During my time with MWI Vet Supply, my biggest responsibilities were to meet with practice managers and veterinarians at animal clinics in the South Texas Region to make sure they were aware of the various online resources available to them. I mostly worked with training practice managers on MWI’s website, mwivet.com, and other e-commerce platforms. It was amazing to me that, even in this day and age, many practices do not have computers or that some practice managers were completely computer illiterate. My job was to go into practices that I was sent to and make sure that the practice manager was comfortable navigating mwivet.com and ordering our products through our website.

I was set up to work under the three Outside Sales Representatives (OSRs) who were responsible for the Houston area but communication and organization between themselves and also between them and myself was severely lacking. I was supposed to hear from the Regional Manager, who is over the OSRs and other MWI employees in the South Texas Region, once a week to know who to be working with and what I was supposed to be doing but I only heard from him twice during the entirety of my ten-week internship. Along with hearing from the Regional Manager, I was supposed to hear from the OSRs separately to confirm who I would be working with and which clinics I would be going to see. I heard from one of the OSRs for about the first week and a half of my internship and was able to ride with him to see how interactions were done between OSRs and practice managers. This was good but it did not really show me how I was going to be doing my duties. After that first week and a half, communication fell off between that OSR and myself and that made it really difficult to know what to do because my duties were dependent on where the OSR sent me and what they needed.
me to do at that time. Thankfully I had an idea of what it was I was supposed to be doing so I took it upon myself to contact some clinics without any direction or formal introduction from the OSRs. This was a bit tedious, though, because I never knew if a clinic I was going into was one I was supposed to be visiting or not.

My preplanned objectives for this internship were to learn the online inventory system that MWI uses, develop a training program for practice managers to teach them MWI online services and present that training to practice managers and also to analyze the economic impact of the MWI online services. During the week of training I attended at MWI headquarters, I became very familiar with mwivet.com and the e-commerce platforms I would be working with thus being able to fulfill my first objective. Gaining such thorough knowledge of the website and e-commerce platforms during training was absolutely vital for me to be able to do my job as an intern and e-commerce trainer. This training also helped me prepare a sort of game plan for how I would interact with customers and show them all of the online tools they had access to as MWI customers. During training we were given different scenarios for how to deal with different types of practice managers with different questions or problems. I kept these scenarios in mind when I was actually out in the field to be able to remember my game plan for training practice managers and also to remember how to deal with potentially sticky situations. My last objective was met by conducting a survey during the last week of my internship. I made a ten-question survey using Survey Monkey and sent it out to 22 of the clinics I had visited or worked with over the phone and got 7 responses, about a 32% response rate. The survey is attached at the end of this report so that you can see the questions I asked and the responses given. During my exit interview with the Regional Manager, he
asked me if I thought he should keep employing Specialty Sales Representatives (SSRs) for the South Texas Region, specifically the Houston area. (SSRs are full time employees who do what I was hired to do as an intern without the immediate direction or supervision of an OSR) Based on my survey results I told him that I did not think it would be economically beneficial to hire more than one SSR for the Houston area.

As previously stated, my main responsibilities were working with mwivet.com and e-commerce platforms and making sure that clinics in my area were familiar with and aware of all of the online features available to them. One of the main features that I worked with were templates. There is a template attached behind the survey for your reference. Templates are like a shopping list for animal clinics. They can organize their inventory and break down their ordering any way they want using templates. The example attached is an Abaxis template. This clinic has chosen to break down their pharmacy by manufacturer although some clinics chose to break down their pharmacy by location. The template allows clinics to quickly check inventory levels and know how much of a certain product needs to be ordered. The online view of this template is identical to the one printed and attached. The purchaser of a clinic can order directly from each template online making ordering quick and easy all while keeping up with inventory levels. As an intern, I would meet with clinics to see how they wanted their inventory broken up then I would teach them how to make templates for their clinic. On many occasions I would end up making the templates myself for various clinics. One of the other useful features of the MWI website is the Product Purchase History. The product purchase history is a 12 month rolling history of everything that the selected clinic has ordered in the past year. This can be very useful for clinics so they can see
what it is that they usually order, which can be confusing because there are so many different brands, quantities, strengths, colors, etc. for the same product. Customers can either order directly from their product purchase history or add previously purchased products to a template that they are creating. Many clinics knew they could see products that they had ordered on the product purchase history but they did not know that they could order from it or make templates from it until I was able to go in and meet with the practice manager to show them these extra benefits. Some of the less well known, yet equally helpful, services of mwivet.com that I would teach clinics about are MWI’s Controlled Substance Ordering System (CSOS) and Proxy Rx. Through CSOS, clinics can be registered through the DEA and signed up through MWI to receive their Class 2 controlled drugs through MWI instead of having to fill out tedious paper work every time they need to order more controlled drugs. Proxy Rx is a feature that is very helpful for clinics that see a lot of patients but do not have very much shelf space in their clinics. By signing up for Proxy Rx, a clinic can have medicine, treats, food and other items usually bought at a vet office shipped directly to their patients’ front door. It was part of my job to inform clinics about these features and help them get signed up in programs like these that they were interested in.

The actual internship for MWI Vet Supply was good and I learned a lot, though the lack of communication between the regional manager and OSRs, even between the OSRs themselves, and the lack of communication to me from them was very frustrating. I felt as though I was not used to my full potential because many days I was not given any direction or tasks at all and I was left at home working from my computer waiting on a phone call or email that I was told was coming to tell me what I needed to do that day.
To an extent I was able to take it upon myself to visit some clinics to help them with the website and other e-commerce platforms but two of the three OSRs I worked with told me not to go visit any of the clinics that they are over without first asking or hearing from them first. During my exit interview with the regional manager, he apologized and explained the reason for the lack of communication was because the company was in a transitional period at the beginning of my internship which caused him to be much more absent than he wanted to be and also put much of the responsibility of me, the intern, on the shoulders of the OSRs when they had never had to deal with that before. Even with the frustrating lack of communication, I felt re-affirmed that the animal health industry is definitely an industry that I would like to pursue upon graduation. What I have learned through the National Agri-Marketing Association as well as AGEC 315 helped me the most throughout the internship but other classes such as AGEC 340 and 415 helped as well.

Overall I would recommend this internship to someone wanting to go into the animal health industry because I honestly think that I was just in at a bad time and I think that it would be much better for someone next summer. I would just suggest that they make a sort of action plan for themselves with goals they want to reach pertaining to the duties they will have as an intern to be able to do some things on their own if there is another lack of communication between them and those above them. MWI is an awesome company in the animal health industry and definitely a good company to try and get in with if that is the industry you want to pursue.

This internship has definitely made me want to follow the sales and market route even more so I plan to take as many marketing classes as I can through grad school.
Along with more marketing classes, I would like to take a class that teaches you how to be more professionally assertive in the business world because I feel that if I were more vocal about needing communication and direction instead of waiting on the OSRs to come to me I could have been able to do more throughout the internship.

Overall this internship was a good experience even though it had its frustrating points. One of my favorite parts was, because this is the veterinary industry, I got to work with and meet a lot of Aggies who were all very interested in what I was doing and what my future plans are. I hope to be able to stay in a field that is so fast paced and filled with fellow Aggies.