**Alternative Solution Analysis  
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Group:

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this document is to analysis and determine the pros and cons of other solutions to for the task at hand. This document will be written from the view of the company behind our proposed app. So, it will be analysis alternative solutions to their problem.

**Problem:**

With the advancement of technology our company requires a mobile presence for their ecommerce businesses in order to stay competitive.

**Current Solution:**

The current solution that has been chosen is to develop an application for our ecommerce business in house with our own development team.

**Pros:**

By developing the application ourselves, we would have a high degree of control on its various features and design elements.

Future maintenance would be easier due to our own development staff having intimate knowledge over the inner workings of the app.

Helps our development team gain experience

**Cons:**

Unexperienced development team

Higher costs and risk

Product may not be made as expected

**Alternative solutions:**

**Hire third party company**

**Summary:**

We could hire a third-party company to develop the application for us

**Pros:**

Less risk

Less cost involved

**Cons:**

More expensive future maintenance

Less control over application features and design

Development team does not gain valuable experience

**Utilize preexisting third party application**

**Summary:**

We could utilize an already present third party application to sell our products.

**Pros:**

Cheapest upfront option

No maintenance costs

Least amount of risk

More trust in store depending on chosen third party

**Cons:**

Third party apps take cut of sales for use, or require subscription

No control over store design or features

No control over availability of store

More complexity in logistics chain

**Use third party tool to develop application**

**Summary:**

Utilize a third part application or Software product to develop an application with their tools. Instead of coding from scratch

**Pros:**

Less complex than coding from scratch

Allows in house development team to gain experience

More control over app design and features than other third-party options

**Cons:**

Complexity of app depends on complexity of chosen tool

Still has similar risk as coding from scratch

Future maintenance is not guaranteed to be easy

**Analysis of suggest solutions:**

We are in a unique position here as we posses a in house development team. They have experience with application development but not enough for upper management to be satisfied with the risk level associated with in house development. Of the proposed solutions hiring a third-party developer to create our application seems insulting to our development team and an option that would waste their talents and time. The other two solutions hold more merit to them.

The first alternative solution is to utilize a third-party platform. There are many third-party ecommerce platforms that we could utilize to sell our products. Of all the choices examined I believe shopify is our top pick for this. It has a low monthly subscription to utilize it and has a list of features that we could utilize for our business. Shopify would also be able to be utilized as a new POS system making inventory integration between online and instore orders far easier. Shopify would also allow us to manage our products listings on other platforms as well such as Amazon or Walmart. This would enable our sales manager to keep an overview of our online listings in a far easier manner. However, there are some cons to utilizing this solution. We would not have any control over inner workings or features over the shopify platform or application. This does mean maintenance cost would be down, however if we wished to add functionality or some type of rewards system then we would not be able to do that. Though I should mention that shopify does allow for third party apps to be utilized with their systems.

The other solution is to utilize a third-party application or tool to develop our own application. There are examples of this such as Wix, and more tailored to application development a tool called Mobi Loud. Now before I continue, I must state that this document is meant for alternative solution suggestion and recommendation. Before a solution is chosen by upper management then more research must be conducted into the proposed tools for each solution. My research may not be adequate for this purpose. These tools would allow for us to custom build our own applications as we currently plan to. This would give us control over the features of our application as well as its design, something we lose with a third-party platform. We would once again be in charge of maintaining the application, however we would now be able to implement features and new systems that we wouldn’t be able to do with a third part app. Utilizing a proper tool would also streamline development by simplifying the process. That is of course assuming our development team is given proper time to acclimate to the tool and learn its uses. However we still have risk with this option. If our team is unable to properly learn the tool then they may not be able to deliver a adequate product. We may also be limited by what we can do with our application due to the complexity of the tool we use.

**Recommended Solution:**

It is my recommendation that we utilize a third-party platform such as shopify as our backbone of our app. It would be utilized for inventory management, POS systems, and the entire checkout process. We could then utilize a third-party tool, such as buildfire, to develop a mobile application that integrates with Shopfiy through their API’s. While developing an application in house would be a better option for our development team this is our first experience with mobile applications. There is a large amount of risk to migrating from limited web presence to a full mobile presence. However, if it is preferred to develop an application in house then I recommend that a template prototype is utilized to aid in development. Utilizing a template would allow our team to properly learn how to build an application and give them a minimum quality standard to strive for. Though I will officially state I believe this to be the lesser option.