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QUINLAN
SCHOOL *of* BUSINESS

BAUMHART CENTER
FOR SOCIAL ENTERPRISE
AND RESPONSIBILITY

MGMT 573

Professor Brian Abrams

Baumhart Center Group Project Final Report

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Executive Summary

At the intersection of profit and purpose, where core values and innovation take precedence, the Baumhart Center at Loyola University Chicago is looking to establish itself as a well-respected center for social impact. Located within the higher education industry, an industry which happens to have been highly impacted by the recent Covid-19 pandemic, the Baumhart Center has had to completely overhaul its educational offerings in order to adapt to the changing environment.

With the recent shift to online learning for many of the nation's universities, the Baumhart Center has encountered a number of key strategic issues that were not as apparent, if at all, prior to the pandemic. These issues, better categorized as areas for improvement, include scale, lack of intimacy, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and limited presence of faculty and students. Throughout this analysis of the Baumhart Center, recommendations for plausible solutions will be made stemming from Porter's Five Forces, SWOT Analysis, and VRIO Framework. Based on these findings, our recommendations follow a hybrid approach of offline and online initiatives which help establishing a strong network within the social enterprise sector, and towards that, developing a mobile application for the center, holding smaller nation-wide events, and working towards integrating offline and online seamlessly.

As society slowly returns to the normalcy that existed before the Covid-19 pandemic over time, the Baumhart Center will need to remain agile and innovative as a means to continue offering a best-in-class experience to scholars, faculty, prospective students, and the community alike. With these recommendations, the Baumhart Center can begin to establish a framework of interdependent, effective, and relatively simple-to-execute solutions that consequently further its mission of doing business better.

Industry Analysis

An industry is defined as "a set of companies that do the same job for customers in essentially the same ways." Using that definition, and knowing Baumhart's mission, the Baumhart Center is in the industry of providing executive management education with a purpose. It's industry then comprises a wide variety of 'companies' that provide or claim to provide innovative leadership skills, not because that's all Baumhart does, but because someone looking to apply to Baumhart might consider those others.

The higher education industry more broadly in the United States is large and highly profitable; currently, the country totals 4,313 institutions of higher education.

Over one quarter of these institutions offer Master of Business Administration programs, which include full-time MBA, part-time MBA, online MBA, and executive MBA, among other formats[1]. The MBA program is the most popular in business schools around the country and it is also the one program growing the fastest in popularity.

Covid-19 has impacted many programs negatively, primarily because of the shift from presential learning to online learning, which made many students rethink or postpone the idea of pursuing their MBA. However, with pandemic-related restrictions slowly being lifted as vaccination rates rise and as universities return to in-person classes, there is an expected increase in the demand of applications for MBA programs from international students as well as students from the US.[2] The Baumhart Center is in a highly competitive industry, and as a business program, it is well positioned due to its competitive advantage of emphasizing the importance of ideals to drive social change in business. This competitive advantage can be expanded and further explored in a post-Covid world.

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[1] "What Are the Different Types of MBA Program?," TopMBA.com, accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.topmba.com/mba-programs/executive/what-are-different-types-mba-programs.

[2] Graduate Management Admission Council, "Application-Trends-Survey-Report-2019.Pdf," Market Intelligence, Application Trends Survey Report 2019, accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.gmac.com/-/media/files/gmac/research/admissions-and-application-trends/application-trends-survey-report-2019.pdf.

However, when looking at how many students would consider applying to Baumhart for these reasons and where Baumhart ranks among its immediate competitors it is difficult to determine. The reason being that there is no exact data however we have found three areas from which the data would be relevant:

1. Trends around masters-level Social Leadership programs with a Social Work focus

2. Trends around Business Education, especially part-time education and/or executive MBA

3. And trends around business professionals looking to be part of shorter programs and events in a digital world

According to a 2019 report by the Council on Social Work Education [3], the enrollment for Master's in Social Work programs had nearly doubled. For dual degree programs, Business was 4th in the top 5 categories. It is difficult to be granular and data-driven in this case, because 2019 and 2020 were so different. Using 2019 data seemed redundant, and 2020 data is not out yet, so we relied on some sentiment analysis on social media and the news. The latest available data on Executive MBA's [4] shows that the pandemic has accelerated the need for leaders who are conscious of inclusivity and digitality. As part of this report, employers believe that shorter programs are key to continued education in management, with an accelerated interest in skills that help understand society, not "just the industry."

Data [5], though to be read with caution, show that there were some financial returns in

[3] Council on Social Work Education, "2019-Annual-Statistics-on-Social-Work-Education-in-the-United-States-Final-(1).Pdf," Survey, 2019 Statistics on Social Work Education in the United States, 2019, https://cswe.org/getattachment/Research-Statistics/2019-Annual-Statistics-on-Social-Work-Education-in-the-United-States-Final-(1).pdf.aspx.

[4] Executive MBA Council, "New Study on the Future of Work & Working Professional Education Examines How Teaching and Learning Must Evolve by 2025," accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/new-study-on-the-future-of-work--working-professional-education-examines-how-teaching-and-learning-must-evolve-by-2025-301173611.html.

[5] "Executive MBA Council | Newsroom | EMBA Trends," accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.embac.org/newsroom-emba-trends.html.

terms of increased pay for EMBA students. This could align with potential trends of the economy, prospective students may not be able to take full time off their work, and an immersive but part-time program model may become more preferable. The industry as a whole has been steadily moving towards an ethics and mission based approach in their MBA curriculum. Only a few universities have dedicated programs or centers in their business school dedicated to a mission-driven approach like Quinlan's Baumhart Scholars.

These universities are mainly the top ranking programs in the United States. This leaves Loyola the opportunity to reach those people who feel that they would not belong at a school like Harvard or the University of Chicago or who are seeking a more individualized experience. While doing industry research, it was found that Loyola's Baumhart Scholars [6] was one of the few programs that both offered and marketed their network and mentorship aspects when it comes to their mission-driven MBA. This leaves Loyola with the opportunity to target the best students possible for their limited positions by emphasizing what they offer over other universities when it comes to both individualization and their focus on social responsibility.

When it comes to Loyola's more regional and direct private school competitors like Butler [7], Depaul [8], and Marquette [9], none of these universities offer a program like Baumhart Scholars or focus on mission driven education as much as Loyola. This gives Baumhart Scholars a leg up on connecting with and ultimately acquiring prospective students from the Midwest who are interested in a smaller private business program with purpose.

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[6] Baumhart Center for Social Enterprise et al., "Baumhart Scholars MBA: Baumhart Center: Loyola University Chicago," accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.luc.edu/baumhartcenter/education/baumhartscholarsmba/.
[7] nlyzun, "The Butler MBA Program," Text, Butler.edu, December 7, 2015, https://www.butler.edu/mba.
[8] "MBA Programs | DePaul University, Chicago," accessed May 2, 2021, https://business.depaul.edu/academics/graduate/mba/Pages/default.aspx.
[9] "A Marquette MBA // Business // Marquette University," accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.marquette.edu/business/graduate/mba.php.

Baumhart Center Analysis

The Baumhart Center is located within Loyola University's Quinlan School of Business. Through research, education, and engagement, the Baumhart Center looks to prepare students and leaders with the tools to take on societal issues they may encounter. With the support of Loyola, the Baumhart Center uses business to drive social impact and focuses its ideals around five key values which include courage, collaboration, diversity, service, and innovation.[1] A description of each value and its relevance to the Baumhart Center is detailed below.[1]

Baumhart Center
Courage: We go to the frontiers of thought, asking critical questions and challenging current ways of doing business.
Collaboration: We embrace interdisciplinary learning and action, leveraging the skills and knowledge of all academic disciplines, community stakeholders, and sectors of our economy.
Diversity: We seek diverse perspectives, knowing that our ideas are stronger when they reflect the racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious, and gender diversity of our world.

Service: We believe in service to others and proactively seek opportunities to create social value for the greater good.

Innovation: We are open-minded, embracing any idea that has the power to change the world.

The Baumhart Center is able to differentiate from other social impact driven programs by practices implemented throughout its structure. Following Loyola's mission to "go forth and set the world on fire," the Baumhart Center exercises new ways of exploring business by focusing on racial, ethnic, and gender diversity around the world. It brings together business, government, nonprofit, and academic leaders to speak and share insights on changes taking place within different industries. These participants bring a broader scope of what social impact can achieve and what it can bring to the communities they are involved in. The Baumhart Center prides itself on building a community of individuals that want to create impact wherever they may find themselves. Below are a few numbers outlining Baumhart's outreach.[10]

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[10] Loyola University Chicago, Quinlan Business School, "Baumhart Annual Report 2019.Pdf," BAUMHART CENTER 2019 ANNUAL REPORT ACCELERATING IMPACT, accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/quinlan-baumhartctr/Baumhart%20Annual%20Report%202019.pdf.

3,500+

Leaders and students participated in learning gathers and presentations.

15+

Nonprofits and social enterprises received support through student-led consulting projects and applied research.

125+

Speakers visited the center to enrich Baumhart's curriculum and to give students exposure to real-world examples.

Porter's Five Forces

Rivalry Amongst Existing Competitors**: For the Baumhart Center, rivalry is low to medium. When examining the Baumhart Center in its entirety, including its purpose-driven programs and collaborative institutes/seminars, there does not seem to be high rivalry among other programs of this nature. However, rivalry is medium for Baumhart's MBA program, Baumhart Scholars, which competes with other traditional and executive MBA programs and programs that have a social impact pathway at both Jesuit and non-Jesuit universities. According to data trends issued by Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International [11], the US offers

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[11] Management Education Task Force, "Management Education at Risk," 2002.

the world's largest number of MBA programs with over 4,000 programs offered by 454 institutions. Therefore, students may have difficulty distinguishing and choosing among these differing programs.

Threat of Entrants: As we mentioned in the introduction, 2020 and the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the sentiment towards adapting more humane business practices and set in motion a move away from profit-only targets. As the sentiment demands conscious business practices, corporate leaders are being called out for doing otherwise, and companies are looking for leaders and employees who can offer a socially responsible understanding of business. Business schools have always responded to the demands of the industry and we suspect it won't be long before business schools start offering either specialization towards this. Companies may also begin more intensive in-house programs on diversity and ethical business. Both of these would prove as competitors to Baumhart's offerings.

Threat of Substitutes: The threat of substitutes is medium to high; the direct substitutes present within this industry include other types of MBA programs (part-time, one-year, executive, hybrid, and/or online), specialized master programs, undergraduate programs, community colleges, corporate training and development programs, apprenticeship and trade schools, gap year programs, volunteering, military, internships, or work. Such substitutes could also potentially be rivals, as they may be targeting the same audience or group of students.

Power of Buyers: Baumhart's buyers are the students of the Baumhart Scholars MBA and the participants of the many programs and initiatives it offers. In both cases, as the threat of substitutes is medium to high, buyers too have a medium power over choosing over Baumhart, as they can opt for any of these substitutes, over other offerings.

Power of Suppliers: The suppliers in this industry include: the faculty and staff that provide business practices and teaching activities for educational courses, the business professionals

and organizations that provide insight during seminars and institutes, and the donors that helped establish the center and continue to support its mission and longevity. While they do have moderate power as individuals, they are extremely powerful as a collective because they do not depend primarily on the industry for revenues, they have significant negotiating leverage, and industry participants face switching costs in changing, recruiting, and retaining highly skilled and experienced suppliers.

SWOT Analysis

S Strengths	**W** Weaknesses	**O** Opportunities	**T** Threats
➤ Small cohorts that encourage intimacy ➤ Individualized student experience ➤ Fundraising and development ➤ Diverse intersected leaders ➤ Mission driven	➤ Attracting new individuals ➤ Keeping intimacy while scaling ➤ Lacks the ability of outreach on a geographic scale	➤ Relationships with other Jesuit Universities ➤ Located in a densely populated metropolitan area ➤ Strong alumni network working throughout multiple sectors ➤ Hybrid & online learning platforms	➤ Notable universities with similar programs – Northwestern ➤ Scaling nationwide requiring more funding

The Baumhart Center has the ability to successfully scale through existing individualized student experiences that connect small cohorts with mission-driven and profit-for-purpose development. These cohorts produce a relationship building environment that goes beyond the classroom into a diverse network of alumni in multiple industry sectors. With our proposed plan, the Baumhart Center will have the capability to scale by using interdisciplinary, practical, and mission-driven approaches to business. With classes, "based on the belief that the best social ventures will understand the social context of poverty and the business strategy to scale solutions," Baumhart seeks to set itself apart from competing universities with similar programs.[12]

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[12] Quinlan School of Business, "Meet Seth Green, Director of the Baumhart Center," accessed May 2, 2021, https://www.luc.edu/quinlan/stories/archive/meet-seth-green-director-of-the-baumhart-center.shtml.

VRIO Analysis

The VRIO framework on Baumhart Center will define the sustainable comparative advantage of the program. According to the VRIO analysis detailed below, it can be inferred that the Baumhart Center has a temporary competitive advantage over other general MBA programs across the nation. After taking into consideration categories including infrastructure, student body size, quality education, Jesuit education, social impact education, and sense of purpose and after analyzing and comparing Baumhart's programs to other general MBA programs, we can assume that the Baumhart Center is well-positioned to compete. The three resources that give Baumhart Center a competitive advantage are Jesuit education, education focusing on social impact, and sense of purpose.

Resources/ Capabilities	Valuable?	Rare?	Difficult to imitate?	Organize to create value?	Result
Infrastructure	X				No comparative advantage
Student body size	X				No comparative advantage
Skilled Faculty	X	X			Temporary comparative advantage
Quality / in-depth education	X	X	X		Temporary comparative advantage
Jesuit Education	X	X	X		Temporary comparative advantage
Education based on social impact	X	X	X	X	Temporary comparative advantage
Sense of Purpose	X	X	X	X	Long term competitive advantage

Key Strategic Issues

Baumhart's stategic mission is to scale without losing the depth of the program. While in the long-run this could mean setting up or supporting the 'Baumhart model' across the USA, in the short-run, this needs be achieved by scaling the impact and reach of the program, without increasing class size. With that in mind, and having analyzed Baumhart's position in the industry, we think that Baumhart has to work on:

1. Maintaining the value-proposition of its unique offering of high-touch programs and education in the time of a global pandemic, and in a post-pandemic world where some level of hybridity will be normal

2. Maintaining and cementing its place as the in social-business and education

Strategy: Having identified the key strategic issues, we present the following strategy: Baumhart should become the center of a thriving community of profit and purpose by using a hybrid model of virtual and in-person initiatives, and establish itself as a thought leader in the field of social enterprise.

Recommendations

Baumhart Summit

To truly make Baumhart a community center, we propose to leverage in-person interaction of high-touch experiences, and then extend it to the digital.

Events, even in a post-pandemic world, should be an important area of focus, and conducted in a way that would have long-term impact.

It is no secret that as a student graduates from a program, their involvement in alumni activities start to taper off. Given that Baumhart does not want to compromise on quality by increasing class size, building relationships with alumni is all the more important. In this section we are recommending the creation of an annual event, the Baumhart Summit, that invites alumni, interested businesses, and new students together to connect and further the community-centric focus.

We propose a nine-day orientation period for new students (longer than the current weekend immersion program), that has a three day (weekend) Baumhart Summitt at the end of it. We envision this becoming an annual event that attracts not only new students, but current industry leaders and alumni. It can also be an area for fundraising for both the center and student aid.

Prior to the summit, all orientation events should be tailored toward the in-person experience, so long lectures, individual homework assignments, and other isolating activities should be avoided and left for online classes. Once the current class is more connected, then the alumni will come to the center for this three-day convention. While the events of the convention should be open to flexibility, the mission of this summit is to continue to foster strong relationships in the community.

An essential piece to this event would be a connection with the Baumhart Connect (discussed later). Using technology to continue relationship maintenance for the rest of the year is essentially to make sure the impact of the Summit extends beyond the event itself. Connection breeds further connection and the more people that Baumhart maintains a connection with during the year the more people will come to the Summit, which means more opportunities and networking abilities which increases the value of the Summit to all attendees, as well as increases the value proposition Baumhart has to offer. The app should be used to get visibility to the Summit, advertise key names attending, and encourage maximum participation both at the Summit, and engagement on the app.

Another crucial piece, especially as former students go on to be involved with and own major companies, is corporate sponsorship. As a Scholar at Baumhart Center, most will be searching for a company that matches their social enterprise passion, and they can assist them. By providing a graduated student an option for a job after their MBA at a partnered organization incentivizes them to join the program, and promises them a return on their investment. On the other side, the company will gain a passionate, driven employee in the future who truly believes in the intersection of profit & purpose. This builds a company's leadership pipeline and ensures that only the individuals who understand this concept are brought into the organization. This sort of connection also creates an incentive for the company to offer tuition assistance to an individual while they're in the MBA program. It's a win-win situation. An individual's knowledge & talents are cultivated during the program and at the completion of it they receive a purposeful job that they have been studying for 20 months.

Depending on the organization, jobs will be offered to those students who are the best fit for them and vice versa. This will scale Baumhart Center's initiatives as more people will learn about social enterprise and other employees at these partnered organizations will be exposed to issues surrounding profit & purpose from the graduates of the Scholar MBA, and more companies will see the value of this mission-driven education approach. In turn, the alumni for

Baumhart will strengthen as these organizations will continually receive Scholar graduates who will be able to engage with those who already worked in that company for a while. However, this will be a highly selective program, quality over quantity but at the same time bringing awareness to social impact throughout the whole organization.

Local Meetups

The Summit is one annual event. Through the year, we propose to keep the high-touch component, to expand its visibility outside Chicago and the Midwest, and to bring publicity to the program, Baumhart should identify 2-5 'hubs' where most students have come from using data from alumni database, to host local meetups. At these hubs, Baumhart can facilitate 1-2 local meet and greet with partners - corporates, alumni, faculty, and potential students.

These events should be advertised using digital media, via Baumhart Connect, and other marketing channels, to bring the community together. Baumhart Connect can also act has a community platform without the Center's mediation. For example, if two alumni are in a city and meeting up, they can post this through the app and organize an impromptu event. More organized events with greater attendance would help set up a foundation, yet once alumni are in regular contact these events will happen organically.

Baumhart Connect

In an effort to strengthen Baumhart's presence on a more virtual level, an interactive social mobile application geared towards scholars and alumni should be created. While restrictions stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic are likely to continue for some time, there are creative, modern methods to enhance social interaction and engagement for Baumhart scholars and alumni. The goal is to develop a mobile application representing the Baumhart Center called "Baumhart Connect." The purpose of this app will be to, like its name, connect Baumhart scholars and alumni with each other and create a more social platform that can be utilized for communication, updates, and general information. Furthermore, this app will be used as an outreach mechanism to increase awareness of the program and to help recruit undergraduate students interested in pursuing graduate studies through the Baumhart Center. Features of the app will include the latest news of Loyola's initiatives, a social platform for current students and alumni to interact and share thought-provoking ideas, a mentor-mentee matching service between current students and alumni (taking advantage of the recently launched Loyola Mentors program), a resource for all things Baumhart for both current and prospective students, and access to Sakai.
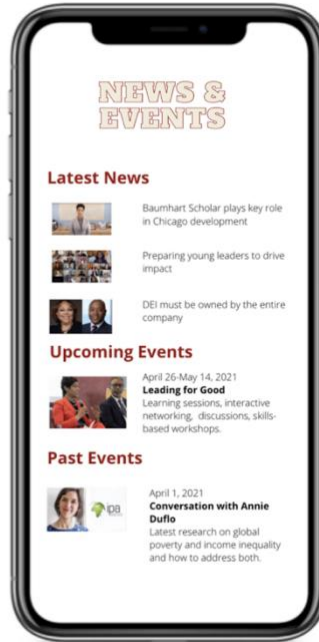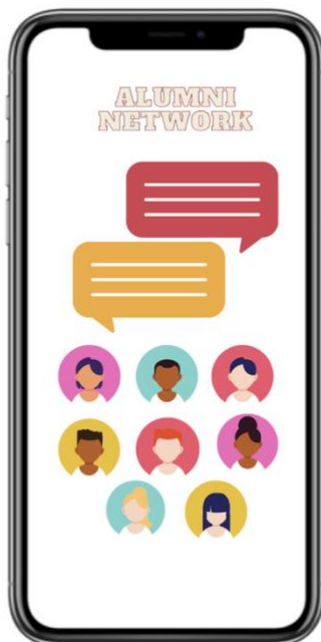
To entice current students to download the Baumhart Connect app, it will be seamlessly synced with the Sakai platform they already use to access course syllabi, take quizzes or exams, post on forums, review materials, submit assignments, and join Zoom meetings. While the desktop Sakai site is efficient, there is nothing easier than being able to access all relevant course materials on a mobile device, something we all have at our fingertips. Students will be encouraged to utilize the mobile platform as a means to stay connected to professors and peers throughout the academic year. Of course, the sheer convenience of having all things Baumhart at their fingertips will be a driving force for app downloads.

During orientation week and at the Baumhart Summit, discussed in further detail below, scholars will be inspired to download the Baumhart Connect app as a means to discover the features and benefits available to them throughout their time at Loyola and beyond graduation as they transition to alumni. Downloading the app will act as an added incentive as scholars will have the opportunity to access their orientation itinerary and store admission tickets for the various events directly in the app. As part of the on-boarding process during the summit, Baumhart representatives will host brief introductory workshops with interactive modules to showcase the features and benefits of the app and to fully immerse the incoming cohort into the virtual aspect of the program.

The mobile application will be free to download and designed for both iOS and Android platforms to achieve a broader reach amongst users [13]. Between 2019 and 2020, there were over 250 million daily app downloads. This statistic is only expected to rise over the coming years, reaching 184 billion downloads by 2024, marking a clear shift in tech user behavior and further supporting the mobile app initiative [14]. To conclude, the goal of the "Baumhart Connect" app will be to do just that - connect lovers of all things Baumhart in one central, easily accessible, online location. Examples of the features and functionality of the app are included below.

[13] "What Age Groups Own What Type of Smartphone?," *PaymentsJournal* (blog), April 2, 2020, https://www.paymentsjournal.com/what-age-groups-own-what-type-of-smartphone/.
[14] "30 Truly Fascinating App Usage Statistics to Know in 2021," accessed May 2, 2021, https://websitebuilder.org/blog/app-usage-statistics/.

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BAUMHART CONNECT

ALUMNI NETWORK

NEWS & EVENTS

Latest News

Baumhart Scholar plays key role in Chicago development

Preparing young leaders to drive impact

DEI must be owned by the entire company

Upcoming Events

April 26-May 14, 2021
Leading for Good
Learning sessions, interactive networking, discussions, skills-based workshops.

Past Events

April 1, 2021
Conversation with Annie Duflo
Latest research on global poverty and income inequality and how to address both.

Affiliated Digital Experiences

Community creation today is a matter of creating experiences both online and offline, and one complements the other. In keeping with maintaining the hybrid balance, we propose Baumhart also focus on building differentiated experiences online, to be streamed concurrently with the offline events so people can stream in, even if they cannot make it in person. This approach can also be used to hold hybrid meetings, classes and programs if a test run is successful.

Instead of setting up an impersonal live Zoom stream, where remote attendees cannot interact with those present, we propose using emerging technology that gamifies the virtual experience, such as gather.town.
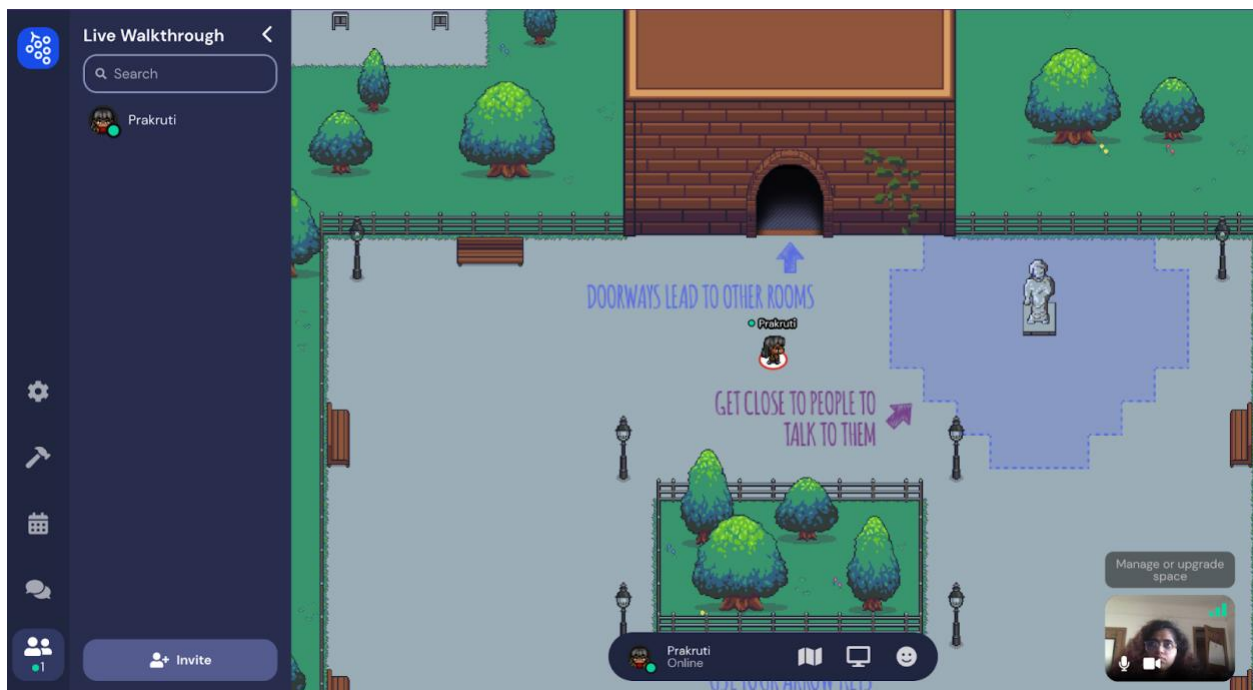
This is a screenshot of what the interface looks like. The 'map' of the virtual space can be customized from scratch, and Baumhart can build a replica of its physical space to

be used by all events. 'Rooms' can be created and participants can move from room to room. All the participants show on the screen as their characters, and then when characters get close to each other, they can chat through video. 'Private rooms' can be created, so that one requires a password to enter. This is helpful in a way Breakout Rooms on Zoom are. There are a host of other features, and there are demos online that also walk the user through on how to integrate it with a scheduled Zoom meeting, how to build the space, and create that immersive virtual environment. For instance, you can place a clickable 'document' or some other object, which can link to something else (highlighted in yellow in the screenshot below).
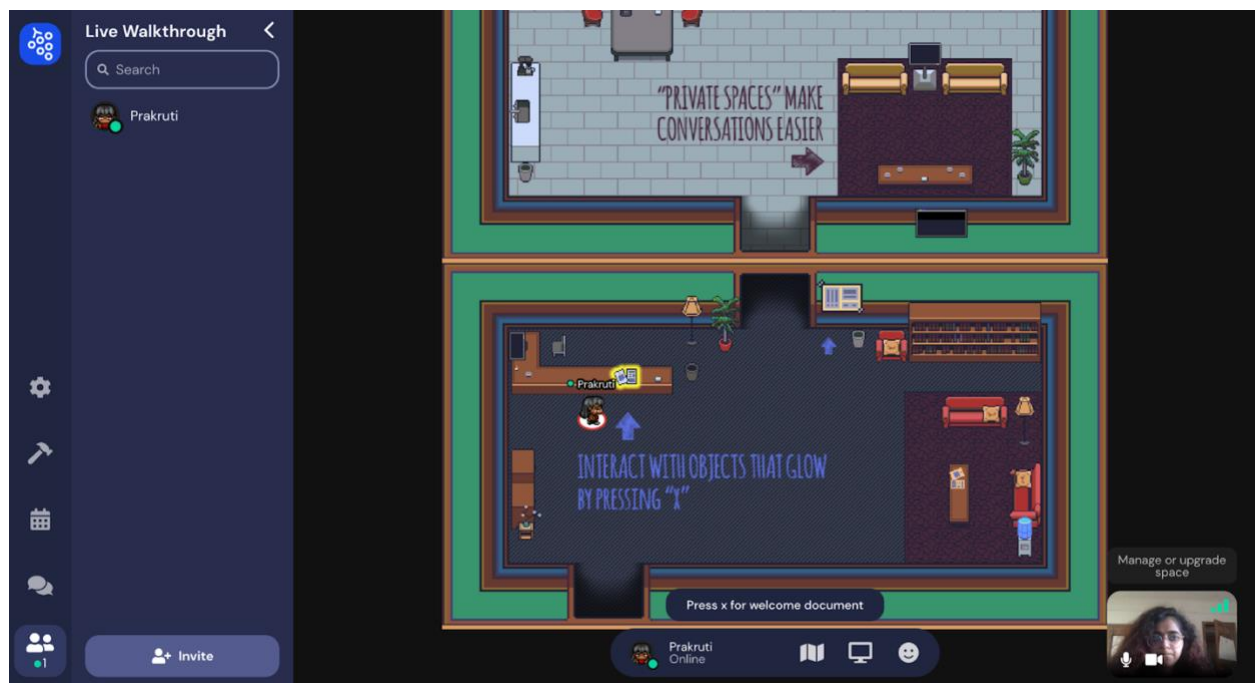
Students or attendees can be asked to sign-in when in person, and then remote users can join in to create a dynamic hybrid meeting experience, whether with groups or individuals. A part-time student worker can help with setting up the gather.town

interface, which should take about 40-60 hours, and then be available for

troubleshooting and guidance on the day of the event.

Cost Analysis

The Baumhart Summit could cost between $100,000 and $200,000 [15] for a 150 person

attendance. However using Baumhart center space, having internal speakers, and not paying

for rooming for alumni will reduce this cost. While this cost is steep, ways to offset it will be to

host fundraising events at the Summit. Since the Baumhart center is mission-driven, giving

alumni the opportunity to help support both the center and the students attending is an excellent

way to live that mission out. For smaller events hosting 20-40 people in an evening, the cost

could run up to $20,000. This cost could be reduced by building partnerships with spaces,

caterers and more. Though, if the meetup is among alumni and spontaneous there would be no

cost for the center.

Affiliated Digital Experiences: Setting up a virtual space, with the help of a student, should

cost about $1000-$1500, and an added $200-$400 per event to have someone to help

troubleshoot and guide.

As for Baumhart Connect, app development and maintenance can be quite costly depending

on the features and functionality offered. In fact, developing a native app [16], as suggested for

the Baumhart Center, can cost upwards of $100,000 and maintaining it can cost 20% of the

development cost per year. Part of the intent of Baumhart Connect will include the opportunity

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[15] "The Conference Cost Estimator for Budgeting," Social Tables, March 17, 2020, http://www.socialtables.com/?p=28295.

[16] "Mobile App Development Cost Breakdown: 10 Biggest Hidden Costs," BuildFire, August 22, 2017, https://buildfire.com/hidden-app-development-costs/.

for Loyola students enrolled in the Computer Science program to develop and oversee the maintenance of the app. In Loyola Chicago's Computer Science department, Professor Nicholas Hayward leads various design algorithms courses whose coursework typically include a project centered around designing, programming, and executing an application, all skills that will be utilized by the students during the development process.

Students will have access to any existing equipment and programs necessary for the app development process through Loyola to help support the ideation, design, development, and maintenance development phases. Throughout the process, the team will receive guidance from professors in the department. Because developing and maintaining a mobile platform is no small feat and requires a significant time commitment, Loyola can offer paid internship opportunities to 5-8 students seeking experience in software development. The internship will pay $20 an hour and interns will be expected to commit roughly 20 hours a week to the development of the application.

Assuming the app development process will span across six months, Loyola can expect an initial financial commitment of $52,000 to $83,200, depending on how many interns are employed, resulting in cost savings of $16,800 to $48,000. Annual maintenance will also be required for each subsequent year post launch to address any significant bugs or to facilitate the addition of new features. The in-house maintenance of the Baumhart Connect app will run anywhere from $10,400 to $16,640 per year, resulting in annual cost savings of $3,360 to $9,600. Tapping into the existing student body at Loyola will not only save significant costs on the development of this mobile application, but it will also provide Loyola students with a unique opportunity to participate in a meaningful, highly educational initiative that will have an impact and provide guidance to students and alumni for generations to come. Furthermore, this will be an invaluable exercise that allows students to prematurely gain experience in the field they desire to pursue post graduation.

Action Steps

Finally, we recommend the following action steps to bring the above mentioned recommendations to reality.

1. We recommend creating an Alumni Liaison position in the next few months, whose first order of business would be to plan the orientation week(s) period in May of 2021. Eventually, the Alumni Liaison should be tasked with organizing and coordinating the events of the orientation, alumni engagement, and more

2. By the end of June all faculty/invitations and venues should be completed and planned out. The course material for the period should be selected and one (or more) person(s) should be charged with getting alumni to attend. Incentives can be used but getting high attendance this first meeting will set a strong precedence for future events

3. The app development can begin in the Fall of 2021, and should not take longer than eight months. Fall 2021 can also be used to test-run immersive digital experiences with software such as gather.town. Both these will require working with students from the Computer Science department at Loyola

4. We recommend beginning Baumhart local events in August-September of 2021. This will give enough time for the center to prepare the beginning orientation period