Business Plan: ACS Results

Executive Summary

ACS Results provides personalized website portfolios tailored to college students in trades and technology. Our platform offers an alternative to traditional resumes by creating a visual and engaging medium for showcasing projects, certifications, and timelines. Starting at Thaddeus Stevens College, we aim to expand to other institutions, leveraging a scalable and cost-effective model supported by passionate software engineering collaborators. Our goal is to revolutionize how students present their skills, enabling them to stand out in competitive job markets.

Mission Statement

To bridge the gap between traditional resumes and the modern digital world by offering tailored website portfolios that visually showcase students' skills, projects, and achievements, fostering confidence and professional opportunities.

Business Description

Name: ACS Results
Industry: Educational Technology & Digital Services
Target Market: College students, specifically tradespeople and technical majors (e.g., electricians, plumbers, mechanics, and welders).

Unique Selling Proposition (USP):
Unlike traditional resumes, ACS Results provides a dynamic, personalized website portfolio that highlights hands-on projects and certifications. This creates an edge in industries where showcasing tangible work is crucial.

Goals and Objectives

1. **Short-Term Goals:**
   - Launch at Thaddeus Stevens College, capturing at least 30% of the student body within the first 6 months.
   - Develop marketing partnerships with faculty and career services.
   - Test and refine our product with real user feedback.
2. **Long-Term Goals:**

- ○ Scale to other colleges across Pennsylvania within the first year.
- ○ Expand to a national presence by year two.
- ○ Build a SaaS platform for automated website portfolio creation.

Services Offered

1. **Basic Website Portfolio:**
   - ○ Flat fee of $45 per website includes custom design, project showcase, certifications display, and contact info.
2. **Recurring Updates Package:**
   - ○ Monthly or quarterly updates for client testimonials, recent work, and new certifications: $10/month.
3. **Premium Tier (Future Vision):**
   - ○ AI-enhanced features for client outreach and automated updates based on student inputs: $20/month.

Market Analysis

1. **Target Demographic:**
   - ○ Age: 18-25
   - ○ Location: Initially, Pennsylvania colleges
   - ○ Career Focus: Skilled trades, technical fields
2. **Market Trends:**
   - ○ Increasing demand for digital portfolios among job seekers.
   - ○ Growing emphasis on skilled trades and certifications in the job market.
3. **Competition Analysis:**
   - ○ **Resumes and LinkedIn:** Focused on text-based summaries.
   - ○ **DIY Website Builders (e.g., Wix, Squarespace):** Not personalized for students or trades.
   - ○ **ACS Results' Advantage:** Customization, affordability, and focus on trades-specific needs.

Marketing Strategy

1. **Initial Outreach:**
   - ○ Partner with faculty and career counselors to promote ACS Results as part of the career development process.
   - ○ Leverage social media to target students, with posts featuring testimonials and success stories.

2. **On-Campus Events:**
   ○ Host workshops on creating standout portfolios.
   ○ Offer free demos to attract early adopters.
3. **Word-of-Mouth:**
   ○ Build a referral program incentivizing students to bring peers on board.
4. **Digital Marketing:**
   ○ Focused ads on platforms like Instagram and TikTok with compelling visuals of portfolio websites.

Operations Plan

1. **Development Team:**
   ○ Use current software engineering classmates for initial development.
   ○ Expand the team as demand grows, offering internships or equity-based roles.
2. **Production Process:**
   ○ **Phase 1:** Manual creation of websites tailored to student needs.
   ○ **Phase 2:** Develop a semi-automated system to streamline the creation process.
   ○ **Phase 3:** Launch a full SaaS platform for automated portfolio creation.
3. **Customer Support:**
   ○ Email and chat-based support during initial phases.
   ○ Add AI-driven chatbot for common inquiries as the platform scales.

Financial Plan

1. **Revenue Streams:**
   ○ **Website Creation:** $45 per website.
   ○ **Updates Package:** $10/month or $30/quarter.
   ○ **Premium Features (Future):** $20/month.
2. **Startup Costs:**
   ○ **Initial Website Development:** $0 (handled in-house).
   ○ **Marketing:** Varied depending on outreach campaigns (estimated $500-$1,000 initially).
   ○ **Operational Costs:** Varied based on scale and growth (estimated $300/month for initial operations).
3. **Scalability:**
   ○ The model becomes highly cost-efficient as more students onboard, especially with automation in Phase 3.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- Unique product specifically targeting tradespeople.
- Direct access to an initial market through Thaddeus Stevens College.

Weaknesses:

- Limited brand recognition initially.
- Manual processes at the start could slow scaling.

Opportunities:

- High demand for digital portfolios among job seekers.
- Potential to form partnerships with colleges and career services.

Threats:

- Competition from DIY website platforms like Wix and Squarespace.
- Possible resistance from students unfamiliar with digital portfolios.

Milestones

1. **First 3 Months:**
   - Secure 50 paying customers at Thaddeus Stevens.
   - Launch social media campaign with testimonials.
2. **6 Months:**
   - Expand to three additional colleges in Pennsylvania.
   - Automate 50% of website creation tasks.
3. **1 Year:**
   - Build a team of 5 software engineers.
   - Expand into the SaaS space with self-service options.

Conclusion

ACS Results is positioned to redefine how tradespeople showcase their skills in the digital age. By starting small and scaling methodically, the business can build a strong foundation while continuously improving its offerings. This ensures value to students and sustainable growth for the company.