

Cemetery Management System Proposal

Database for Eternally Deceased
(DED)

CSC 3380
Cameron Martin
Jared Key
Christopher Duong
Luke Higginbotham

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Executive Summary

Efficiency is the cornerstone of any business, and management software exists solely to increase efficiency. The cemetery business is niche enough that many existing software do not offer the specific features they may need, but there are softwares specifically for cemeteries. Very few of these cemetery management softwares exist, creating a lack of innovation in the market. The management of cemeteries is an intricate job, so these softwares are inherently intricate and daunting projects to complete.

Our target clients are anyone who owns or manages a cemetery of any size. DED will feature easy but in depth end user functions for both the general needs of a business and the niche demands of a cemetery. Our software can be used for any size cemetery but is not sufficient to operate for multiple cemeteries.

Due to the niche nature of the cemetery business, not many competitors to DED exist; many of those that do are only for certain applications, such as CemeteryFind, while those that include the whole scope of the business sacrifice depth for breadth in their utility, such as CIMS and PlotBox.

DED aims to be flexible to the needs of the customer and to provide more depth than necessary rather than lacking any core function a user may need.

Gap in the Market

In the current market, software solutions are expensive and time consuming to get started with. The main drawback to adopting a new software is the time commitment to set up the new system, but DED will require as little downtime as possible, to allow businesses to minimize the costs of switching. To assist in reducing the cost of switching, our software will be affordable compared to other available software.

DED will also serve as a single software to provide all the functionality a cemetery would need, allowing cemeteries to cut costs by eliminating not only their overall management service but also replacing financial and work-order based softwares. This reduces overall costs as well as increases efficiency as time wasted learning to use and switching between applications is cut out. Some businesses may entirely lack a software for their finances or management; those businesses may not cut costs by moving to a software immediately, but DED aims to be easy to use and increase the efficiency of the workplace more than both physical records and other available software.

Meeting the Market's Needs

DED will address the needs of the market by reducing time to get started with the software and reducing costs. The primary goal is to keep costs of developing DED as low as possible to be able to provide a solution at as little cost to customers as possible; DED also eliminates the need for other

software to make it worth the cost of adopting a new system. DED will reduce downtime by automating as much of the set up as possible and simplifying what is left to the customer.

Implementation

Management

DED will be managed by its contributors.

Development

DED will be developed using the following the technologies;

- Java
- SQL

Marketing and Distribution

Our software will be released with a free trial and a tutorial to assist users with navigating all of the new features that DED has available. DED will be compatible with any platform including windows and ios.

Monetizations

DED will be subscription based available in both monthly and yearly installments depending on the preferences of vendors.

The Problem and Our Solution

The current problem with cemetery software is the lack of innovation and efficiency. Software that is available to cemeteries are often outdated and only contain a limited number of features which negatively impacts daily operations. In addition to this, many cemeteries still use physical records which increases liability and increases chances of disaster if these records were to be damaged or lost in any way.

Our solution is to improve the features of cemetery softwares such as; CIMS, Quickbooks, and Personal Reflections, and to create a more robust but simple user interface for customers and cemetery management alike. DED will include improved reporting, trust fund, and deed systems.

Industry Need for Our Technology

DED will change the game of cemetery software. The market is small, therefore another option for cemetery businesses that specifically caters to their input will greatly improve the way that cemeteries handle their online practices.

Market Analysis/Primary Market/Secondary Market

Although the market is niche, there are already a few established programs. Of these, CIMS and Plotbox Cemetery Solutions are our main competitors. These services are generally the most popular choices for management actively looking to update their infrastructure. Our primary goal is to create a friendly and more accessible database system for people who may not be as technologically inclined while still offering a useful and better product that eases the load on cemetery workers.

Our primary market consists mainly of smaller, family owned/ran cemeteries that are still utilizing outdated record keeping methods. Our secondary market will be users of other programs who may not be currently satisfied.

Marketing Strategies

Overview

DED is a cemetery management software which aims to provide a beginner friendly and intuitive experience to those wanting to modernize their management methods. In order to accomplish this we must be able to have a flexible program that adapts to the skills of the user while remaining accessible to those of all levels. In addition to this, our team aims to keep the product competitively priced and to be constantly taking into account customer feedback.

Primary Customer analysis and entry strategy

The main entry strategy the team will be using, will be to offer a free trial period for those still not completely convinced to implement our software into their systems. In addition we will be offering a detailed introductory tutorial of our program to teach those who may not be as technologically inclined. We also plan to have a dedicated walkthrough system of our program's more advanced features to those that may need it.

Core competency

The core competency of DED is to seamlessly blend the convenience and assurance of modern technology alongside a robust support system that will allow customers to adapt and learn more easily. This coupled with a low price and scaling adaptability will ensure our software's relevance against competitors.

Expansion strategy

DED will be constantly updated to fix any potential complications or bugs, as well as to push features that will be based on customer feedback and market/field research.

Sales Strategy

Pricing

DED will begin by offering all customers a free trial paired with an introductory tutorial for those who may need it. After this initial trial, we will offer a monthly subscription service or an annual package at a reduced rate.

Positioning

DED will be programmed to be accessible on any platform as well as a possible customer side extension for any cemetery going wanting to access records.

Promotion

Promotional strategies will include various techniques such as internet advertising and personal inquiries with potential clients who would benefit from such a system. This coupled with possible in person demos/instruction will all benefit in gaining recognition within the market.

Place

DED will be a software startup which can easily be run from a home/rented server and scaled up as needed with our clientele size.

Competition

CIMS

CIMS is a cloud database-driven cemetery information management system which utilizes auto updated maps. They are distinct due to their flexibility with distinct versions which can adapt to accommodate that cemetery's needs.

Plotbox

Plotbox is a cloud based death care management solution which offers users full software and mapping integration. It also promises users to a service which will "bring all deceased records together into a quickly searchable database."

Development Strategy

DED would first meet the obvious requirements, then would fulfill the suggestions given to us during the interviews. After this stage of development we would aim for achieving a more attractive graphic design to not only the software, but to all of our social media platforms as well. Once properly tested, DED would penetrate the market using our sales strategy outlined earlier. Then we would focus our attention toward frequent maintenance and updates, assuring our customers that we are listening to their feedback and constantly improving.

Barriers

- Monopolistic competition
- High price for marketing our product
- Creation of software and graphics
- Customer transition
- Partnerships to help DED grow

Critical Risks

One significant risk in the fabrication of DED would be our reputation. Consumers may not want to transition to our software because they are comfortable with the software they already have or because of the inherent

issues of adopting a new system. Another important risk is a security risk, for liability reasons it is gravely salient for DED to be a secure software that cannot easily be manipulated and withholds sensitive information from unauthorized parties. We must deliver on everything we have promised to our consumers and create a brand that manifests high quality, service, and security.

Interviews

(5 entries)

What management software do you currently use?

- NEXUS (Email)
- CIMS, Cemetery Information Management System (Email)
- CIMS (Phone)
- Plotbox (Phone)
- The Crypt Keeper (Email)

What features do you like in your current management software?

What features would you keep?

- THE ABILITY TO TIE MULTIPLE CONTRACTS TO ONE PLOT/FAMILY.
- I like that I can give it partial names or just first or last name and it does a comprehensive search. I would keep every feature that I am aware of.
- I like the layout of the program and how intuitive it is to use

- I like how easy it is to search for plot owners and similar information in the database. It's the feature we use most often and are very happy with it.
- I really enjoy how the system can have multiple users working and uploading to the site at one time which makes data transfer very easy and fast.

What features do you dislike in your current software? What would you change?

- THE INABILITY TO TRULY DRILL DOWN INTO THE PLOT FOR MULTIPLE BURIALS. I CAN SEE THE OWNERS, BUT CANNOT VIEW BACKWARD.
- I would enhance reports and the ability to pull a piece of information out without having to print all the pages or having to adjust what is exported into csv or excel. There is no easy way to pin longitude and latitude.
- Map printing and its features are confusing to use when they should be more intuitive to help with families trying to find their plots more easily.
- When entering information about a plot site it's tedious to have to navigate through separate menus to enter relevant information when it should all be centralized in one spot.
- Mapping feature is not very flexible. Our property is not uniformly square or rectangular so trying to use it can sometimes cause issues.

What are some features you would like that your current software doesn't provide?

- THE CURRENT SOFTWARE HAS SOME ACCTG REPORTS, BUT LIMITED IF I DON'T PURCHASE QB THRU THEM.
- I would like to be able to do more searches by family names (family tree) deceased or living. I would also like to put in one person's name

and pull up all lots associated with their name or family. If there has been anyone buried in those lots.

- I would like to be able to add custom documents to a grave to allow for possible record keeping for a customer. I'd also like grave relationships to be more evident and easy to access.
- Currently there are no specific features that come to mind, all the ones featured have satisfied our needs.
- A streamlined version of the program that could hide the many unused features we have would make navigation much easier.

Would you be interested in a software that addresses these issues?

- POSSIBLY... COST IS A MAJOR ISSUE. CEMETERY SOFTWARES ARE SO EXPENSIVE WHICH MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO WARRANT THE COST VS BENEFITS.
- Of course I would be interested, the cost and/or the project of making a switch is the biggest drawback to me.
- I would as long as the cost remained competitive or at least warranted a more expensive price with significant improvements to CIMS.
- If the competitor is cheaper but still provides equal or better quality program and service we would consider it.
- I would be interested if the software stayed within our budget while fixing our current issues with the program, in addition to being easy to implement/convert since adopting a new system usually has its own issues.