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# IN230-UNIT 9

COMPETITIVE AUDITS

# SHORT OVERVIEW

- This week you will apply what you have learned to brainstorm ideas for design solutions. You will also conduct a competitive audit.



- You are ready to move into the third phase of the design process: ideate. In this unit, you will consider everything you have learned about the users you are designing for and the problems they are facing in order to brainstorm ideas for design solutions. You will also conduct a competitive audit.

- Understand design ideation
- Recognize business needs in design ideation
- Conduct a competitive audit

## UNIT 9 OVERVIEW AND OUTCOMES

Course Outcomes:

**IN230-5:** Prepare a design plan for a mobile app to showcase in a digital UX design portfolio.

## UNIT 9 READING

- **Qwiklabs Course: Start the UX Design Process: Empathize, Define, and Ideate**

- **Module: Ideating design solutions**

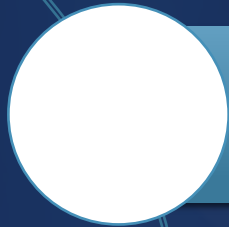
- **Videos:**

- Welcome to week 4
- Understand design ideation
- Explore lots of ideas
- Recognize business needs during design ideation
- Scope the competition
- Limits to competitive audits
- Steps to conduct a competitive audit

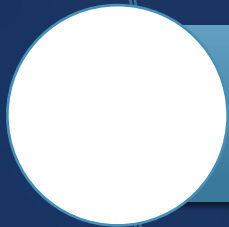
- **Readings:**

- Learn more about design ideation
- Learn more about competitive audits
- Steps to conduct a competitive audit
- Activity Exemplar: Create a competitive audit for the CoffeeHouse project

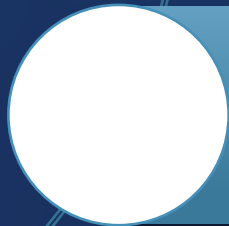
## UNIT 9 LEARNING ACTIVITIES



**Qwiklabs Course: Start the UX Design Process: Empathize, Define, and Ideate**



**Module: Ideating design solutions**



**Learning Activities:**

Practice Quiz: Test your knowledge on competitive audits

Practice Activity: Create a competitive audit for the CoffeeHouse project

# UNIT 9 DISCUSSION

- **Topic: CoffeeHouse project Competitive Audit**
- Complete the practice activity in “Start the UX Design Process: Empathize, Define, and Ideate” titled Practice Activity: Create a competitive audit for the CoffeeHouse project. Answer the following questions:
  - What was the most challenging part of the audit?
  - What are some things you learned from the exercise?
- Please include a written response of one to two paragraphs (100-200 words). Be sure to include at least one reference (Qwiklabs is fine) with your initial post. Then, check out what other learners have written and comment on at least two of their posts.



## UNIT 9 ASSIGNMENT

- **Outcomes addressed in this activity:**
- **Unit Outcomes:**
  - Understand design ideation
  - Recognize business needs in design ideation
  - Conduct a competitive audit
- **Course Outcome assessed:**
- **IN230-5:** Prepare a design plan for a mobile app to showcase in a digital UX design portfolio.



## Purpose



This assignment, **Module 4 Challenge: Create a competitive audit and report for your portfolio project**, will assess your ability to conduct a competitive audit and create a report for the project you have been developing throughout the course.



A competitive audit explores your competitors' strengths and weaknesses. You can present the results of this analysis to your design team and stakeholders in a competitive audit report. The insights you gain from this process can inform your design process and help you save time, money, and energy. To refresh your memory on the steps involved in creating a competitive audit, review the *Steps to conduct a competitive audit* video and reading in the Qwiklabs module.



This activity has two parts:

Part 1: Conduct a competitive audit

Part 2: Create a competitive audit report





## Purpose



This assignment will assess your knowledge of conducting a competitive audit for your portfolio project. The assignment asks you to identify two competitors and conduct an audit to assess the competition. Insights from a competitive audit are used to inform your designs.



The graded assessments in Qwiklabs are quizzes and/or hands-on activities. These assessments are meant to enhance your understanding of user experience design. They will also help to prepare you for the Google Certification at the end of the program.



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- Complete the assigned Qwiklabs activities to prepare for this assignment. Conduct a competitive audit for your portfolio project. As a reminder, you should watch all videos, complete the readings, and complete the practice quizzes before attempting the graded assessments.

1. Please **review the Unit 9 Assignment Rubric** (see under Course Resources) before beginning this activity.

2. Complete the following graded assignment:

- In Part 1 of this activity, you will conduct a competitive audit.
- In Part 2, you will create a competitive audit report. The instructions for both parts of the activity are below.

- **Step-By-Step Instructions for Part One: Conduct a Competitive Audit**
- **Step 1: Access the template**
- Download the [competitive audit comparison template](#) .
- **Step 2: Outline your competitive audit goals**
- Consider the goal(s) of your competitive audit. Write 1-2 sentences describing your goal(s) for your competitive audit at the top of the sheet next to “Goal.” For example, the goal for Zia’s Pizza could be, “Compare the ordering experience of each competitor’s app.”
- Template is in the course for the current unit 10 assignment.

### ■ **Step 3: Identify competitors**

- Search online for three to five products or services similar to yours. Make sure to identify at least one direct competitor and one indirect competitor:
  - **Direct competitors** offer products or services similar to yours and have the same target audience. Essentially, you are both trying to solve the same problem.
  - **Indirect competitors** either offer different products to the same target audience or offer similar products to a different target audience.
- Including both direct and indirect competitors gives you a clearer idea of the full competitive landscape.

#### ■ **Step 4: Add competitor information**

■ Next, add the name of each competitor to the spreadsheet, replacing “Competitor #1 name” with the first competitor, and so on. Then, add details about each competitor to the template under the following headings:

1. Competitor type (direct or indirect)
2. Location(s)
3. Product offering
4. Price (relative costs from \$ -)
5. Website (URL)
6. Business size (small, medium, large)
7. Target audience
8. Unique value proposition

## ■ **Step 5: Add research findings**

- Review each competitor's website and app. Then record your findings in the spreadsheet. For each competitor, evaluate positive and negative aspects of each of the following categories — First impressions, Interaction, Visual design, and Content. The First impressions category should assess your competitors' digital presence in general, including both their websites and apps. The Interaction, Visual design, and Content categories should focus specifically on your competitors' apps.
- Eight commonly compared features are pre-filled beneath each category (in row four of the template). Feel free to add or remove features based on the goal of your competitive audit. The features already in the template include:
  1. First impressions: Desktop website experience, App or mobile website experience
  2. Interaction: Features, Accessibility, User flow, Navigation
  3. Visual design: Brand identity
  4. Content: Tone, Descriptiveness

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- Once you have settled on the features you want to compare, rate each competitor according to the following scale:
    - Needs work
    - Okay
    - Good
    - Outstanding
  - Remember to consider details like what works well, what could be improved, and whether your competitor meets the needs of their target audience.

- **Step-by-Step Instructions for Part Two: Create a Competitive Audit Report**
- **Step 1: Access the competitive audit report template**
- Download the [competitive audit report template](#) .
- **Step 2: Analyze your findings**
- Examine your completed competitive audit spreadsheet, and try to spot at least 2-3 themes and 2-3 trends:
  - In this context, a **theme** is a high-level idea, like a company that values collaboration or believes in making their product available on lots of devices.
  - A **trend** is how different companies put those ideas into practice. For example, how many companies that value collaboration offer expanded cloud storage for collaborative use? To uncover trends, ask yourself: What are the similarities between you and your competitors? Is there a feature that your competitors all approach in the same way?
- Template is in the course for the current unit 10 assignment



### ■ **Step 3: Summarize your findings in a report**

■ To create your competitive audit report, you will present the insights from your audit in narrative form. Consider the themes and trends you uncovered during your audit while writing your report.

■ There are nine sections in the report template, to be filled out as follows:

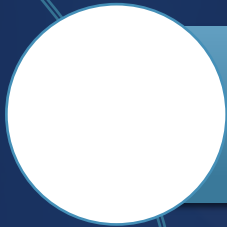
1. Competitive audit goal(s). Enter the goal(s) from the top of your audit spreadsheet.
2. Who are your key competitors? Consult your research and the General information section of your audit and describe each competitor in 1-2 sentences. Be sure to note whether they are direct or indirect competitors.
3. What are the type and quality of competitors' products? Describe what each competitor offers, making note of what they do well and what they could do better. Your answers should be complete, but relatively brief — no more than a short paragraph (2-5 sentences) for each competitor.

4. How do competitors position themselves in the market? Describe each competitor's target audience in a few sentences. Be specific about characteristics of their ideal customers (e.g., age, location, income, spending habits, etc.).
5. How do competitors talk about themselves? Consider each company's value proposition. Summarize what they claim is unique about their offerings in 2-3 sentences.
6. Competitors' strengths. List 2-4 things each competitor does particularly well.
7. Competitors' weaknesses. List 2-4 things each competitor could do better.
8. Consider what your competitors fail to do. Identify 2-3 gaps in the market that they do not fill (e.g., design or product features, customization, etc.).
9. Consider ways you might address the market gaps you identified. List 2-3 opportunities for your product to stand out from its competitors.

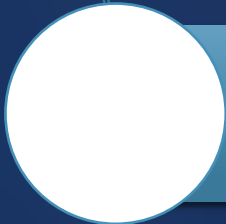
# REQUIREMENTS

- The graded assignment must be passed with a score of 80% or higher. The graded assignment **must be completed no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on Tuesday**.
- Complete the following graded assignment:
  - Conduct a competitive audit for your portfolio project
  - Create a competitive audit report for your portfolio project
  - Review all assignment requirements in the Unit 9 Assignment Rubric (see under Course Resources).

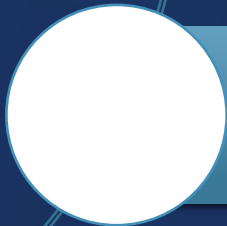
## DIRECTIONS FOR SUBMITTING YOUR ASSIGNMENT



Part one of your assignment should be saved in the Excel template provided. Part two of your assignment should be saved in a Microsoft Word Document.



Save your assignment document according to this convention: IN230\_Unit9\_AssignmentPart1\_LastName\_FirstName and IN230\_Unit9\_AssignmentPart2\_LastName\_FirstName (use your own name of course).



**Submit your completed assignment to the Unit 9 Assignment Dropbox** by the deadline.



# HAVE QUESTIONS?

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