

IS379 Course Projects

Sixty percent (60%) of the grade in IS379 comes from a project that you complete in three iterations plus a final synthesis presentation on the day of the final exam. The project will give you **a unique perspective on how to improve landing page conversions using advanced web measurement and hypothesis testing.**

In the first project iteration, you will analyze existing Google AdWords campaigns for a non-profit organization. You will determine each campaign's goal actions and measure how well those are achieved on its landing pages. In the next two project iterations, you will design and test alternative landing pages to improve performance.

In the course of the project, you will gain significant hands-on experience with conceptual models from leaders in the field, most notably Wider Funnel's LIFT model. This sort of conceptual model is critical for making effective use of the many analytic tools with which you will gain proficiency in this class.

We are fortunate to be working with non-profit recipients of Google AdWords grants. Google has provided us with significant access to their domain experts in AdWords, Analytics, and Website Optimizer. The non-profits are allowing us significant access to and control over the web pages that drive their businesses.

The experience you will have in this course is unique. If you work hard to fully profit from it, you will gain a knowledge edge available only at Eastern Michigan University.

Project Components

The IS379 project is done in teams. Teams are assigned randomly and consist of between three and five members. Changes in team composition are very rare but may occur after consultation with the instructor.

Each project step is graded at both the team and the individual level. The team portion of the grade counts for 67% of the total. At each grading step, I will survey the team and ask you to assess how each of you contributed to the team portion. The results of the survey may cause individuals in the same team to receive different grades on the team portion.

The individual portion counts for 33% of the grade. The individual portion of the grade is assessed separately from the team portion.

Given that 67% of the total iteration grade is based on the team portion, team members have a strong incentive to insure that the overall project is well executed.

Here are the requirements for each project step.

Iteration 1 (160 points)

In this iteration, you will analyze your non-profit's Google AdWords campaigns and landing pages relative to the non-profit's organizational goals. For each landing page, you will determine the goal action the visitor is expected to undertake. You will then use Google Analytics to analyze how well the landing page is inducing visitors to take that action. This analysis will require copying the non-profit's current landing pages into your

test market directory, installing analytics codes for tracking the goal actions, and, as a final step, once you are certain everything is working, redirecting the landing pages from the Google AdWords account. The technical aspects of these steps are explained in the Google Conversion University material referenced in the syllabus. Chapters from Web Design for ROI, also referenced in the syllabus will help you with the concepts.

To again stress the key point in this iteration: for each landing page, you must clearly define goals relative to the non-profit's business needs as expressed through their AdWords campaign. Success in this endeavor depends on overcoming the technical, conceptual, and communication hurdles associated with it. You will need to work hard every week.

On the due date for Iteration 1, student teams need to provide an in class presentation where they explain how they met the criteria. The presentation will be prepared using Google Docs. You must also have completed all of these remaining actions:

- The goal tracking codes must be installed in the landing pages and the AdWords landing pages switched by **September 30, 2009**.
- One team member must have submitted the link to the group presentation to the eCompanion drop box.
- One team member must have created a post in the Bigger Buy Button student site that explains the team's overall campaign strategy. This post must have the title: "IS379 Iteration 1 Team Project".
- Each individual team member must have created a post in the Bigger Buy Button student site with the title "IS379 Iteration 1 Individual Contribution" where they describe their contribution to the team effort.

Iteration 2 (160 points)

In this iteration, you will develop alternative landing pages for the non-profit's AdWords campaigns and prepare them for testing in Google Website Optimizer. You will use Wider Funnel's LIFT model (see references in syllabus) to motivate your critique of the initial page and the design of your alternatives. You should also make reference to Steve Krug's "Don't Make Me Think" which provides much of the intellectual motivation for the LIFT model.

A key point in this iteration is that the Google Website Optimizer experiment must be ready to launch the day of the iteration. This requirement means that you must have the alternatives coded and uploaded to your test marketing directory with the Website Optimizer codes installed and verified. Again, you will have to work hard each week to achieve this goal, and you will have to really work to maintain contact with your non-profit.

On the listed due date, each group will prepare a presentation that outlines the overall testing strategy and how it fits with the organization's goals. You must also have completed all of these remaining actions:

- One group member must have submitted the URL for their test market site to the eCompanion drop box.

- One team member must have submitted the link to the group's Google Docs presentation to the eCompanion drop box.
- One group member must have created a blog post in the Bigger Buy Button student site with a link to the group site and each of the individual sites. This post must be titled: "IS379 Iteration 2 Team Project".
- Each individual group member must have created a blog post with the title, "IS379 Iteration 2 Individual Contribution". In this post, you will explain your contribution to the team effort.

Iteration 3 (160 points)

In this iteration, you will report on the results of your Google Website Optimizer experiments to your non-profit. You must indicate whether the experiment came to a conclusive result, and if so, why. For experiments that did not come to a conclusive result, you must also explain why and suggest alternatives you might try in the future. All explanations must be framed using the conceptual frameworks provided by Wider Funnel's LIFT model, "Web Design for ROI", and "Don't Make Me Think". You must provide a clear recommendation to the non-profit regarding its landing pages. This recommendation must be implemented by the final synthesis report one week later.

On the listed due date, each group will present their experiment in class and explain how they met the criteria. You must also have completed all of these remaining actions:

- One team member must have submitted the link to the group's Google Docs presentation to the eCompanion drop box.
- One group member must have created a blog post in the Bigger Buy Button student site with the title: "IS379 Iteration 3 Team Project".
- Each individual group member must have written a blog post with the title "IS379 Iteration 3 Individual Contribution".

Final Synthesis Presentation (120 points)

This is a presentation on the date of the final. In it, you report on how you implemented your recommendation to the non-profit. Often, implementation just consists of stopping the Website Optimizer experiment and making sure that the ads point at the selected landing pages. Demonstrate that you have done this.

I would also like your evaluation of the following items:

- Your effectiveness in using the LIFT model as well as the LIFT model itself.
- How you would apply the approaches you used in this class to other similar situations? What are the limitations you see in these approaches?

On the listed due date, each group will present their experiment in class and explain how they met the criteria. You must also have completed all of these remaining actions:

- One team member must have submitted the link to the group's Google Docs presentation to the eCompanion drop box.

- One group member must have created a blog post in the Bigger Buy Button student site with the title: "IS379 Final Synthesis Team Project".
- Each individual group member must have written a blog post with the title "IS379 Final Synthesis Individual Contribution".