# Information Gathering Document App/Group: International Student Assist

## **Key Partners**

## Who are our Key Partners?

- What are our Motivations for establishing these relationships?

#### Bank

- Business account to deposit/withdraw funds
- Escrow account to accept/disburse CC payments

Paypal/CC business account(s) – to accept/refund student payments

- International transactions:
  - a. 3.49% of transaction amount
  - b. 1.50% of transaction amount (international transaction fee)
  - c. Source: https://www.paypal.com/us/webapps/mpp/merchant-fees#apm-rates

## Marketing/Business Development personnel

- Plan, direct, and coordinate marketing policies and programs
- Determine demand for current product and services and compare current market share with that of competitors
- Research and track changes in current marketing trends, methodologies
- Conduct briefings on current market, marketing techniques, and proposed changes
- Propose, develop, and implement changes in current marketing solutions
- Propose, develop, and implement innovative marketing solutions
- Develop pricing strategies to maximize profits and/or market share
- Oversee product development and monitor trends that indicate need for new products and services

## Digital Media Design personnel

 Design or create graphics to meet specific commercial or promotional needs, such as packaging, displays, or logos using a variety of mediums to achieve artistic or decorative effects

- **Document: Information Gathering** 
  - Design digital user interfaces or websites
  - Develop and test layouts, interfaces, functionality, and navigation menus to ensure compatibility and usability across browsers or devices using web framework applications as well as client-side code and processes.
  - Evaluate web design following web and accessibility standards
  - Analyze web use metrics and optimize websites for marketability and search engine ranking
  - Design and test interfaces that facilitate the human-computer interaction and maximize the usability of digital devices, websites, and software with a focus on aesthetics and design
  - Create graphics used in websites and manage website content and links
  - Collaborate with interpreters from target foreign country(s) to create student web pages in native language of that country
  - Other duties as assigned in keeping with job description

## CPA (Certified Public Accountant)

- Install systems of recording costs and other financial, accounting, and budgetary data
- Perform accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services
- Prepare financial statements
- Conduct briefings on business health with forecasts
- Propose business changes to maximize income
- Advise on external investments to leverage profits
- Prepare quarterly/annual tax returns
- Advise on methods to reduce tax liability
- Conduct quarterly in-house audits
- Subject to annual third-party audits

Legal services for immigration, domestic/int'l internet/privacy law, and IP (Intellectual Property) law

- Advise regarding domestic/int'l internet privacy laws
- Brief on changes to domestic/int'l internet/privacy laws
- Advise regarding immigration of int'l students to US
- Brief on changes to US immigration law
- Advise regarding protection of IP (Intellectual Property) including patents, trademarks, and copyrights

Client colleges/universities – int'l student office representative at target institution

- Maintain institution's database of application requirements for int'l students via university web interface
- Maintain communication with prospective int'l students during application process until student is accepted
- Report deficiencies in expected software operation and suggest upgraded/additional features to university web interface via links provided on web interface
- Maintain security of login credentials

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Embassy POC (Point Of Contact)/advisor in each target country for int'l students

- Advise regarding changes to US/target country relationship and applicable US laws
- Suggest bilingual candidates to interpret English website content into native language (by country)
- Interview prospective int'l students in target country to grant/deny student visas

Domestic sponsor for int'l students – a volunteer who pay SEVIS fee for candidate int'l student(s)

## Software developers

- NOTE: "software" refers to user interface web pages, SQL scripts, database operation, APIs (Application Program Interfaces), and other specialized Operating System scripts throughout this job description
- Research, design, and develop computer and network software or specialized utility programs
- Analyze user needs and develop software solutions, applying principles and techniques of computer science, engineering, and mathematical analysis
- Update software or enhance existing software capabilities
- May work with computer hardware engineers to integrate hardware and software systems, and develop specifications and performance requirements
- Maintain databases within an application area, working individually or coordinating database development as part of a team
- Verify software conforms to requirements specified in SRDs (Software Requirements Documents)
- Develop, test, implement, and maintain software in accordance with approved Software Deficiency Reports

- Update software in accordance with approved suggestions submitted by client universities and int'l students
- Collaborate with Digital Media Design personnel to develop, test, implement, and maintain user interface web pages tailored to int'l students in each target foreign country and to individual client universities
- Update software based on bug reports, software deficiencies, approved suggestions for new/revised features, changes in law, etc.
- Other duties as assigned in keeping with job description

## Cybersecurity/network administrator

- Install, configure, and maintain organization's
  - a. Local area network (LAN)
  - b. Wide area network (WAN)
  - c. Data communications network
  - d. Operating systems
  - e. Physical and virtual servers
- Perform system monitoring and verify the integrity and availability of hardware, network, and server resources and systems
- Review system and application logs and verify completion of scheduled jobs, including system backups
- Analyze network and server resource consumption and control user access
- Install and upgrade software and maintain software licenses
- Assist in network modeling, analysis, planning, and coordination between network and data communications hardware and software
- Plan, implement, upgrade, or monitor security measures for the protection of computer networks and information
- Assess system vulnerabilities for security risks and propose and implement risk mitigation strategies
- Ensure appropriate security controls are in place to safeguard digital files and vital electronic infrastructure
- Develop, publish, and implement procedures to respond to computer security breaches and viruses

## Who are our key suppliers?

Web hosting platform (hardware and software) - candidate platform: AWS

- Selected based on
  - a. Geographical reach owns facilities worldwide
  - b. Quality of service (compared to our experience with Azure)

- c. Quantity of available discrete application services
- d. Offers the following broad service categories:
  - Packaged Software as a Service (SaaS)
    - 1. Includes laaS services
    - 2. Provides all resources needed to develop, test, implement, maintain, and distribute software solutions over a wide geographical area
    - 3. Service provider maintains software and hardware, including servers, storage, network, virtual machines, OS, middleware, runtime, applications, and app data including backups
  - Platform as a Service (Paas)
    - 1. Includes laaS services
    - 2. Provides software development tools, including OS, middleware, and runtime; maintained by service provider
    - 3. Client responsible for maintain/backup developed applications and app data
  - Infrastructure as a Service (laaS)
    - Provides cloud-accessible hardware (servers, storage, network) and virtual machines maintained by service provider
    - Client responsible to provide/maintain software and backups, including OS, middleware, runtime, developed apps, and app data
- d. Mature, responsive service and responsive to customer inquiries (compared to MS Azure)
- e. Price: based on usage (services, outbound data, etc.)
  - Too many unknown variables at present, but a calculator is available online
  - Free tier allows cost-free setup/acclimation

Int'l identity-/age-verification software – Veriff.com

- \$49 / mo (min)
- \$1.49 / verification
- 30-day free trial
- Source: https://www.veriff.com/plans

Data encryption software (available via AWS)

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First-person tracking software/cookies (via AWS?)

Customer survey software (SurveyMonkey)

- Individual plan: \$39/mo (\$468 billed annually)
- Team plan: \$32/user/mo (3-user min, billed annually)
- Source:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/welcome/sem/?program=7013A000000mweBQAQ&utm\_bu=CR&utm\_campaign=71700000059189106&utm\_adgroup=58700005410205670&utm\_content=43700049188971266&utm\_medium=cpc&utm\_source=adwords&utm\_term=p49188971266&utm\_kxconfid=s4bvpi0ju&language=&test=&gclid=Cj0KCQjw7KqZBhCBARIsAI-fTKJRWDol1nPpWrRXi\_zrqcuit7y8VX1NLHkg6G8F1ugjWspexNl4VKMaAqBQEALwwcB&gclsrc=aw.ds#pricing

- Alternatively, we could write our own survey software to use the either or both of the following web page features
  - a. "Comment" block
  - b. "Trouble" link

App stability/error monitoring software (candidate: BugSnag.com)

- Included services (depends on subscription)
  - a. Error monitoring/diagnostics
  - b. App stability management
  - c. Alerting and workflow engine
  - d. Security and compliance
  - e. Deployment/data access
  - f. Support and services
- Pricing
  - a. Lite (small teams, 7-day data retention)
    - Fee: \$0/mo (free)
    - Limits: 7.5k events/mo, 1 seat
  - b. Standard (mid- to large-size team)
    - 150k events/mo, 5 seats
    - 450k events/mo, 15 seats
  - c. Enterprise contact for info
  - d. Free trial (no time limit given)
  - e. Source: https://www.bugsnag.com/pricing

Digital Media/Design software – applicable personnel will advise

Marketing/Business Development software – applicable personnel will advise

## **Key Activities**

## What Key Activities do our Value Propositions require?

Equipment – computer hardware and office furnishings including landline telephones.

Buildings - office with parking unless offsite.

#### **Employees**

- Accountant/bookkeeper
- Software developers
- Digital Media Designers
- BusinessDevelopment/Marketing
- Cybersecurity/network administrators

Intellectual Property – web page layout and graphics for student and university user interfaces.

#### Computer Software

- Accounting
- Digital media/design
- Marketing
- Web design/database/data encryption
- First-person tracking software/cookies
- Customer survey software
- App stability/error monitoring software

#### **Expert Knowledge**

- University int'l student application reps advise int'l student throughout the application process until application approval
- Int'l students attending currently orient newly arrived int'l students in client university culture, local indigenous culture, local climate, etc.
- Law services provide advice on domestic/int'l internet/privacy, data protection, and IP (Intellectual Property) laws
- Software developer plan, develop, test, implement, and maintain the user interface web pages, SQL scripts, database schema, and specialized operating-system scripts.

 Cybersecurity/network administrator – advise and implements needed hardware/software acquisitions and upgrades and latest data privacy/protection practices

## Political Connections – embassy personnel provide:

- Insight into local culture at target foreign nation
- Changes to US foreign relations policy and laws regarding target foreign nation
- Act as a conduit for access to possible talent (e.g., interpreter) available in target foreign nation

## What Key Activities do our Distribution Channels require?

- Timely subscription payment we must pay our bills in full and on time or we lose our AWS distribution network
- Timely software updates student and university clients want software that works so it minimizes their frustration. Short of that, updates should be planned, developed, tested, and implemented as quickly as practical

## What Key Activities do our Customer Relationships require?

- Ads in int'l social media that are relevant to the prospective student population. If prospective students do not use a given platform, they will never see the ads that we place on that platform. If we lose contact with our customer base, they may perceive this as not caring about their welfare. In addition, this is a waste of time, effort, and money.
- Intuitive user interface so that users enjoy the experience. Otherwise, they will find other resources that do create an enjoyable experience.
- Prominent and accessible method to report software deficiencies and suggest new features, particularly for client universities. This means at least one prominent link for this purpose on every user interface web page. Nothing is more frustrating to a user than to use software that doesn't work correctly, and they have no means to vent that frustration by reporting the problem.
- Timely response to software deficiency reports. Clients perceive a slow response as, "They are too busy for me because I am not important to them."
- Easy and secure login/subscription process with ID verification with particular attention to policies and procedures for client university. Clients become frustrated with overly complex login procedures and subscription membership processes. With universities shouldering the bulk of the financial burden, we cannot afford to appear lax with their data or they will search elsewhere for a service provider that is more responsible.

- Option to allow persistent login credentials verification. Although this can be a security weakness, it allows users to avoid repeated login and the frustration that entails when they cannot easily remember their password.
- Require credentials verification prior to implementing changes to user account. This is an absolute must to avoid a man-in-the-middle attack should the client walk away from their station without logging off.
- Confirm current username by displaying it in the user interface web page. This verifies to the user that they are working within their own account.
- Easy email access to ask questions, report software deficiencies, etc. The more easily a client can communicate with us and others, the more likely they will be to use our service. We should be able to accomplish this by linking email servers to our database via various API's.
- Comprehensive FAQ segmented by topic to minimize email traffic. This tends to be an intensive effort... *once*, but it is well worth effort to minimize client frustration with our product.
- Links to context-relevant webpages of external websites, including USG information, candidate university, etc. "Context relevant" means the link goes directly to a third-party web page that is relevant to the current information the client seeks instead of being dumped on a generic home page and leaving the client to browse to the correct location. In my personal experience, I won't not do this because I do not know what information the web page designer had in mind when creating a link. In my frustration, I give up and go elsewhere on the web.
- Allow client institutions to customize data displayed on student user interface
  web pages (e.g., add/remove contact info, etc.). Client universities may be
  required to change their requirements or experience policy changes such that
  they may need to hide university information that prospective students could view
  previously. The university should be equipped with tools to turn on/off these data
  for viewing.
- Comprehensive explanations/instructions on each web page of student UI. Most users do not refer to instructions until they cannot proceed. Including relevant instructions on each web page including what we intend the client to do at externally linked web pages! makes for a much more enjoyable user experience.
- Website help/support links to report website problems, make suggestions, and submit queries to candidate institutions and US embassies (?; Unsure whether or not embassies need or would be allowed to use our website.) We should make reporting a problem as easy as possible for clients so their perception of us is "we care about you". Again, this is easily accomplished by including on every web page a prominent link or text box for communication from the client

- Easy and timely payment/refund processes. The easier it is for a prospective student to pay for a subscription, the more likely they will be to do so. Conversely, we should refund their money even more quickly to avoid "bad press". As the saying goes, "Good news travels like molasses; bad news travels at the speed of light!"
- Low-latency web experience, particularly for prospective int'l students. This is
  where AWS is a solid partner because of their global infrastructure. The more
  quickly the client can conduct their business, the more our product will be
  perceived as being useful and of high quality

### What Key Activities do our Revenue streams require?

- Accept/convert int'l funds to USD this simplifies the process for prospective students to pay for our services, and, thus, they will be more likely to pay for a subscription.
- Method to accept/refund int'l funds this is an area in which Paypal and Western Union are of utmost importance.
- Easy payment/timely refund processes clients are more likely to pay for a subscription when the payment process is easy. Moreover, a client will have a kinder perception of our company when we send their refund, and the client may be less inclined to badmouth us to other prospective clients.

## **Customer Segments**

## For whom are we creating value, and who are our most important customers?

We are focusing on a niche market: US academic institutions (universities/colleges) and int'l students. We also are providing value to US embassy personnel based in foreign countries by building an app to which they can refer international students for guidance.

## Who are our most important customers?

## Segmented Market (subgroups)

- We plan to divide our markets by state (universities) and country (prospective students).

#### **Diversified/Multi-sided Platform**

- We are a diversified/multi-sided platform. Client US universities make up one side of our market while international student subscribers populate the other
- Our prototype/base case is LSUS and Nigerian students

## **Key Resources**

## What key resources do our Value Propositions require?

- Access to approved transcript evaluations services to recommend to students
- A list of official websites relevant to applying to US universities
- Software Developers

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- Domain name
- APIs for various web resources
- Partnerships with universities whose institutional links may need to be included in the app
- Connections to US embassy representatives who can help in the information-gathering stage of determining the process for coming to study in the US.

## What key resources do our Distribution Channels require?

- Mailing list or list of international students' email addresses.
- Web-hosting hardware and software platforms
- Digital media design personnel and software
- Front end user interfaces for prospective students and client universities
- Cash for operations or capital projects
- Legal counsel for patent and copyright law and international legal issues

## What key resources do our Customer Relationships require?

- Social Media Accounts Relationships with international student admission representatives
- UX designers
- Surveys directed toward international students that ask about pain points
- Encryption of customer data and enhanced authentication methods for the app

## What key resources do our Revenue Streams Require?

- Accounting personnel
- Marketing/Business Development personnel
- Partnerships with universities who subscribe to our service
- An int'l payment processing feature on the app to accept payments from students.
- A streamlined, automated method to help students pay their SEVIS fee

## **Value Proposition**

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## What is the value of an app that helps students sort through the details surrounding applying to a US school?

- Value Statement: The International Student Assist app clearly and thoroughly outlines the process of getting from the prospective student's home country to the US to study. Although each student's requirements are different, we provide general guidance at each step, from finding a transcript evaluation service to applying to their desired US school, from obtaining an I-20 (a key document for international students studying in the US) to applying for their visa and paying the required fees, and items to keep in mind as they make their way to the US. The app also takes some of the administrative burden off university admissions employees and improves university visibility through branding.
- We help to alleviate some of the confusion for international students applying to a US university. Confusion usually surrounds:
  - 1. What documents do US academic institutions typically require from the student (I-20, I-94, and social security card [in order to work on campus], transcript evaluation, SAT/ACT scores, English proficiency scores)
  - 2. Applying for and obtaining a US F1 student visa, which requires submitting:
    - A complete educational background report
    - Proof of financial support, usually in the form of personal or parents' bank statements
    - Proof of insurance and immunizations
    - A copy of a current passport.
  - 3. How to pay the SEVIS fee required to get a US student visa
  - 4. What records or documents need to be retained throughout the student's time in the US.
  - What should be done during the process to avoid possible complications later (e.g., renewing a passport for the maximum allowable period before obtaining a visa)
- We are helping to remove some of the stress associated with students relocating to the United States. If we can give students some idea of what to expect from the process of relocating, they will be able to better concentrate on their studies and tend to important matters like arranging accommodations for when they arrive and obtaining insurance rather than spending time trying to figure out what they should do next. Helpful features might include:
  - 1. A *Tips* section that provides context for the student, who may be caught off guard when they encounter unfamiliar aspects of US universities. Tips could include:
    - Ways to ensure good relationships with your American dorm mates
    - Ways of taking advantage of the emphasis on community at US institutions by participating in clubs, Greek organizations, or sports
    - Preparation for US institutions' emphasis on discussion and peer-driven learning.

- 2. A checklist/education roadmap that outlines each step the student should complete along their journey toward studying in the US.
- 3. A timeline that suggests when the student should begin each step in the education roadmap.

## What is the value of this app for universities and university administrators?

- The app helps reduce some of the administrative tasks associated with tracking international student enrollment for the university.
- The app can be a branding tool for the university and an incentive for international students to attend the university.
- The app improves the university relationship with international students by providing value to students and communicating that the students are a priority.

## What services do we want our app to offer?

- The app is a roadmap for students taking them through the steps for applying to a US school.
- It will have a color-coded checklist with headings and subheadings that allows the student to keep track of what steps they have completed and what key documents they have acquired.
- It will have links to websites that the student will have to use as they work through the checklist (for example, links to transcript evaluation services, links to the US Embassy in their home country and the visa application website)
- It should have a breakdown of each of these processes and explain in detail the steps to complete them, as well as the records they will be receiving that need to be retained.
- List the proof of funds and immunization process.
- Provide a way of paying the SEVIS (I-901) fee, which is the fee for the student's visa that must be paid via US check, money order, or Western Union.
- For universities who purchase the service, the app will be branded for the university. The app will be a multi-user system and the university also has the option of including links to student organizations of interest to the international student.
- This service will be offered at a reasonable price for students. The price for universities will be either per student or per year, but it will be discounted based on the expected number of users at the university.
- The app will be secure and keep the student's information safe. The app could include enhanced multi-factor authentication to increase security and peace of mind.
- The app will provide suggestions that help the student to make important connections at their US school. Does the school have an International Students' Association? Have they reached out to professors at the school in the department of their chosen subject of study? Have they made arrangements for housing?
- The app would also have electronic document storage.

- The app would have a feature that allowed university administrators to keep an inventory of the number of international students in the process of applying to the university.

## Are we offering the service to different segments of the international student population?

- The app could cater to both undergraduate and graduate students planning to study in the US. We could also think about providing special content for student athletes, who may have a slightly different experience.

## **Customer Relationships**

## What type of relationship does each of our customer segments expect us to establish and maintain with them?

- International Students: automated services; tailoring the web app to their specific needs, email notifications, and text messages
- Academic Institutions: self-service; allowing GUI functioning so the university can tailor the app to their own needs (likened to Moodle) and personal assistance for IT problems
- US Embassy personnel in other countries: personal assistance; develop good standing with other countries to help encourage more international students to come to the US

#### Which ones have we established?

 Beginnings of a personal assistance relationship with faculty of LSUS and several of the international students attending the university.

## How are they integrated with the rest of our business model?

- The strength of relationships we develop with our customer segments is developed through our channels, and can be affected by our cost structure.

#### How costly are they?

- Things such as email, texts, zoom, and or face-to-face meetings will incur relatively little cost since we hope to automate most of those tasks.
- A customer service line may be required, but the tentative business model is to have the app be primarily self-service.

## Channels

## Through which channels do our customer segments want to be reached?

- International Students: face-to-face, email, possibly telephone, and texts
- Academic Institutions: email, zoom, possibly face-to-face
- US Embassy personnel: email, Zoom

#### How are we reaching them now?

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- Communicating face to face with both international students of LSUS and staff of LSUS; have not yet reached the point of connecting with US Embassy personnel.

## How are our Channels integrated?

- The app will be sent to international students through their school email and they will be able to search for it on the App Store and Google Play store.

#### Which ones work best?

- The face-to-face method appears to be working best at the moment because it produces the quickest responses, but we assume email will be the most effective at later stages.

#### Which ones are most cost-efficient?

 While being local and small, the face-to-face method is most cost-efficient because our group is already on campus for classes. However, if we convert time to billable hours, email is likely the most efficient. In the future, email or Zoom probably will be the most cost efficient.

#### How are we integrating them with customer routines?

- Choosing to visit the campus when students also are on campus to speak with them; approaching admissions/registration staff during their office hours. Emails will be sent to both personal and university emails.

#### **Channel Phases:**

Awareness: We will raise awareness about our product through marketing to universities and students.

Evaluation: Include surveys before, during, and after testing.

Purchase: Students, if purchasing the app on their own, will pay for functionality, and institutions will pay a yearly subscription.

Delivery: We provide links that send customers directly where they need to be (students) and automatic file upload for quicker processing (universities).

After Sales: Have IT personnel that are able to help both the students and the universities with customer support.

#### **Revenue Streams**

#### For what do customers currently pay?

- Students pay for their i901 fee or SEVIS fee, Application fees.
- Universities pay an international students advisor to provide guidance to students

## For what value are our customers really paying?

- Universities will subscribe to the app for their students. It will give students a step-by-step guide, instructing them on how to go from their home country to their school of study with less stress and confusion. It will also help administrators streamline the process of welcoming students to their university.
- Students not yet associated with a university can purchase individual subscriptions to the app.
- We will be assisting students in paying for their SEVIS fee and assessing an additional charge for our processing service.

#### How are they currently paying?

- International students currently have to make this payment for their SEVIS by contacting someone in the US from their home country to assist them. Using Western Union may also be an option. These can be a hassle.
- Universities are currently paying for administrators' salaries and training. Administrators' time could be better spent on activities with students that add more value to the university rather than processing extra paperwork and managing data that our app could easily provide and organize.

#### How much does each revenue stream contribute to the overall revenue?

- Subscription from universities will generate about 80% revenue of the overall revenue. Individual student subscriptions and a small processing charge added to the SEVIS fee paid by students will generate the remaining 20%.

## **Cost Structure**

Variable costs: Our App is a value-based model. Some of our variable costs are:

- Legal Services

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- Cloud Services
- Miscellaneous ( Software, Travel, Meals, Research (surveys,etc), Supplies and Materials)

**Fixed costs:** The application will require a considerable amount of outsourcing and automation to incur low costs.

- Salary for developers, UI/UX designers and Accounting Personnel
- Insurance
- Office or coworking spaces
- Marketing
- Social Media

**Economies of scale:** As the business grows, the cost in relation to the scale will decrease. For instance, the cost for cloud services reduces in relation to the scale of the application.

**Economies of scope:** As our application grows we will be able to create other similar applications or functionalities for various demographics for less cost (e.g., services for international athletes etc).

Cost Type	Resources	Approximated Cost	Final Cost(Approxim ated Cost *2)	Percentage of Total Cost
Fixed Costs	Software Developers	\$350,000.00	\$700,000.00	61.95%
	UI/UX designers	\$60,000.00	\$120,000.00	10.62%
	Marketing and social media	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	8.85%
	Office or coworking spaces	\$12,000.00	\$24,000.00	2.12%
	Insurance	\$400.00	\$800.00	0.07%
	Accounting Personnel	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	8.85%
	Payment Gateway	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00	0.44%
	Google play accounts	\$50.00	\$100.00	0.01%
Variable Costs	Legal services	\$30,000.00	\$60,000.00	5.31%

Cost Type		1		Percentage of Total Cost
	Domain and Cloud Services	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00	0.89%
	Miscellaneous	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00	0.89%
	Total Cost	\$564,950.00	\$1,129,900.00	100.00%

From the Cost structure above, the total cost for our application is \$1,129,900.

## International Students' Roadmap for Applying to US University

Possible criteria for students to consider when applying to a specific university:

- Liberal arts degree

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- Research facility
- Faculty of experienced professionals
- Global accreditation AACSB
  - (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business)
- Flexible curriculum/teaching methods (face-to-face vs virtual/distance learning)
- Internships, co-ops, externships
- Accelerated degree programs

Application periods and timelines for US universities

- Academic period; start/end months
  - 1. Semesters (2 periods per year)
    - a. Fall late Aug to mid Dec (4 mos total)
    - b. Spring mid Jan to early May (4 mos total)
    - c. Summer late May to early Aug (2 mos total)
  - 2. Trimesters (3 periods per year)
  - 3. Quarters (4 periods per year)
- Application period/deadlines (determined by university)
  - 1. Early application (optional offering by university) Acceptance requires immediate drop of all other applications
  - 2. Regular application -All other applications may remain open until student acceptance

Application Process for International Students to attend US university

- Research educational options
- Select candidate SEVP-certified school(s) to attend
  - 1. Find Education Advising Center in your country interview/advising
  - 2. College Navigator find suitable college; private rankings
  - 3. SEVP (Student and Exchange Visitor Program) Certified School
  - 4. Stories by other int'l students
- Contact (via email) college admissions officer at each school for to be advised on unique application process and requirements
  - 1. English proficiency requirements accepted test centers, minimum requirements
  - 2. Accepted academic transcription services for undergrad/grad students
  - 3. Internships, externships, scholarships, work-study programs
  - 4. Foreign-student admission requirements
  - 5. Estimated costs
  - 6. How to acquire required docs

- 7. Int'l student fee(s), if any
- 8. Requirement to declare major, if any
- 9. Academic session length (semester, trimester, quarter, etc.)
- 10. Early/regular application deadlines
- Learn English
  - 1. Internet
  - 2. Schools or NPO
  - 3. Libraries
  - 4. Scans
  - 5. English proficiency tests available at test center in home country
    - a. IELTS (Internat'l English Language Testing System) exam
    - b. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language)
    - c. C1 Advanced
- Finance your studies (no US-gov't loans, grants, or scholarship help)
  - 1. Home country education authorities (funding for foreign study)
  - 2. International Admissions Office (at chosen college)
  - 3. Scholarships/grants US gov't free search tool
  - 4. US gov't Exchange Programs
- Complete application before specified deadline
  - 1. Admissions requirements set by each college; see above
  - 2. Standardized test(s) English test center and admissions test types
    - a. Undergrad
      - SAT analytical skills
      - ACT verbal skills
    - b. Graduate student
      - GRE test for liberal arts majors in humanities/sciences
      - GMAT programs with focus in business
      - Other/specialized tests
        - DAT (Dental Admission Test)
        - LSAT (Law School Admission Test)
        - MCAT (Medical College Admission Test)
        - OAT (Optometry Admission Test)
        - PCAT (Pharmacy College Admission Test)
  - 3. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) measures language skills
- Become accepted by SEVP-certified school
- Accept university offer of admission
- Receive document(s) from university for visa application (I-20 or DS-2019, depending on visa type)
- Pay \$350 USD SEVIS I-901 fee online (keep receipt!)
- Apply for student visa
  - 1. Student visas type of visas (F-1, J-1, or M1; links), application process, fees, required docs

- 2. Prepare for visa appointment what to do to pass interview at US embassy/consulate
- Prepare for departure
  - 1. How to navigate US immigration system how to get started, arrive, stay and leave US
  - 2. Life in US list of holidays, states, other info
  - 3. Working while studying in US info for int'l students to find work while attending school
  - 4. Training opportunities in the US OJT for students
  - 5. Driving in US quick facts
  - 6. ESL (English as Second Language) improve language skills
  - 7. Income taxes US Internal Revenue Service filing requirements