Project Plan Inception

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CIS 599

Graduate Info Systems Capstone

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1. **Company Background**

Company Name: LP Pet Supplies

Business Overview: LP Pet Supplies is a new online store specializing in premium pet products for various animals, launched in 2024 with backing from a prominent venture capital firm. Inspired by industry leaders such as Chewy and Amazon's pet section, the company uses technology and partnerships to offer a convenient shopping experience. LP Pet Supplies aims to improve pet owners' lives by providing quality products, reliable service, and affordable prices.

**Facility Information**

The company is relocating to a new two-story building that will serve as both its headquarters and main distribution center. This location was carefully selected to support current operations and future expansion.

**Employment and Growth Predictions**

Number of Employees

* Current Status: 10 employees
* Growth Projections (Next Two Years): Expanding to 30 employees to support increasing operations, customer service, logistics, and technological infrastructure.

**Revenue Projections**

Revenue

* Current Status: $5 million annually
* Growth Projections (Next Two Years): Aiming to generate $30 million in annual sales by strategically marketing the company, expanding product offerings, and fostering stronger customer relationships.

1. **Business Type, Customers, and Demographics**

**Business Type**

LP Pet Supplies is a B2C (business-to-consumer) e-commerce business operating within the pet retail industry. "According to Kumar and Raheja (2012), Business-to-Consumer e-commerce provides companies with a platform that enables them to direct customers to merchants and earn commissions from the rewards offered by those merchants." “Business to Customer describes activities of business serving end consumers with products and/ or services” (Kumar,3).

**Customers**

The primary customers of LP Pet Supplies are pet owners encompassing a wide range of animal enthusiasts, including those who own small pets like cats and hamsters, as well as those with larger pets such as dogs, birds, and reptiles. LP Pet Supplies serves a diverse customer base, including:

* Pet Owners: Seeking everyday essentials and premium products for their pets.
* Pet Enthusiasts: Interested in specialized products and accessories.
* Veterinarians and Pet Care Professionals: Purchasing supplies in bulk for professional use.

**Demographics**

LP Pet Supplies primarily focuses on adults aged 25 to 55 who have the financial stability and willingness to invest in their pets' well-being. The ideal customers are middle to upper-middle-class individuals with disposable income for purchasing pet products. Initially, the company targets urban and suburban regions, with plans to expand its reach across the nation. Additionally, the target demographic consists of tech-savvy individuals who prefer the convenience of online shopping and place a high value on the quality and variety of pet supplies available.

1. **Information Systems Infrastructure**

To support growth and accommodate the new facility, LP Pet Supplies will use a hybrid cloud system. This will combine cloud services like AWS or Azure for web hosting, storage, and backups with on-site systems for office operations, network security, local databases, and employee workstations. “By combining public cloud and on-premises infrastructure, a hybrid cloud platform provides the flexibility, scalability and security that is required for the large amount of data now needed in e-commerce applications.” (Gorantla,2)

* E-commerce Platform: Shopify Plus or custom-built on Magento for scalability and integration of payment gateways, inventory management, and CRM.
* Cloud Hosting: AWS or Azure for website hosting, traffic management, and disaster recovery.
* Network Infrastructure: Robust equipment (firewalls, routers, switches), secure employee Wi-Fi, and VoIP for customer service.
* Data Security: Compliance with GDPR and PCI DSS, customer data encryption, and regular audits.
* Employee Workstations: Desktops/laptops with software, VPN for remote access, and collaboration tools like Slack or Teams.
* Customer Service: Zendesk or Freshdesk for helpdesk, chatbots for 24/7 support, and a ticketing system.
* ERP/CRM Integration: Cloud-based ERP (NetSuite/Dynamics) for inventory and finance, integrated with Salesforce for CRM.

1. **High-Level Block Diagram of Information Systems Infrastructure**

A screen shot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Note: This diagram shows the interconnected systems in a simplified way. Each box represents a key part of the IT infrastructure, working together to ensure smooth operations and data flow.

The rapid expansion of the e-commerce sector, especially in the pet supplies market, offers a unique opportunity for LP Pet Supplies to position itself as a prominent player in this growing industry. As highlighted by Lindsay Beaton in her article, “E-commerce made enormous strides between 2015 and 2019 and will grow to 27% of the market in 2020 and to 35% by 2024, which will make the internet the top channel for pet product sales,” according to the June 2020 report from Packaged Facts, *U.S. Pet Market Outlook, 2020-21: The COVID-19 Impact*. This growth is driven by a combination of convenience, accessibility, and consumer preference for online shopping, especially during and after the pandemic.

With industry leaders like Chewy.com and Amazon controlling 75% of the online pet product market, smaller businesses like LP Pet Supplies need to stand out by providing a premium and curated experience, akin to Dogphora’s approach (Beaton,1). By emphasizing quality, specialized products, and exceptional customer service, LP Pet Supplies can attract a loyal customer base in the niche of high-quality pet products.

A strong technology plan is key to helping the company reach its growth goals. By using cloud services for flexibility, implementing modern software for managing inventory and customer relationships, and creating a smooth online shopping experience, LP Pet Supplies will be well-positioned for expansion. The hybrid business model will also allow the company to easily adjust to changes in the market and support both online and potential physical store sales, similar to how traditional retailers are now shifting more sales to digital channels.

With a well-defined project strategy and focus on utilizing the latest technology, LP Pet Supplies is set to become a strong player in the fast-growing online pet supply market, aiming to reach $30 million in revenue within two years. As the industry moves more towards online shopping, the company’s commitment to quality, convenience, and customer satisfaction will help it succeed in this competitive space.

References

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