

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE

BUSINESS RESEARCH
BEC324/E

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAM

NOVEMBER 2024

Time: 2 hours 30 minutes (BEC324)
Subject: BEC324/ E
Marks: 75

This paper consists of 4 pages including the cover page

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INSTRUCTIONS

1. Ensure you write the correct subject name and the correct date on the cover page.
2. Ensure that your name is clearly indicated on the cover page.
3. Clearly number each question within your paper.
4. Please attempt to write as neatly as possible as illegible handwriting cannot be marked.

PAPER SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES:

SECTION A: QUESTION ONE IS COMPULSORY

SECTION B: SELECT EITHER QUESTION TWO OR QUESTION THREE.

SECTION C: ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS SECTION

GOOD LUCK!

SECTION A:

Read the mini-case study carefully and answer the questions that follow

Crises Management at CrowdStrike

CrowdStrike is a leading cybersecurity technology company known for providing endpoint protection, threat intelligence, and cyberattack response services. It uses artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to detect and prevent malware, ransomware, and other cyber threats.

In July 2024, CrowdStrike caused a major IT disruption due to a faulty update to their Falcon sensor configuration. This update triggered widespread "Blue Screen of Death" (BSOD) errors on millions of Windows devices, affecting critical systems globally, including banks, airlines, and telecommunications services. This impacted many of the athletes travelling to the Olympics.

CrowdStrike - which previously reached a market cap of about \$83 billion - is among the most popular cybersecurity providers in the world, with close to 30,000 subscribers globally. The firm has been a software darling for investors, due to its growth and high margin. Its stock had doubled in the past year but the company's stock fell more than 11% after this outage.

"This event is a reminder of how complex and intertwined our global computing systems are and how vulnerable they are to a mistake and an error," said Gil Luria, senior software analyst at D.A. Davidson.

But the outage could force customers and investors alike to rethink their dependence on the company, opening the door to potential rivals.

"While most companies don't really have an alternative to Microsoft, they do have alternatives for security," he added.

"This may cause many companies to reconsider which security product they use, and whether they need to diversify across different security products in order to prevent these types of outages."

CrowdStrike CEO George Kurtz said in a post on social media platform X that the event was not a security incident or cyberattack and a fix had been deployed. He later apologised for the impact caused by the company.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/technology/cybersecurity/crowdstrike-chaos-could-prompt-rethink-among-investors-customers-2024-07-19/> (Accessed 28 September 2024)

QUESTION 1

[30 marks]

A marketing research company was hired to assist CrowdStrike with unearthing possible effects of the faulty update at CrowdStrike and provide possible recommendations for CrowdStrike to gain back the customers' trust. As senior marketing research consultant you are asked to answer the following questions:

- 1.1 From a marketing point of view, state the main problem that CrowdStrike is facing after the data breach. (2)
- 1.2 Given the problem under analysis, articulate a clear research objective which needs to be achieved during the research project. (3)
- 1.3 Describe the three different research designs that can be used in a study and indicate which research design would be most applicable in the case of the research project for CrowdStrike. Explain the reason for your answer. (9)
- 1.4 Briefly outline the three different research approaches which can be used in a research project and explain which approach would be most suitable for this project. (9)
- 1.5 Briefly discuss each of the steps that may be followed when carrying out this research project for CrowdStrike. (7)

SECTION B: Answer either Question 2 or Question 3

QUESTION 2

[20]

- 2.1 Sample size is determined either by using statistical methods, or just blind guessing. Discuss the general procedure to follow in order to determine a sample size statistically. (6)

2.2 Discuss the steps followed in hypotheses testing. (14)

OR

QUESTION 3 [20]

3.1 Describe the probability sampling methods that can be used by researchers. (10)

3.2 Explain any four factors that researchers should consider when selecting an appropriate statistical test. (10)

SECTION C: Answer Question 4 (Compulsory)

Question 4 [25]

4.1 Discuss any three measures of central tendency and any three measures of dispersion. (12)

4.2 Discuss any three advantages and four disadvantages of using web-based surveys. (13)

END OF EXAM PAPER