



Deadlines

Check the 'Key dates' section on campus for the following deadlines:

- Project submission
- Programmatic assessment submission
- Personal reflection and group feedback
- Peer marking

(your Online Programmatic Assessment is separate to your Whitepaper project and should be completed on the Virtual Campus).

Module 5 Project

Whitepaper

Your Challenge

Create a whitepaper that sells your ideas on how a major digital trend of your choice will influence an industry assigned to you.

What is a Whitepaper?

Whitepapers are documents written to persuade an audience to adopt a certain position. They have become regular features of content marketing strategies, as they often appeal to an organisation's customers with a solution to something the customers need, and are typically used to sell new information and projects. For more information on what a whitepaper is and how it's used, check out [this resource](#).

Audience

The audience for your whitepaper is your clients, fellow professionals and thought-leaders for your industry. Depending on the industry you've been assigned, this could be CEOs of leading organisations, the heads of professional associations, or senior management at your company.

Context

We find ourselves in the middle of a period of digital transformation. The commercial, social and intellectual potential offered today by new technologies is unprecedented in human history.

The past decade has seen the birth of a new era for the majority of the world. Indeed, it's only ten years since the adoption of mainstream broadband, and just eight since smartphones became an essential accessory.

Over the next few years, we'll continue to see transformation in the way we live driven by the internet, the smartphone and new connected devices. This is your opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the digital landscape, to indulge in some future gazing, and to share your thoughts on where digital will take us next.



Suggested time required:

Approx. 15 individual hours



Learning Objectives

- Evaluate the constantly changing nature of digital's impact on a specific industry
- Determine the potential consequences of digital on an organisation's ability to innovate for a specific industry
- Make well-researched, concise and convincing recommendations that drive an industry's digital strategy
- Provide feedback on a digital trends whitepaper for a specific industry

Instructions

You'll create a whitepaper that sells your ideas on how a major digital trend of your choice will influence an industry that we have assigned to you. Your whitepaper will give the background, theory, further details, and your point of view on how this digital trend will influence this specific industry.

The whitepaper should provide valuable insight and analysis into the current marketplace and guidance for the future. Given the potential audience for these whitepapers, the research should be comprehensive. The finished article should be in-depth, and provide real value and knowledge, ultimately driving change within the industry. After reading your rationale, the audience should be ready to 'say yes' to your suggestions. Be persuasive with examples and research.

Whether it's an emerging digital trend like dual-screening, or the rise of purchasing on a mobile device, your document should outline the trend, explain its impact, and recommend a course of action to pursue. It should also be short: a maximum of four pages that you think will persuade senior management to act on your recommendations.

This project is designed to get you thinking about everything you've learned throughout the Squared Online course, and to encourage you to analyse and present key facts in a compelling way.

In summary, you should regard this whitepaper as an authoritative document that will help your target audience make relevant decisions about the topics in question. Your document should outline the trend and explain its impact on the industry as a whole, as well as the capacity for the industry in general to change. It should recommend both strategies and action for driving innovation and change.

Your Groups

Check the 'Project' section on the Virtual Campus to find out which industry you'll be investigating!

Your Module 5 Deadlines

You'll need to pay close attention to all the assessment deadlines for this module:

- Submitting your whitepaper
- Personal reflection and group feedback exercise
- Peer marking
- Individual assessment: online programmatic assessment

Key Assessment Criteria

This project will be assessed against these criteria (see the rubric below for more details):

- Clear identification of a viable trend
- Clear explanation of recent industry innovations and current industry gaps
- Quality and validity of proposed strategy for change
- Quality and viability of recommendations
- Use of data to back up all of the above

Course contribution: A compulsory pass must be obtained for this project.

Your whitepaper should:

- Identify a viable **trend** for your industry
- Highlight **recent innovations** in your industry and identify gaps that your industry should fill
- Recommend **strategy** and tactics to make **change** within your industry
- Include the **benefits, risks and challenges** of implementing your recommendations; what's at stake if recommendations are ignored?
- Back up all of the above with solid, relevant and meaningful **data**
- Discuss the **regulatory implications** that adopting the trend could entail

For more details, refer to the attached rubric.

Formatting Guidelines

1. Length: maximum of four A4 pages with font size 11, no more than 2MB in file size
2. PDF format
3. Clickable links should **not** be included
4. Reference all external data or statistics
5. Diagrams and images to boost your paper's persuasiveness

How to submit your Whitepaper:

Nominate one member of your group to submit the PDF to the Virtual Campus on behalf of all your group members. Only that group member is required to submit your project. Once the nominated group member has submitted your project, all other group members will receive the submitted project status. Please note that you won't be able to make any amendments once your document has been submitted. The document you upload will be sent for marking so please make sure it's the final version.

Check out the formatting guidelines in the sidebar on the right.

Personal reflection and group feedback

Once you've submitted your project, you're required to complete the personal reflection and group feedback exercise. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on what you have learned from working in a group online, as well as to provide feedback on your group members. Personal reflection and group feedback are compulsory activities which are required to pass each module. You should complete these after you have submitted your project.

Peer marking: professional feedback from peers

In Modules 1, 2 and 3, you built your capacity to give and receive feedback through various group activities. For this project, you'll be graded through a formal peer marking process. Taking part in this process will allow you to better apply those critical leadership and reflective skills you've developed.

The marking process

You can watch [this short video](#) to give you some background on how peer marking works. Your project will be marked with the rubric attached to this brief.

Receiving a mark

Each project will receive both a rating out of 50 and written constructive feedback from a number of your peers. Each rating will then be averaged out and recorded as a single grade. In addition, once all of the whitepapers are marked we'll give you a chance to read them and the feedback they received.

How your mark will be calculated:

- Five to seven of your peers will mark and provide feedback on your whitepaper
- Each peer will give your paper an individual mark
- Each individual mark will be averaged to make up your final mark (see figure below)
- The maximum mark will be 50/50
- You'll need an average mark of 30/50 from your peers to pass
- And just like your other projects, the weighting of your whitepaper contributes 25% toward your final mark (the same as in your other module projects).



Exceptional Whitepapers

When you've finished giving feedback to your peers, the Squared Online team will choose the most exceptional whitepapers and those groups will be announced during the Graduation Class. The exceptional papers will be invited to be published as part of the Squared Online blog.

Exceptional Feedback

Being an agent of change requires applying your critical thinking skills, communicating clearly to your peers and providing the support they need to be successful. The Squared Online team will review the feedback you gave and the most exceptional feedback will also be acknowledged during the Graduation Class.

Milestones



By the end of Week 1

Decide upon trends to research that have impacted your assigned industry and create a project plan with your group



By the end of Week 2

Complete research on trends and start drafting your recommendations



By the end of Week 3

Write a draft of your entire Whitepaper and edit to strengthen your paper's persuasiveness



By the end of Week 4

Submit your final draft of your Whitepaper



Suggested time required for project:

15 hours

Suggested time required for marking and feedback:

1.5 hours

Tips

- Be confident with your recommendations. The more confident you are, the more persuasive your report will be.
- Backing up your observations and recommendations with research will show that you're a real thought-leader and understand your industry. Just be sure to reference all of your data sources.
- Be critical of your own work. Anticipate how your audience will respond. Are there areas where they might not agree with your reasoning? How might you convince those opposed to your ideas?
- Are your recommendations authentic and actionable? Have you provided a clear path for implementation and achieving success for your audience?

Rubric

1. Trend

Visionary 10	Professional 8-9	On Track 6-7	Develop Further 4-5	Revisit Required 2-3	Overhaul Required 0-1	Total: 10 points
Meets 'Professional' standards and presents a fresh, creative approach to the trend that has potential to be disruptive	Clearly describes a viable trend for assigned industry and provides relevant examples to support why it would be beneficial for assigned industry to adopt	Describes a viable trend for assigned industry and provides examples to support why it would be beneficial for assigned industry to adopt, but description lacks clarity and some of the examples used aren't relevant	Describes a trend for assigned industry and provides examples to support why it would be beneficial for assigned industry to adopt, but description lacks clarity, the trend isn't viable and some of the examples used aren't relevant	Briefly mentions a trend for assigned industry, but either the trend isn't relevant to the assigned industry; or fails to describe it and its relevance to the industry	Does not describe a trend for assigned industry	

2. Recent innovations						Total: 10 points
Visionary	Professional	On Track	Develop Further	Revisit Required	Overhaul Required	
Meets 'Professional' standards and provides some future gazing about what would happen if the gap identified is ignored	Thoroughly and clearly discusses recent innovations for assigned industry and identifies gaps in the industry using relevant detail	Discusses recent innovations for assigned industry and identifies gaps in industry, but part of the response lacks substance and clarity	Discusses recent innovations for assigned industry and identifies gaps in industry, but the response lacks substance and clarity	Briefly mentions innovations, but fails to identify any gaps in the industry	Does not discuss innovations or identify gaps in industry	

3. Strategy for change and recommendations						Total: 10 points
Visionary	Professional	On Track	Develop Further	Revisit Required	Overhaul Required	
Meets 'Professional' standards and the strategy and tactics offered are creative, fresh and unique	Clearly explains a strategy and provides actionable tactics for the industry to implement recommendations	Explains a strategy and provides tactics for the industry to implement recommendations, but part of the response isn't clear and the strategy and tactics are not realistic or actionable	Explains a strategy and provides tactics for the industry to implement recommendations, but the entire response isn't clear and the strategy and most of the tactics are not realistic or actionable	Implies a strategy and tactics to implement recommendations, but doesn't explicitly state what the strategy or tactics would be	Does not explain a strategy nor provide actionable tactics for the industry to implement recommendations	

4. Benefits, risks and challenges						Total: 10 points
Visionary	Professional	On Track	Develop Further	Revisit Required	Overhaul Required	
Meets 'Professional' standards and offers a creative, unique solution for each risk and challenge	Clearly explains the benefits, risks, challenges and what's at stake for industry for each recommendation. Each benefit, risk and challenge is well thought out and logical	Explains the benefits, risks, challenges and what's at stake for industry for each recommendation, but part of the explanation lacks clarity. Only some of the benefits, risks and challenges are well thought out and logical	Explains the benefits, risks, challenges and what's at stake for industry for each recommendation, but most of the explanation lacks clarity. The majority of the benefits, risks and challenges are not well thought out or logical	Only implies implicitly and fails to flush out benefits, risks and challenges and what's at stake for each recommendation. It's not apparent why an industry should adopt the trend nor what risks, challenges and what's at stake if the trend isn't adopted	Does not provide recommendations by explaining the benefits, risks, challenges and what's at stake for industry	

5. Use of data						Total: 10 points
Visionary	Professional	On Track	Develop Further	Revisit Required	Overhaul Required	
Meets 'Professional' standards and relies on creative data sources that include both qualitative and quantitative data	Backs up all of the rubric criteria with solid, relevant and meaningful data	Backs up all rubric criteria above with data, but some of the data used isn't relevant	Uses data to back up some of the rubric criteria above, but the quality of the data isn't relevant	Inconsistently uses data to back up the rubric criteria above and when used, isn't relevant	Does not back up any rubric criteria above with solid, relevant and meaningful data	