

# Smallgoods Client Survey

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**Interviewees:** Mike Eastwood (owner) and Jenny Eastwood (owner)

## **The interview gist:**

After conducting a client interview with the owners of Smallgoods: Mike and Jenny, we were able to determine the basic business model of the startup. Throughout this client survey analysis, it will highlight what Mike and Jenny expect what Smallgoods' website can perform for them as well as their ideal marketing portfolio.

## Part 1: Company's Business Structure

### Business

**1. How would you describe Smallgoods? What are your overall business goals? What have you done or changed during this pandemic? Why?**

- Boutique / Cafe emphasis on American-made cheese.
- Overall business goal:
  - Embrace American made produce is fresh, healthy, and superior.
- During the current pandemic, they changed the layout of their store and they are now basically selling by the sidewalk, and they are also selling food on behalf of some of the farmers they know to establish a meaningful relationship.

#### **Summary**

Smallgoods is a boutique cafe with a strong emphasis on American-made cheese. They also sell sandwiches and other quick-lunch meals. Jenny used to work for a cheese shop there and she really likes cheese, and both owners used to be located in New York City. Unlike California, NYC has small specialized stores dedicated to selling specific products. After they came to California, they wanted to see if they could carry this trend to San Diego. They first started with farmer's markets which have a robust market in San Diego areas;

they wanted to figure out the experiences, demographics and other information before opening the shop. They opened smallgoods in February 2020, which was right before the pandemic. During the current pandemic, they had to make quite big changes and started to work with other shop owners and farmers. While enforcing the safety protocols to deal with COVID-19, they are still able to establish and maintain good partnership with the farmer. Essentially, they are launching a little mimicry of a farmer's market in front of their store.

### **Analysis**

The selling point of Smallgoods' products is they are all American-made. Mike and Jenny didn't open Smallgoods for any big business goals, but more for personal interests because they felt obligated to detach the common negative connotations of American-made produce.

While recovering from COVID-19 and continuously enforcing a strict protocol to make a safe space for customers, they still have the intentions to evoke a friendly in-person experience while the customers visit their stores.

### **Design Idea**

- *Emphasize American-made products on the website*
- *Briefly explain the specialty of Smallgoods—cheese*
- *Create a tab for COVID-19, list rules and regulations, information about the current situation (may include location, hours, etc.)*

## **2. How would you describe your brand in three words?**

- American Artisanal Products

### **Summary**

While there are many cheese shops in San Diego, Smallgoods is unique and different in the way that they only sell American made products. When they were in NYC, they got to see many products from different countries and as they are now in San Diego, they wanted people to like American products and form attachments with products from their home country.

### **Analysis**

We will put "American Artisanal products" as one of the emphasis while designing the website. To an extent, it will be plausible to brand Smallgoods as an American patriotic company that aims to highlight the key features of what makes American produce remarkable.

### Design Idea

- *Emphasize American artisanal products*

### **3. What types of goods/services are available? Are there special offers for clients?**

- Prepackaged sliced cheese/bread/frozen pre-prepared food/French food
- Cheese (and cured meat) platter which is good with wine and popular for customers
- Changing cheese frequently to keep customers coming back finding out what's new
  - Keep the experience new and interesting for the customers.
- Every Tuesday and Thursday, selling fresh fruits and vegetables out front.
- Selling flowers once a month or on holidays (i.e. Valentine's Day)

### Summary

Smallgoods sells varieties of products while their emphasis is on cheese. Besides cheese and cheese platters, they also have cured meat, sandwiches, salads, etc. Some of the cheese they sell is only available for a certain time and they change frequently. It also serves a way to keep customers coming back and find out about their new products. Smallgoods have different products when it comes to holidays and it keeps the experience new for customers.

### Analysis

It would be necessary to include the different varieties of products on the website, but as there are a number of them, we will have to further discuss how to prioritize them. As mentioned by Mike and Jenny, there were not many special offers, but they do have special products during the holidays. we could have a page that introduces the event and products when a particular holiday is coming. Another thing to take into consideration is the constant change of menu as Jenny and Mike want to keep a relatively new experience to every customer that convinces them to discover more for both returners and newcomers. This is an essential characteristic that should be highlighted in the website that the experience with Smallgoods is far beyond guaranteed delicious products and more of the exploratory experience.

### Design Idea

- *Make Goods/Services page, with subcategories including but not limited to cheese, bread, frozen pre-prepared food, French food.*
- *Make Event page specifies special offerings. (In the form of blog, calendar, or other)*

**4. Who are your competitors? What are the points of differentiation that are pulling customers to choose your store?**

- Grocery store - since they used to live in NYC, people go to specific stores for specific great products, but in San Diego, people often go to grocery stores and purchase everything there
- Other cheese shops - The primary product of smallgoods are cheese
  - Venissimo Cheese
- Other cafe or sandwich shops, fast food entities where people can get a quick lunch entity. - Smallgoods is also a cafe and sells lunch-time sandwiches and cheese plates

**Summary**

There are three major competitors Smallgoods has in general. The first one is the grocery store. Mike and Jenny mentioned that when they used to live in NYC, there are many small shops and boutiques and people go to specific shops for specific products. After they moved to San Diego, they found that people basically buy everything from grocery stores. And people tend to buy cheese in grocery stores rather than cheese shops. The second competitor is other cheese shops, and they mentioned there is a famous cheese shop called Venissimo. The third one is other cafes or sandwich shops. Smallgoods also sells sandwiches and other food for a quick lunch. They mentioned that fast food shops, and other sandwich shops can also be their potential competitors.

**Analysis**

Knowing the competitors, the next step will be doing competitive analysis and interviewing the users to see what they liked about smallgoods. By conducting a competitive analysis of other cheese shops, we could draw inspiration from them and use them for the design of our website. By interviewing the users, we could know what are some things that customers liked or some distinct things about Smallgoods cheese and we can highlight them on the website to attract more customers.

**Design Idea**

- Display the uniqueness of Smallgoods that the competitors lack

**5. How have you promoted and marketed your store in the past?**

- Marketing strategy: access to special and unique products that nobody else gets
- Word of mouth

- Returning customers from the farmer market's experience while Jenny and Mike launched a "pilot experiment" to investigate the potential market they serve in the La Jolla and San Diego neighborhoods.

### **Summary + Analysis**

As mentioned above, the uniqueness of smallgoods is that their products are American-made. We will keep this in mind when designing the website and highlight the uniqueness of Smallgoods.

## **Users**

### **1. Who are your ideal primary customers? What groups of customers purchase your products?**

- Most of the current customers are people from 50-60 years old semi-retired or retired.
- While everyone is welcomed, the ideal primary customers are people around 20-35 years old, willing to spend money on products and experiences. They are also hoping to get more young families as customers to their store.
- Kids

### **2. How do you think the customers mostly find the store?**

- About half of their customers are returning customers, and they are extremely loyal
- New customers find their store mostly by Google "La Jolla cheese" and calling them

### **3. How have your customers changed over time? Do you have more loyal customers or newcomers?**

- When they used to be in the farmer's market, about 80% are new customers and they have around 20% of returning customers
- For the shop, only about 40% are new customers and about 50-60% are returning customers.
- Existing customers are extremely loyal

### **4. What type of customers are you hoping to target the most through the website?**

- Age below 35, young customers who are always socially switched on
- Older customers are not familiar with electronic devices

### **Summary**

Most of the current customers live in surrounding communities and are 50-60-year-old semi-retired and retired people. Besides, most of the customers are returning customers either from the farmer's market or their store. In the store, the returning customers take up 50%-60% of the total amount, which is a pretty high percentage showing that the current customers are extremely loyal. Compared with the older generation customers that they have, Smallgoods wants more younger generations to engage in their business. Their ideal primary customers are young people who are willing to spend small amounts of money on their product and enjoy the experience. They want to advertise their product online to attract younger customers since younger generations are more familiar with digital devices.

They have also prepared a polaroid camera in the store for kids in the activities that they have held before, and Jenny also mentioned that kids are critical to what they want in front of the counter.

### **Analysis**

Smallgoods will be a good place for educating kids with good and fresh products on diet. This could provide a special experience for families. We can make an activity page for attracting families that want similar experiences. Also, since the current customers are pretty loyal, the website will be targeting new younger customers. The design should match the young generation's taste.

### **Design Idea**

- Activity page for families (optional)
- Mainly targeting younger potential customers
- Design guide follows the young generation's taste

## Part 2: Website Analysis

### Website Content + Design

#### 1. What are the top 3 ideal themes are you looking for for your website?

- Informative
  - The website should be informative and have the basic information about the shop and how can customers reach them quickly
- Easy to use
  - The website should be easy for users to navigate and find the information they need.
  - Mobile functionality
- Engaging
  - Not only information based, but also related to the shop
  - In interesting and unusual ways

#### **Summary**

The three main themes that Mike and Jenny are looking for in their website are:

Informative, easy to use, and engaging. One thing Mike emphasized is that he wanted the users of their website to know that they need to come to the store to get the product and online orders are not supported at this point. They wanted the website to be informative so that customers can know when, what, and how to reach them. The second theme is easy to use. They hope the customers can navigate and find the information they need quickly without having to wonder where to go. The functions on the website should be efficient. The third one is engaging, Mike and Jenny want their website to be interesting and contain information not only about products and services, but also include information and stories about the shop.

#### **Analysis**

**Informative:** we will provide all necessary information on the website, including: the basic info such as hours, locations, and contact info such as numbers, emails, and that the customers need to come to the store if they want to purchase the products. We will make these easy to see so that customers can immediately know what they can and can not do

from the website and if they do want to buy the products, how to reach them. We will also have information about the products and visual images.

**Easy to use:** this requires the websites' functions to be simple and efficient. We don't need much functionality as the website is not set up for online orders. However, we will still have functions for users to check out their products, including images and descriptions. These will be simple and easy to find

**Engaging:** This requires the website to be interesting in some way that attracts the users to further explore. We will use visual images and maybe include some interactive features to make the website more engaging. However, to make the website engaging and informative at the same time, we will need to further discuss the amount of text and images to include on the website.

**2. What content do you want to include on your website? Any specific features you would like included such as a special offers menu, blog, subscription services, or newsletters?**

- Basic Information about the shop and how can customers reach them (locations, hours, numbers, emails)
- Mention that customers NEED to come to the shop
- Products/menu (simple with description)
- Live Instagram feed - included in the current website

**Summary**

One of the most important things that they would like to include in the website is the basic information about the shop and how customers can reach them. As Mike and Jenny mentioned, the website is not set up for online orders, they want the customers to know and provide information for customers to reach them such as locations, hours of operation, emails, phone numbers. While it does not support online orders, they still want to include their products especially cheese platter on the website, along with the descriptions. They also mentioned that they have an Instagram account and their current website has the live instagram feed and they would like to keep that as well.

**Analysis**

information including locations, hours, phone number, emails, etc. will be included in the website and most likely on the homepage. We will need to double check if all the information on the current website is correct and since these are one of the top concerns, we will discuss more on where to put this information and keep the website simple and clean at the same time. We will also have visual images and descriptions for Smallgoods'



products, and we will include some of the most famous dishes on the homepage. As mentioned earlier that Samllgoods' products are all American-made, it would also be one of our focus points when designing the website. We will also keep the live Instagram feed they have on the current website. Besides what Mike and Jenny wanted us to include, we are also thinking to include a page about special events and products for holidays since they mentioned that they have special products during holidays, and it can be a good way to attract more customers.

**3. What kind of functionality on your website are you looking for? What do you want to communicate to the users through your website?**

- The website is not set up to do online orders
- Could do delivery
- **Product first**
- The website should provide users the basic information on how to contact the shop especially because the website is not set up for online orders

**Summary**

Mike and Jenny wanted their website to be mostly information based, they pointed out that they don't do online orders so the website is not set up to do online orders. They wanted the website to be product-first, hoping it could show their products on their website along with some descriptions. They want to attract more young customers through the website. Based on the research of their current customers, they want more young people to learn about their unique American-made cheese. They want the users to have an opportunity to know their products and their story.

**Analysis**

To demonstrate the product first, we will include images of their popular products on the homepage so that users can see them immediately when they enter the website.

Mike and Jenny didn't have many requirements on what functionality to have for their website but they did mention that they would not be providing online order services.

Without the function of the online order, we have to discuss more on what can keep users coming back to the websites.

**Design Idea**

- Intense visuality on the homepage with high-quality pictures of products
- No online order services

**4. How do you prefer information to be displayed on the website? Do you prefer your website to have more visual images or text?**

- No strong preference on one over the other
- The website should have enough information for users to know where, when and how they can find and purchase the products
- Condensed in text, the description should be simple
- Visual images are also needed as customers should be able to see the products

**Summary**

Mike and Jenny didn't really have a preference on images or text, but they did mention before that they want the website to be informative and include all necessary information for users to reach them, such as where, when, and how they can find the store and the products they have, at the same time, they wanted the website to be condensed in text and have simple descriptions. They also hope to have images on the website to show their products.

**Analysis**

It requires us to find a balance between texts and images since there is quite a lot of information we need to put on the website. We will avoid putting all information together so that users won't have to read a whole paragraph to find certain information. The text will be organized and probably mixed with images. For visual images, we are thinking of using images to show their products as well as their shops and stories to make users' experiences on their site more engaging.

**Design Idea**

- Keep the content simple and not heavy to read
- Balance between text and images

**5. Can you think of any website designs that you have liked in the past and what you particularly liked about them?**

- Fish shop
- Similar to a website for a fish shop, the website is not set up for online orders but as a functional sales tool that can maybe attract more customers by providing the basic info and help people learn how can they reach them or purchase the products

**Summary + Analysis**

Mike and Jenny didn't really have a particular design they are aiming for, but they think their website is most similar to a fish shop website. Given that fish shop websites do not

support online ordering and delivery like other shops do, they still include their products and basic information on their websites. It is really helpful for us when doing the competitive analysis. We could look through some fish shops' websites and draw inspiration from those websites since they are similar in functionality. It would be helpful to know how similar websites are designed and worked.

### Design Idea

- Draw inspiration from websites of fish shops

## Current Website Evaluation (<http://www.smallgoodsusa.com/>)

### 1. What are some things that you want to keep or remove from your current website?

Why?

- Keep
  - Logo
  - Simplicity
  - General info—when, what, and how to reach them
  - Live Instagram feed
- Remove
  - The history is not so important
  - Want to have a revamp of the current website - not sure about the potentials

### Summary

Smallgoods wants to keep the website simple and remove unnecessary information such as history. The redesign should be based on the current website and have a space for displaying Instagram feeds. Mike and Jenny mentioned that the history part of the current website can be removed. And generally, they wanted an overall revamp of their current website.

### Analysis

When designing, we will keep the logo, and the section of live Instagram feed, but maybe we will change the overall layout and put the section of Instagram feed to a different

location. The website will look simple and we will remove anything that is not necessary and add new contents and functionalities mentioned above in the web content+design part.

## User Objectives

- Show the users the company emphasize on new and customizable experience
- Find a way to appropriately display cheese (the main selling product) with the constraints of not able to tangibly sense this produce as well as lack of knowledge of different types of cheese

## Design Objectives

- The relevant information should be easily accessible in the website (including location, contact information, offered products, etc)
- See if there is a potential to investigate in online-ordering through their website
- The need of scalable website as well as a mobile site for Smallgoods
- Although the website should always focus on the product, it's important to investigate how to insert a right amount of "humanity" into the website rather than a completely e-commerce website.

## Priority List

1. Emphasis on American made products
2. The website should be informative, easy to use, and engaging.
3. Include clear and noticeable general information (easy access to the below information)
  - a. Location
  - b. Hours
  - c. Contacts
  - d. Products
4. Product first along with high-quality pictures, condensed in text.
5. Include product page, and live Instagram feed.

6. Not include any online order functionality (as of now)
  - a. If indeed find a correct way to do so, it's a potential opportunity to investigate
7. Keep the original website logo with its color scheme and similar typography