



## *JWI 530: Financial Management I*

### Assignment 1A

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### Financial Analysis Snapshot and Initial Findings

Due: Sunday, Midnight of Week 4 (10% of Final Grade)

#### Overview

A critical financial accounting skill is the ability to read, analyze, and make actionable decisions from published financial statements. Business leaders gain valuable information from the annual reports of direct competitors, companies that operate in similar fields, and companies in which they are considering an investment or partnership.

#### Instructions

You are the CFO of a leading luxury jewelry store, Welch & Co., that plans to expand into national sales of precious metals. The General Manager (GM) of the new precious metals division wants to establish a long-term advertising relationship with a nationally recognized publisher. The GM has narrowed the field down to two firms, and the CEO, your boss, has requested your analysis and guidance and has asked you to do a financial review of recent results from **The New York Times Company** (NYSE: NYT) and **Gannett Co., Inc.** (NYSE: GCI). You have decided to organize your work into TWO components:

- Part A: Financial Analysis Snapshot and Initial Findings using data from the companies' annual reports (Due: Sunday, Midnight of Week 4; worth 10% of Final Grade)
- Part B: Executive Memo and brief Video Presentation of your analysis (Due: Sunday, Midnight of Week 5; worth 20% of Final Grade)

Before starting your work on Assignment 1A, carefully read the instructions for both 1A and 1B. Your deliverables for Assignment 1B are directly connected to the work you will complete for Assignment 1A.

### Assignment 1A: Financial Analysis Snapshot and Initial Findings

1. All work must be completed and submitted in the Excel Assignment 1 Workbook.
2. Go to the Investor Relations section of each company's website and download their annual reports. You may need to download more than one report to get all the required historical data.
3. Use the Annual Reports/10K to populate the Excel workbook template for the two most recent years, 2021 and 2020.



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- Some entries simply require finding the respective line-item amounts, while others will require calculations that should be entered as formulas (these are indicated in the template).
  - Two years of historical data and ratios have already been provided in the template from the prior years' annual reports; do not change the data and ratios provided.
  - **NOTE:** The template has been set up to provide immediate feedback on your entry. If the cells turn **green** after you enter the data or formula, you have made a correct entry. If the cell does not change to green, it indicates that the wrong value has been entered into the cell. This may be caused by a mistake in a calculation or by selecting the wrong data from the annual reports/10Ks. If a cell fails to turn green, complete the following steps to troubleshoot:
    - I. Ensure that you understand what data is required for that entry.
    - II. If you cannot locate the data in the annual report/10K, review the Reference Guides from weeks 2-4 and the other course materials to help find the needed data.
    - III. If you have confirmed you have identified the correct data, review your calculations. A simple math error or a misunderstanding of a ratio may be the culprit.
4. Include a brief summary of your initial findings and thoughts on “the stories behind the numbers” in the “Summary Notes” sheet of the Assignment 1A Workbook based on your analysis of the annual reports. Follow the instructions in the workbook and organize your insights into the four broad categories you will address in your Executive Memo and Presentation for Assignment 1B.
- Profitability/Net Income Margins
  - Debt Management
  - Cash Is King
  - Short-Term Liquidity

**NOTE:** Your summary notes do not require elaborate responses. Bullet points are fine. Focus on outlining key differences between the two companies, anything that surprised you or is noteworthy, and your initial thoughts on where one company might have a financial advantage over the other. These notes will help you think through what you will highlight in your Executive Memo and Presentation in Assignment 1B and will be an opportunity for your professor to provide feedback before you submit that assignment, allowing you to make edits if needed.

With the data in hand and some initial analysis of the stories behind the numbers, you should feel confident about moving on to Assignment 1B, where you will discuss your findings in your memo and presentation. However, if you need extra support from your



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Professor or the Finance Coach assigned to your section, please indicate this by selecting the **YES** box in the REQUEST PROFESSOR/COACH MEETING section of the Summary Notes sheet. If you do not require a meeting, select **NO**.

### Submission Requirements for Assignment 1A

Your Financial Analysis Snapshot and Initial findings must be submitted using the Excel template provided.

### RUBRIC ASSIGNMENT 1A

10% of Course Grade	Assignment 1A				
CRITERIA	Unsatisfactory	Low Pass	Pass	High Pass	Honors
1. Accurately Complete the Data Snapshot Template  <b>Weight: 75%</b>	Snapshot not submitted or has greater than 30% errors.	Submission has 30% or fewer errors.	Submission has 20% or fewer errors.	Submission has 10% or fewer errors.	Submission has no errors.
2. Initial Findings Summary  <b>Weight: 25%</b>	Summary is missing, unclear, or off-topic; does not present an acceptable response to the guiding questions.	Summary is basic; meets minim requirements but is overly vague.	Summary is good; would benefit from additional specificity in some responses.	Summary is very good; includes appropriate detail to explain the impact and learnings from the experience.	Summary is excellent; includes well-articulated insights into the challenges and benefits of financial statement analysis.