

CS 330 Assignment 3

Winter 2004

Software Review

1. Decision Support System

Go to <http://www.umsi.edu/~sauter/DSS/book/gdss.html>

Look at one Application. Read about it. Write about it. Try it out, if possible.

Compare the actual software to our theoretical discussion (or the textbook's theoretical discussion) of what a DSS or GDSS should be.

Items to include: What does it do, who uses it now, how might it be used in CS courses at Waterloo or for business purposes, theoretical comparison as above. Many students include additional items such as purpose, features, current documentation, on-line help, ease of use, user interface issues, and so on. If you wish to show screens or output, include as an appendix.

The highest marks go to reports which are well-organized with a main title, sub-titles, *specific* examples of use of the software, and recommendations on software improvements and/or potential uses or users of the software. The lowest marks go to reports that sound like advertisements copied from the web.

2. Experimenting with a Natural Language Query System

Access the START Natural Language Question Answering System, found at:

<http://www.ai.mit.edu/projects/infolab>

- a) Ask one or two sample questions as suggested by the system. Then make up 10 questions of your own. Report your results as in the previous questions.
- b) How well did START do? Evaluate START as follows:
 - i) Choose one of your queries. Try to evaluate it using a general-purpose search engine, such as Google. Compare the results you received with the START results.
 - ii) Comment on the overall effectiveness of START. Did it provide accurate information?
 - iii) Comment briefly on the user interface.