

Interview Minutes (Philippa Snow - Accountant)

Date: October 9, 2023

Interviewer: Berenice Flowers

Interviewee: Philippa Snow

Location: Cineco's Records Room

Berenice (B): Hey, Ms. Snow! It's very nice to meet you, heard a lot about you!

Philippa (P): Good afternoon. I think I had asked you to communicate our agenda, so that I can approve it. I wonder what happened to that. But it's alright- if only you could present our agenda briefly, then I can provide with any input I may have.

B: Well, I want to talk about *your* experience of the system. What can we start doing, what can we stop doing, what should we keep doing, all that stuff. And also, how much money we have for the new features, you know, for allocation purposes and such.

P: I am afraid that I do not see the use in such a meeting. I mean, I really have not much to do with our online platform, nor do I have any decisive capacity on the budget. Maybe you should talk with Jeaninne?

B: Why would you say that? First of all, you keep the books, which makes you kind of the person that sees everything around here! You're like the MVP of the business- plus, you are the last stop for our final printouts: tickets and invoices. You're absolutely crucial to our efforts, Philippa! I can call you Philippa, right?

P: That would be fine. I still fail to see how my participation is relevant, but here goes. So, about the current system. It's a financial disaster. It's inefficient, unreliable, a real resource-guzzler. If I were you, I would just redo the entire thing from scratch. It's just not worth it.

B: Actually, that's a great idea! I'm definitely going to tell my manager. However, we do need to move forward with the update, and I am really not sure whether she'd like anything that radical.

P: Well, if you don't redo it, you're just going to perpetuate the current issues. But what do I know? Anyways, the whole thing is a logistical nightmare. We are renting an ungodly amount of traffic capacity, just because the system is usually disproportionately loaded with excess users. Plus, we're not even getting in that many sales, because the whole structure is annoying and redundant. In proportion, on-site ticket purchases are much higher than online bookings.

B: Would you have any idea on what more could we do to increase online reservations?

P: Plenty, but not enough information to back them up. Again, the whole thing needs to be dropped and redone. But I do recall that we had an increase in reservations, when the "Loyal Customer" promotion was running. That employed an interactive map of the cinema, which we outsourced to a different set of specialists. The idea was that someone could use a special

voucher code, which performed a bulk purchase of 5 simple tickets and then led you to an interactive map, where you could reserve your spot. For every day you were using a ticket, you had your own little spot reserved, and if you pre-ordered snacks, you would find them right on your seat. It even became a little contest among their regulars: everyone rushed to get the good seats before anyone else got them.

B: That would be so cool! What happened then?

P: Unfortunately, we didn't have the staff to support it. Everyone moved on to different projects, and the worst thing is we haven't rolled back the feature yet. And it can get frustrating, because now you can pretty much book your seat every time you purchase a ticket, but it doesn't really matter. Noone's checking, and even when the screening is packed, we still sell tickets at the counter, because the seat booking system is conditional can only print named tickets. That's something they don't have to do when they buy their tickets from the box office. And, of course, we have to give plenty of refunds and discounts when we're overbooking.

B: So, what would you think would be the first order of business? Because we do need to start, *or my manager will kill me [laughs]*.

P: If I were you, I wouldn't compromise accuracy and reliability. If that means a longer timeline, so be it. A rushed solution may neutralize your budget, and I would hate to explain the books to Jeaninne if this happens.

B: I am taking down on my notes your dedication to accuracy, Philippa. However, I also need to go back to my team with something. Let's talk about the budget. How much are you willing to allocate for this upgrade?

P: I would allocate what's necessary for a solution that works. But I don't think this applies for Jeaninne. She has this weird impression that we are doing bad, and we cannot allocate more than pennies.

B: Wait, aren't your sales dropping? I mean, that's what everyone has been telling me.

P: Exactly. Sales are dropping. But that doesn't mean we're going bankrupt. This cinema has been a landmark for half of Utrecht's more cultured film-goers. In a city with a third-of-a-million population, that gets us in the thousands of regulars. Our rush hour screenings are always packed. We may have lost some loyal patrons, but we're still doing pretty well. Our maintenance and improvement budget for this year is actually around 600.000€, almost 20% of our projected annual revenue. I have been trying to tell Jeaninne, but the more ticket sales drop, the more they grow impervious to reason.

B: That's very good news! So, to top that, what would you like the new system to have?

P: You mean, in case you don't pull the plug and toss it in a bonfire? Well, I don't want anything to change, I am used to the way things *don't* work. In fact, that would be it: leave everything as is. At least, now I get some insight on who's coming and going, and make relatively safe projections. So yeah, don't touch anything, unless you plan to redo our webpage completely.

B: Yeah, but isn't there anything you *would like* to have?

P: I guess it would help me a lot if I got an aggregation of our daily revenue, so that I finish up with the daily cash report faster. It's an hour of my day, every day, and I still do it by hand. It's not pressing, though. By the way, our time has lapsed. If you wouldn't mind, I need to get back to my books.

B: That's alright! Thank you very much for your time! See you soon!

End of Interview: 17:00