

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
B.SC. HONOURS (IT) DEGREE PROGRAMME – 2024/2025
FINAL EXAMINATION
ISU6302 – SOCIAL MEDIA AND GLOBAL COMPUTING
DURATION: TWO HOURS ONLY (02 HOURS)



Date: 09.11.2025

Time: 09.30 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.

Answer any **FOUR** Questions **ONLY**.

Question 01

Nimal is the proprietor of a small coffee shop in Kandy named “Bean & Brew.” One morning, a customer uploads a 15-second TikTok video featuring the shop’s signature beverage, the “Cinnamon Cloud Latte,” with the caption “Hidden gem in Kandy!” By evening, the video garners over 500,000 views. The following day, hundreds of customers arrive at the café; however, Nimal faces several operational challenges:

- No official social media presence
 - No online ordering system
 - Only three staff members
 - Seating capacity limited to twenty customers
- a) As a consultant hired to manage this situation, develop a 48-hour emergency action plan to effectively respond to the sudden surge in popularity. Clearly outline which digital platforms should be established immediately and justify their selection. [05 marks]
- b) Propose a one-month social media content strategy for Bean & Brew:
- I. Identify two (02) social media platforms most suitable for a coffee shop and provide justification for each. [03 marks]
 - II. Recommend three (03) types of content that should be posted regularly, including specific examples. [03 marks]
 - III. Suggest the optimal posting times and provide reasons for your choice. [02 marks]
- c) Assuming the coffee shop has no allocated advertising budget, propose three (03) cost-free strategies to sustain and leverage its online momentum using social media tools and features. [06 marks]

- d) After six months, Nimal wishes to evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts. Identify four (04) key performance indicators (KPIs) that should be tracked and explain the significance of each metric in assessing business growth and engagement. [06 marks]

Question 02

Kavya is a university student who has gained an online audience of around 50,000 followers on Instagram, where she shares fashion and lifestyle content. A well-known energy drink brand offers her a payment of Rs. 150,000 in exchange for the following conditions:

- To publish three (03) promotional photos featuring their product
- To omit any mention that the posts are part of a paid promotion
- To falsely claim that she consumes the product daily (although she does not) and
- To delete any negative comments related to the brand from her posts.

Kavya's followers place significant trust in her recommendations, and she is currently in need of financial support to cover her university tuition fees.

- I. Identify three (03) ethical issues present in this scenario. [03 marks]
- II. Discuss the potential consequences if Kavya accepts the offer without appropriate disclosure, considering the impact on her followers, her personal reputation, and potential legal implications. [04 marks]
- III. Define "disclosure requirements" in the context of influencer marketing and explain their importance. [02 marks]
- IV. Describe how Kavya should appropriately disclose a paid partnership in accordance with ethical and regulatory guidelines. Provide a specific example of a compliant caption. [03 marks]
- V. Develop an ethical counterproposal that Kavya could present to the brand which:
 - Preserves her authenticity,
 - Aligns with the brand's promotional objectives,
 - Adheres to ethical and advertising standards, and
 - Enables her to earn a fair income. [05 marks]
- VI. Suppose a follower comments, "You sold out! Unfollow." Draft a sample response from Kavya that demonstrates professionalism and effective community management. [03 marks]

- VII. If Kavya intends to pursue influencer marketing as a long-term career, outline three (03) ethical methods through which she can monetize her social media presence beyond traditional sponsored posts.

[05 marks]

Question 03

During an election period, a widely shared Facebook post claims:

“BREAKING: Government to ban rice imports tomorrow! Stock up now!”

The post has received over 50,000 shares, includes dramatic images, and appears to be formatted like a legitimate news article. However, upon closer inspection, the following details raise concern:

- The source is “TrueNewsLK247.com”, an unfamiliar website
 - No other credible news outlets have reported similar information
 - The comments section shows widespread panic among users
 - Facebook was created only two weeks ago.
- I. Determine whether this post constitutes misinformation or disinformation. Clearly explain the distinction between the two and justify your classification. [03 marks]
 - II. Identify four (04) indicators or “red flags” suggesting that the post may be fake news. [04 marks]
 - III. Explain how Facebook’s algorithmic system may have contributed to the rapid dissemination of this false post. [03 marks]
 - IV. Outline a step-by-step verification method (at least four steps) that could be used to determine the authenticity of this claim before sharing it. [06 marks]
 - V. Suggest an appropriate course of action an individual should take when encountering such a misleading post. [03 marks]
 - VI. Identify two (02) actions that can be taken directly on Facebook to address or report this type of content. [02 marks]
 - VII. Recommend two (02) community-level initiatives or strategies that can enhance media literacy and help prevent public panic arising from misleading or false social media posts. [04 marks]

Question 04

A major social media platform introduces an **AI-powered content moderation system** to automatically detect hate speech and remove harmful posts. Within days, users start complaining that harmless jokes, cultural memes, and song lyrics are being flagged or deleted.

- I. Briefly explain how **AI and machine learning** are used in social media content moderation. [05 marks]
- II. Identify two (02) key challenges AI faces when understanding language and context. [04 marks]
- III. Is this problem more related to **algorithmic bias** or **data limitation**? Justify your answer. [06 marks]
- IV. Explain one ethical concern of over-reliance on automated moderation systems. [04 marks]
- V. Propose three (03) ways the platform could improve its moderation system to ensure fairness and accuracy while still protecting users. [06 marks]

Question 05

A retail company launches a **virtual reality (VR) shopping mall**, where users can browse digital stores, try on virtual clothes using avatars, and purchase both real and NFT-based items. However, users complain that it requires expensive VR headsets and that not everyone can access the same experience.

- I. Explain the difference between **Augmented Reality (AR)** and **Virtual Reality (VR)**. [06 marks]
- II. Identify two (02) specific benefits VR brings to social media and online business. [04 marks]
- III. Discuss how the **digital divide** can affect participation in VR-based social media environments. [05 marks]
- IV. Identify one (01) privacy or data-related risk unique to immersive platforms. [04 marks]
- V. As the digital marketing manager, propose three (03) strategies the company can use to make its metaverse experience more **inclusive, accessible, and secure** for all users. [06 marks]

Question 06

A new social platform called OpenSphere promises full transparency and user ownership. It runs on blockchain, allowing creators to sell content as NFTs and earn directly from followers. Six months later, the platform faces backlash over:

- Fake NFT sales and scams
- Slow transaction times
- Users struggling to understand crypto wallets

- I. Explain how blockchain technology enhances transparency and ownership in social media. [03 marks]
- II. Define what an NFT (Non-Fungible Token) is and give one (01) example of how creators use it. [04 marks]
- III. Discuss two (02) main challenges blockchain-based social media platforms face in terms of usability and trust. [06 marks]
- IV. Compare how a centralized vs. decentralized platform handles user data and control. [06 marks]
- V. As OpenSphere's technology consultant, design a three-point improvement plan to build user confidence and reduce fraud without compromising decentralization. [06 marks]

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