

## WRA 420 Project 1: Landscape/Competitive Analysis

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#### Overview

For my competitive analysis, I chose to focus on subscription software offerings for businesses. The transition in software from perpetual license to subscription licensing models is progressing rapidly, and I wanted to take a look at the landscape.

I decided to put myself in Microsoft's shoes because they are a traditional company with a perpetual licensing model who is making the transition to subscription-based software. The two competitors I chose to analyze (Evernote and Google Apps) have never offered a perpetual licensing model and are therefore growing, but not in transition between the two types of business models. The choice to focus on offerings for business was both to reign in the scope of the project, and because Microsoft's primary traditional audience has been business customers.

#### Attributes

**Funnel:** I chose the Funnel as an important attribute because content is only as good as its audience's ability to find it. If the content is structured in a way that makes it difficult for the right people to find it, then it serves no purpose. I tried to analyze the various ways business customers might find the content (e.g., search engines, other areas of the website) to determine whether the current architecture supported an efficient path to the appropriate content.

**Purchasing Information:** This attribute was initially "Value Proposition and Purchasing Information." However, I realized that the "value proposition" content was a rabbit hole of sub-attributes that could have made for its own analysis. I decided to reign the scope back in to only including purchasing content. I chose this because Microsoft's pricing structure was distinctly different from Evernote and Google's models, and I thought it would be important to understand how the different models would impact the various business customers the companies were ostensibly trying to serve.

**Content Mobility:** I initially labeled this attribute as "mobile content." However, after our readings from *Content Strategy for Mobile*, I realized that this was the wrong approach. Instead, I chose to focus on whether or not the content was consistent on all platforms, and whether it adapted to be easily consumed on any platform. As our readings have mentioned, I was not able to test all of the possible platform/device/browser contexts a particular customer might have. However, I tested in the environments I had access to (iOS, Android, Mac, and Windows desktops). It was particularly interesting to see that, while Microsoft touted the importance of mobile access in their content for Office 365, the actual content was not made in a way that worked well with mobile devices.

## Layout

A primary concern was creating a presentation that would make sense to readers on its own. I chose to make the presentation in PPT using an Office 365 template as the base. I did this because someone doing a competitive analysis on Office 365 for Microsoft would likely use the program when making their deliverable.

In my initial draft, I analyzed each website and the three attributes as a set. So, I analyzed all of the attributes for Office 365, then Evernote, then Google Apps. However, one of the groups I reviewed instead divided the project first by attributes, and then by website. I felt like this was a far more effective method for organizing the analysis, so I rearranged my presentation to follow that logic.

One of the main points of feedback I received in the peer review was a bit of confusion in transitioning from one website to another. To that end, I tried to color-code each of the pages relating to a particular website. All of the Office 365 pages were coded with a red title, red bullets, and red callouts on the screenshots. Evernote was coded similarly in green, and Google Apps in Blue. The intent was to give the audience immediate visual cues to remind them which website was being talked about.

## The Final Thought

I didn't want to fall down an analysis rabbit hole in terms of the value proposition content, but I did want to take a second to point out the odd audience focus toward existing Microsoft Office customers. While Office is incredibly common, it is not universally used. I wanted to call attention to the fact that having a value proposition that said "Office 365 is great if you're comfortable using Office," might not be the best long-term strategy for continued adoption.