

## Introduction

As a new start-up in the field of Dutch primary education, EduApp Development is aimed at developing a high quality, tablet based, educational platform. Since its founding in 2014 the organization has made significant progress towards this goal. By involving big IT players, the organization is able to use their knowledge while remaining nimble to quickly adjust if needed. This report examines the organization through a SWOT analysis. This analysis will be used to identify key areas of improvement for the organization. One of these will be further looked at and recommendations will be provided to improve in this area.

## Description

EduApp Development is a small start-up located in the north of the Netherlands. Consisting of four part-time employees, the start-up is focusing on developing a tablet based education platform for the Dutch Primary education market. Based on information provided by the founders of EduApp Development and interviews with the employees, the following SWOT matrix was derived (Table 1).

**Table 1: SWOT matrix of EduApp development**

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Backed by major firms (partnerships)</li><li>- Strong domain knowledge</li><li>- Small and agile organizational structure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Little product development knowledge</li><li>- Little digital knowledge</li><li>- Weak management</li></ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threads</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Strong demand for tablet-based education</li><li>- Ability to easily transfer product into other markets</li><li>- Big potential market (1,8 million users in our primary market)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- For-profit model not accepted in the Dutch educational sector</li><li>- Fragmented marked</li><li>- Buyers have limited budgets available</li></ul>

A more detailed description of the various elements of the matrix will be given in the corresponding sub-section.

## **Strengths**

In the analysis, three strengths were identified. These will be discussed here in more detail.

### **Strength 1: backing by major firms (partnerships)**

EduApp Development is backed by major firms in the field of IT and mobile connectivity. By partnering with these firms gives EduApp Development access to the knowledge and expertise of these firms. This allows EduApp to use this to overcome their own lack of IT and product development knowledge.

### **Strength 2: strong domain knowledge**

Being a daughter organization of Cedin, a big educational consulting firm, gives EduApp Development the advantage of having strong domain knowledge. This allows it to know the market they are operating in very well which gives them an advantage over competitors.

### **Strength 3: small and agile organizational structure**

Due to the small size of the organization, it is easily adjusted in lights of new facts. Given the product is constantly evolving this is a clear advantage over more established competitors.

## **Weaknesses**

In the analysis, three weaknesses were identified. These will be discussed here in more detail.

### **Weakness 1: little product development knowledge**

The absence of knowledge on product development is a thread to the organization as it opens up the risk of the product never being completed. The current reliance on partners in this matter is unsustainable and the organization needs to develop more expertise in this area.

### **Weakness 2: little digital knowledge**

The little knowledge the firm has about digital is a thread as they are developing a digital solution.

### **Weakness 3: weak management**

The current lack of vision of where the product needs to go to in the future is a weakness of the organization. The lack of vision might result in a mission drift and scope creep which is not beneficial to the organization.

## **Opportunities**

In the analysis, three opportunities were identified. These will be discussed here in more detail.

### **Opportunity 1: strong demand for tablet-based education**

Tablet-based education is currently a hot topic in Dutch primary education. Schools feel a strong need to start using tablets in their curriculum as a way to differentiate themselves. Therefore, a market exists for this kind of product.

### **Opportunity 2: ability to easily transfer product into other markets**

Once developed for primary education, the platform allows for adaptation to other sectors.

Currently, incident management and healthcare are researched as alternative sectors. This flexibility to offer a similar product is interesting.

### **Opportunity 3: big potential market**

The size of the Dutch primary education market offers the opportunity to sell many products. With around 1,8 million students the market is big enough to reach a viable number to justify the development costs of the product.

## **Threads**

In the analysis, three strengths were identified. These will be discussed here in more detail.

### **Thread 1: for-profit model not accepted in the Dutch educational sector**

In the Dutch education sector, people look down upon for-profit companies making money of the backs of education. The fact EduApp Development is a for profit company opens up the risk of the firm not being accepted as a genuine education provider.

### **Thread 2: fragmented market**

Although the primary education market in the Netherlands is significant, it is highly fragmented. Over 1000 foundations exist with under them 10 schools on average. This fragmentation means a significant effort will have to be made to reach a sufficient market penetration.

### **Thread 3: buyers have limited budgets available**

The product developed by EduApp Development is a premium product, sold at a premium price.

However, schools only have limited budgets available, opening up the possibility of schools not being able to afford our product.

### **Discussion**

Being the daughter organization of a consulting firm, EduApp development has little product development knowledge. This knowledge is essential for developing new products. Without this knowledge the organization is more likely to develop a product that does not fit the needs of the final customer. This is a huge risk for the organization and should therefore be addressed. This can be done in various ways:

- Knowledge on product development is generated internally and over time
- Knowledge on product development is bought
- The managing of the product development process is outsourced

The main differences between these solutions is the time when the knowledge is available and the

### **Recommendation**

In order to decrease the risks due to the lack of product development knowledge the following is recommended:

- Increase short term product development knowledge by outsourcing the managing of the product development process to one of the partner organizations involved in the project.
- Increase short term product development knowledge by hiring one or two people with knowledge of product development in the education sector.
- Increase long term product development knowledge by building in-company knowledge on this topic.

