Assignment 1 Discussion Project Plan development</td>
<td>1-2 page write up of readings, Establish teams, Captains, and Spokesperson, student SMS demos</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/9/03</td>
<td>Mappware.com presentation Project Plan development Problem Statement/Research Questions</td>
<td>Meet with Mappware Project management team, draft Project Plan outlines, Q&amp;A</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/11/03</td>
<td>LACC presentation Project Plan development Primary Objective/Sub Objectives</td>
<td>Meet with LACC consultants, finalize Project Plans due 6/13</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/12/03</td>
<td>Pick up Mappware Documents at Stuart Business School Read documents</td>
<td>Summary for each software due 6/16 include:</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1) Strength</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2) Target Market</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3) Questions/Comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/16/03</td>
<td>Meet 10pm to discuss about Project Plan &amp; come up with a Criteria List to which the software will be analyzed Assign sections of the Project Plan report, as well as which software to analyze for each member (2 software each)</td>
<td>Criteria List with rating scale, Project Plan sections due 6/19, software evaluations due 6/22</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18/03</td>
<td>Meeting with System Redesign in class to share information/insights Evaluate Mappware</td>
<td>Draft Mappware evaluation</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/19/03</td>
<td>Meet 12 noon to combine sections of the Project Plan Redefine the Criteria List Evaluate SMS</td>
<td>Final Draft of Project Plan Draft SMS evaluation</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/22/03</td>
<td>Meet 9pm to work on Power</td>
<td>Draft Power Point</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>6/23/03</td>
<td>Short Power Point presentation and Q&amp;A session</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/24/03</td>
<td>Meet 3pm to work on revised Final Project Plan, Power Point presentation, &amp; Mid Term Progress Report</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/25/03</td>
<td>Power Point presentation</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/26/03</td>
<td>Meet 3pm to work on Mid Term Progress Report</td>
<td>6 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/27/03</td>
<td>Meet 3pm to evaluate all the software in-depth as a team</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/30/03</td>
<td>Review &amp; Project Improvement Workshop</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/2/03</td>
<td>Open Meeting-Development Workshop</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/7/03</td>
<td>Module and Working Group Activity Update &amp; Progress Reviews</td>
<td>2.5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/8/03</td>
<td>Midterm Progress Report and Project Plan revision</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/9/03</td>
<td>Open Session-Module-Group meetings Work on Team Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/10/03</td>
<td>Meet 1pm to work on 1st Draft Final Report</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/11/03</td>
<td>Meet 12noon to proof read 1st Draft Final Report Turn in Final Report for proof read</td>
<td>4 hrs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7/14/03</td>
<td>Work on Team Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>1.5 hrs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>7/15/03</td>
<td>Meet 2pm to work on 2nd Draft Final Report and Team Power Point Presentation</td>
<td>2nd Draft Final Report, Team Power Point Presentation partly finished</td>
<td>3hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/16/03</td>
<td>Revise 2nd Draft Assign responsibilities for Team Power Point Presentation, Poster, &amp; Final Report Turn in 2nd Draft Report for proof read</td>
<td>Revised 2nd Draft</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/17/03</td>
<td>Meet 3pm to work on 3rd Draft Final Report, Team Power Point Presentation, team Poster contents</td>
<td>3rd Draft Final Report, Team Power Point Presentation, Poster contents</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/18/03</td>
<td>Meet 1:45pm at Fourth Floor Consulting</td>
<td>Evaluation on Elevator™</td>
<td>1.5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/19/03</td>
<td>Meet 2:30pm to work on Poster</td>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/21/03</td>
<td>Meet 3pm to practice Team Final Presentation, revise Poster</td>
<td>Revised Poster</td>
<td>2 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/23/03</td>
<td>Submit Final Deliverables, Presentations</td>
<td>Submit Final Report, Web page, Poster, &amp; Practice Final Presentation</td>
<td>3 hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/24/03</td>
<td>IPRO Day Stuart Business School</td>
<td>Final Presentation &amp; Poster Session Business, 4-6pm</td>
<td>2 hrs*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*estimated time