BPA Entrepreneurship
Grapevine

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BPA Entrepreneurship (505) Business Plan

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

Problem Statement

The problem at hand is regarding unemployment and job searching during the pandemic. Last year, the COVID-19 pandemic struck. This aggravated a huge existing problem, as studies showed that about 70% of people looking for jobs in the US last year had little or no direct information about what their potential job and workplace would be like. This means that people looking for jobs can't get reliable information without direct connections to an employee.

Proposed Solution

The solution for this is the mobile application, Grapevine. Grapevine provides a place for employees to share their opinions regarding their work environments for future employees. They can also share their interests, helping prospective employees decide whether a job is right for them. Grapevine is meant to create a more transparent workplace for the benefit of both employees and employers.

The app will run ads and will require businesses to buy licenses to establish their own company's page to allow for reviews and company-based posts and job offerings. These income pipelines allow for the app to grow into what is expected to be an international solution.

Financial Proposal

The proposal is for 5,000 dollars to get the app running with copyrights and a trademark. The current app has been tested in 16 target environments in 2 different schools and within 3 communities. The investment will go into publishing the app and buying the creative commons licenses and advertisement startup costs. It will also contribute to the app's own advertising costs.

Business Description

Problem

Today's supply chain problems and worker shortages have been exacerbated by workers' reluctance to take a job due to unfamiliarity with the environment and employers' inability to retain current employees. Grapevine eases worker reluctance by giving workers the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the workplace and lightens retention struggles by giving employers the opportunity to hear their employees' requests firsthand.

Grapevine

The importance of sharing job experience has been intensified by the Coronavirus pandemic. When people are taking new jobs, they often aren't able to gain first-hand experience through shadowing or interning in person. Without any familiarity with a specific workplace, deciding to apply for and accept a job offer is a hard decision. Grapevine gives employees the ability to share experiences and applicants the ability to explore an environment without even being there, making the decision unimaginably easier.

Grapevine is an IOS/Android application that runs on X-Code and Adallo software. In the app, there are posts about job ratings, worker experience, and recommendations for future employees or prospects. The app uses Google's Firebase data storage system to give it its social media capabilities. The app is a gateway solution that allows users to smoothly lead themselves into another experienced worker's social media platforms and contact information.

The app uses ads that don't hurt user experience, to produce an accelerating revenue as time goes on. The app also uses licenses for businesses to buy, which will allow them to develop their own page and use worker feedback to improve their own company and workspaces.
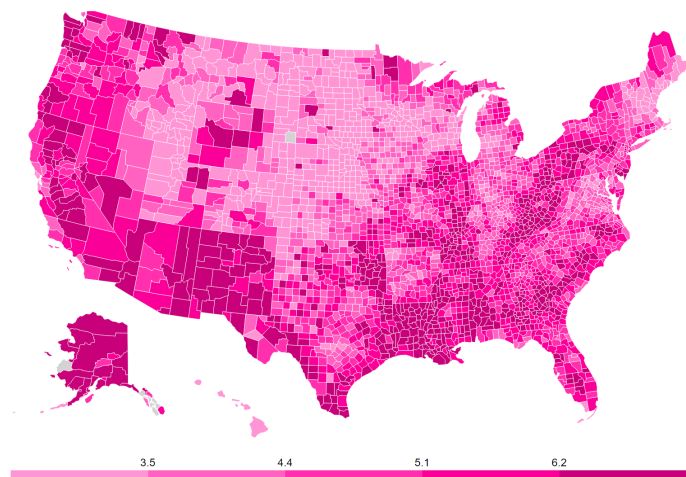
Business Objectives

Economic Objectives

The economic objectives that the business will strive to achieve are based on gaining enough to expand nationally and internationally in the coming 10 years. This will entail expanding to 10 businesses within the first 2 months, 30-50 in the first year, and a steady influx of around 50 small businesses and local chains each year after that.

Economically, this will bring in around 30,000 to 50,000 dollars each year in business licenses. The objective is to gain around 80,000 dollars before expanding out of the midwest region, and around 300,000 dollars before advertising to expand to the countries in the North American and Central American regions.

Social Objectives

The application is meant to help individuals find jobs suited for their interests and needs. Granted that company sponsorships with licenses may allow for biased posts and sharings, it will be an objective to make sure companies understand this app is for their benefit. Allowing people to learn that the business is for the good of the company and supporting its employees is essential to having a successful social media platform and a thriving community around it.

3.5   4.4   5.1   6.2

Business Strategies

Business Growth Strategies

The test strategy has been and will be to apply the app to a target company or community/neighborhood. The strategy of Grapevine once public will be to appeal to local stores that are part of bigger companies such as fast-food chains. These may include McDonald's and Burger King restaurants, and companies such as Mattress Firm. Then the strategy would be to expand to higher-skill working environment corporations like Zoom or Teva. These bigger companies can allow Grapevine to increase in popularity among many different markets and areas. The goal then would be to expand to all types of businesses across the country, then in the world. The market tests seen below can be found on the app's GitHub: https://github.com/Jerryx2020/Grapevine

Economic Strategies

The main economic strategy would be to increase the prices of licenses and ads as the app develops and becomes mainstream. Since this is the only app that is like it's type, there is a high probability that the app soars with the investment, which would allow for more expansion and higher economic growth. With the investment of 5,000 dollars, 1,000 will go into publishing the app when ready, 2,000 will go into the testing phase, and the rest of the investment will be used for initial campaigning and advertising. There will be approximately 1,000 dollars extra, and that will be used for internal improvements for future research and development.

Product Description/Development

Product Summary

Grapevine provides a place for employees to share their opinions regarding their work environments for future employees. They can also share their interests, helping prospective employees decide whether a job is right for them. Grapevine is meant to create a more transparent workplace for the benefit of both employees and employers.

Product Development

In building Grapevine, we experienced many problems including pesky database networking glitches, several failed attempts at a search function, and one point at which our IDE simply refused to run our app. In each case, we persevered through frustrating debugging, an adventure that included hours of reading through Google Firebase documentation, an exotic foray into the world of AI, and several days of waiting for a patch to Apple's Xcode.

But, beyond our relatively ordinary bugs, Grapevine, itself, was the result of technical difficulties. We began without much experience programming mobile applications. As a result, our initial model was extremely crude. It had a poor interface, clunky dynamics, and a dysfunctional database. We decided that a complete overhaul was necessary and that we would conduct research to tailor our app to the needs and wants of our target market.

We surveyed more than 30 professionals, asking what they would want in an app used to share information about work environments. From their responses, we derived three main pillars upon which we would rebuild our app: simplicity, safety, and singularity.

We united these three pillars into what we call the "Gateway Model." It perfectly describes the way that we keep the focus on our main goal of improving the workplace by connecting people. We don't try to recreate the many features and functions already built into other platforms; instead, we offer a unique forum and help our users connect within and without the app. We defer neither the responsibility of moderating our platform nor the obligation to protect our users; we subject our venue to rigorous review and give our users the ability to remain anonymous. We don't drift from our initial goal; we stick to it. We were confronted with countless problems throughout the development process, and we drew lessons from them that we turned into these few tenets.

We united these three pillars, and we built Grapevine.

Business Management

Upper Management

Grapevine was developed by 3 students in the Blue Valley District: Shishir Vargheese, Jerry Xia, and Nathan Bronson. The management scheme is where coding-related problems are handled by all 3 members of the team, and the rest of the duties are split among them. Shishir handles advertising and outreach, registering for contests, and giving short presentations to companies to sample within. Jerry handles the app improvement scheme, where reviews and professional feedback are translated into changes and fixes, and works with the Android version of the app on Adallo. Nathan takes care of a lot of the heavy lifting within the code but also works on the database and licensing.

Company Growth

As the company grows, we plan to increase our employment to high school interns and then college students. After we develop a solid base of computer science and marketing majors, we can transition into paid jobs. Upper management will stay within the group of 3 founders.

Nathan Bronson   Jerry Xia   Shishir Vargheese
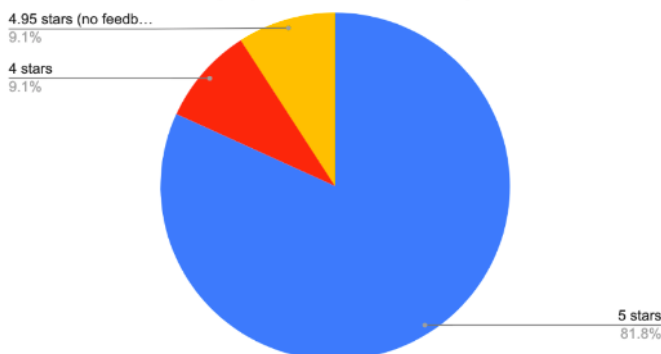
Marketing Analysis

We found that top-level officials and, even, managers often have a loose connection to their lower-level workers and, therefore, are less able to give prospective employees reliable information on the quality of employment and intern experiences. Because of this, when employers try to recruit potential employees, there can be a disconnect between the manager's perception of their work environment and the reality. This becomes a problem for both parties. And this is where Grapevine comes in.

The application is very useful for students, professionals, employers, and even consumers. From our surveys sent to our target audience, we got an overwhelming amount of support about how the novel solution would not only help people with job searching, but would also help employers fix problems related to their work environments, and incentivize this in the market by showing consumers that companies value their employees. Grapevine is directed towards prospective employees, working employees, students, retired professionals, and employers. The target markets during startup were schools to review classes and different local businesses. Below are the statistics on how the app performed before and after improvements.

Count of App Ratings (Feedback Included)

- 4.8 star (no feedback) 16.7%
- 4 stars 16.7%
- 3 stars 8.3%
- 5 stars 58.3%
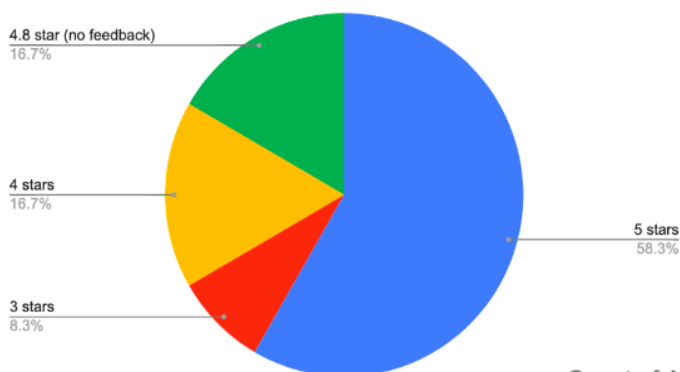
Count of App Ratings (Post-Improvements)

- 4.95 stars (no feedb… 9.1%
- 4 stars 9.1%
- 5 stars 81.8%

Financial Analysis

Loan Amount

The requested loan is for **5,000 US Dollars**.

Income Statement - Years 1-2

Revenue	Licenses Advertisement Revenue	3,400 * 10 + 4000 * 20 0.26 * 1,000 + 0.26 * 10,000
	Total Revenue	$116860
Expenses	Advertising/Marketing Testing Expenses (Yr 1)	-40,000 -20,000
	Total Revenue	-4,000
Gains	BPA Loan/Investment	5,000
Losses	N/A	N/A
Net Income	(Revenue + Gains) - Expenses	$57860.00

Balance Sheet: Not applicable, due to online business assets

Cash Flow Statement

Operating Cash Flow	Net Income	$57860
Investment	BPA Loan	$5,000
Growth	Gain Percentage	38% 60% 64%
Return	Starting Cash Return	$7860.00 **$30,640.00**

Conclusion

Grapevine is currently the most secure investment possible, as the product is already in existence and tested. With your investment, Grapevine can grow to a level above all expectations and will give a return of around 6 times the initial investment. This is because there are no production costs to us high school students developing the code and publishing it.

With this, it is clear that there is only one way forward, and that is to invest in your future and our future, Grapevine.

Thank You,

Team @ Grapevine

Link/QR to Github Repository:

https://github.com/Jerryx2020/Grapevine