

## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT: The Gerson Project in BV Caps

### Topics

**Client Project  
Data Analytics**

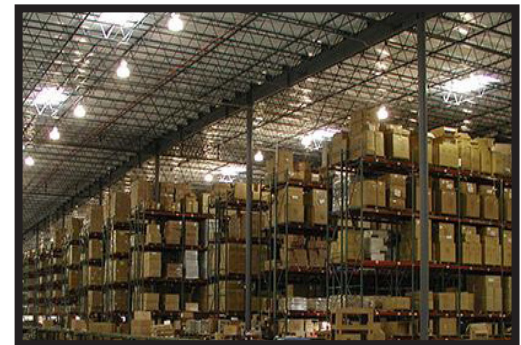
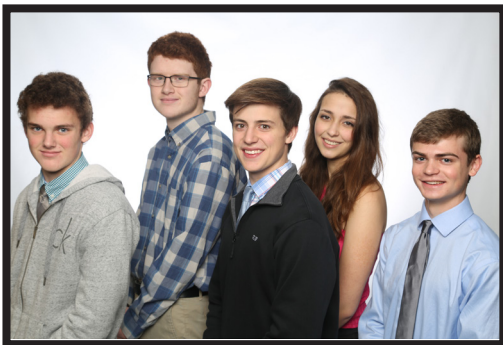
**Cross-Strand Student Team  
Marketing**

**Project Management  
Digital Photography**

We as educators look for opportunities to combine multiple curriculum topics into a single lesson/activity. Not only does it allow us to optimize our limited resources to include our own time, it better represents how work in the “real world” is done. In CAPS, we have the added challenge to ensure it is career relevant. The Gerson Project was such an activity.

Mr. Orin Borgelt, Chief Sales Officer at The Gerson Companies, approached our Business Development Manager Ms. Jennifer Collet about a need they had in their business. Gerson ([gersoncompany.com](http://gersoncompany.com)) is a Kansas City based home décor distributor that serves wholesalers and retailers across the US. Conducting business since 1942, they currently operate a 500,000 square foot warehouse carrying thousands of products in Olathe Kansas. While they have achieved and continue to enjoy great success, the nature of their business is changing as online sales become an increasingly important channel. Given that trend, management wanted to measure (A/B testing) the sales impact of having multiple product images on-line. Gerson turned to BV Caps for this project.

An inter-strand student project team was formed: Conner Wilson, Clay Craft and Nick Young from Global Business and Ariana Novicoff, Shelby Matchette, Andrew Grant from Digital Design and Photography. After initial skill development by both our Global Business instructor, Ms. Janet Graham and our Digital Design and Photography instructor, Mr. John Rodgers, provided ongoing coaching. Students were first exposed to the fundamentals of project management and introduced to our project management tool; Basecamp. Foundational skills in Marketing and analysis and product photography were also developed. Additional software skills using Microsoft Excel, Adobe Lightroom and Photoshop were used for the twelve-week project.



Specifically, the team was challenged to 1) create and post professional and visually appealing lifestyle product images for their drop-ship portfolio that were aligned with their product numbers and other promotional display material and 2) perform e-commerce Data Analytics to determine the impact of these product images to increased sales.

The final After Action Report (AAR) with the client, which is conducted in a formal “shark tank” like presentation, allowed the team to share the results of not only producing images for Gerson, the photography team were able to use them as apart of their personal portfolios. Also the team performed expert analysis reflecting the # of customers, # of orders and # of sales related to those images. Additional recommendations focused on the optimal number of glamor images, which portion of the portfolio should be targeted and how this tactic should complement the other marketing efforts performed by Gerson.