Business Plan

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**Executive Summary**

Digital Shield is an LLC that looks to provide the world with a better ease of mind with network security. We look to provide a unique service that has in person and abroad approach. We have our plans to conduct business mainly online but offer a unique ethical hacker portion of the business so that we can provide a proactive approach to your security. Our slogan life is better left unhacked will be our goal and modo so that we will be the most proactive anyone could be. The owner Dylan Drake has a mission to rid people and business of their fear of the cyber-attack. This will be our present and future because it is a constant threat and one that should be our highest priority. Our business and industry with this mission will continue to grow and we will grow with it.

**General Company Description**

Our company will be a Limited Liability Company or LLC for short. We will provide a service through digital or in person assessments of their cyber security at a location of business or personal home. We will provide a digital shield for our customers so they can feel save while on the web or protect assets in the digital realm for businesses and individuals.

Our mission is to rid people and business of their fear of the cyber-attack.

I want this business to be a provider of the best cyber security locally within the next 1-2 years and grow to the best in the state in the next 3 years and expand to other states and countries by the next 5 years. Objective number one get certifications to become a business and proper licensing. Objective number two dive into more research about the means to which to properly provide the service. Objective three get a clientele developed with recuring customers through subscriptions. Objective number four expand through employees, locations, and services. Objective number five have a well-developed company that is organized and is ready to turn a profit. Objective number six develop leaders to expand into new markets.

My services will mainly be aimed at business that have a developed cyberspace.

My industry is one that is in demand and the need is growing. In the short term the curve is gradually growing for the need of more thorough cyber security. The long term is that this will be a much-needed field because cyber security and ethical hacking will be needed to prevent and stop cyber-attacks and hacking in the future. My company will be praised to take advantage by keeping a well-developed research team and a monitoring team that can provide the ethical hacking service to find weak point and advise in the upkeep of their security.

The company’s core strength will be client service/ customer satisfaction. We will provide a face to go with the company so that they can recognize who we are when we come to help or when they see our logo, we are who they imagine. Our customer service, and our service/product is what will make us succeed. Our major competitive strength will be able to provide and in person touch to our service so that they can see the human behind the product. I bring some manger/ leadership, marketing, intro programming skills to the table.

**Products and Services**

Digital Shield offers both a product and a service depending on the level in which you would like to buy. Our first subscription plan named Cyber Shield. will be just the anti-theft/cyber security protection software. This includes your basics of a firewall, VPN, cite prevention, a secure cloud storage. These all are a part of our lowest price option that we will offer at 15$ a month or for 100$ a year depending on your preferred mode of payment. This also includes free updates and troubleshooting if a problem were to be recognized. Our second level named Cyber Armor is a little bit more advanced that includes all aspects of the first but with added features of dark web monitoring and privacy monitoring system. This will be offered at 20$ a month or at 120$ a year. Lastly the final product/service named cyber suit which is the best to offer with best protection. This includes all features above plus a service were up to 3 times a year a Digital Shield cyber security ethical hacker service can be offered. With this the associate will have to be in contact with the company and have arranged dates set aside to evaluate the cyber security of the client. With this service you will be able to provide feedback on employee behavior. With that you can have that adjusted so that people may not use your own staff against you to get into your system. The plan itself cost 300$ a month or about 3000$ a year for this service. If needed you can request an ethical hacker more than the designated 3 times a year for an additional 300$ a visit.

If you go and read up on our competition’s services, you get protection form cyber threats just like ours, but we offer the edge in providing ethical hacking where others do not. By us having that service alone we have an advantage for consumers to be safer and business not having to worry about their hard-earned assets being in jeopardy. Compared to the competition we are the one that offers a plan directly for business and that is the plan named Digital Suit. This one is tailor made for business because of the ethical hacker function. From research I have put together ethical hacking is usually a freelancer type of business not offered in a subscription or list of products. We also offer the advantage of being a third party, so you do not have to worry about someone being under your pay scale has an ethical hacker. We provide the service, and you just must handle the bill rather than a full salary employee. In all our services help provide a necessity in today’s world were the cyber realm needs a shield and we are here to provide that defense.

Our disadvantages are that we have an idea we must just offer the service and product. We are still in development, so we have many strides to take before we are ready as a company to launch. Also because of we offer our prices are high but with time that disadvantage will become small or mute because of our advancement to make the cost cheaper.

**Intellectual property & Company Designation**

The idea of ethical hacking and security measure is nothing new for the market but how we implement the idea is new. We plan to implement our measures through local means and be in person software security. From my research there is no patents that are in place for my idea for a business. It is also difficult to put a patent on my service. A general service that is in common use for network security is hard to patent. Other forms of legal protection would be looked upon like a Trade Secret and Copywrite. Since I have a software program that goes along with my service that works as a network security that works in the background when I am not there. I would use a trade secret to help protect my software design for two reasons. The first being my client’s safety because if the person who is trying to do harm knows the code they could search for weak points and try to exploit them. This can be bad for business and reputation of my company. Second being it protects the product that I am selling from other businesses. This is so they do not get the leg up on our competitive edge. I will also be seeking a trademark for my logo so no one else can use it for their own gain.

Legal certification is mandated for the purpose of offering ethical hacking through a certification. “The CEH credential certifies individuals in the specific network security discipline of Ethical Hacking from a vendor-neutral perspective.” (*How to Become an Ethical Hacker, 2021*) This is a form education and legal mandate necessary to help in building your skills so that you can efficiently learn how to hack ethically through offensive or defensive measures. We will make sure that every employee will have this certification before the hiring process so we can ensure that they know the knowledge and are able to use it for the ethical purpose of the company.

Other product in the market that can be in competition with is Norton Life Lock, Mcafee. They provide a similar service that is a subscription service that provides network security. We will offer our own version of a network security but will have the advantage of being our own code and our own hometown business.

We are an LLC for tax and liability reasons. This is so that we as the individuals get more burdens relieved especially from taxes and liability from harm of the company. We can also defer taxes through the company rather than the individual.

**Marketing Plan**

The market for my product includes any person with internet access. According to the United States Census Bureau up to 85% of households have internet subscription. There are a total 122.8 million households in the US so about 104.38 households will be my total target market. (Bureau,2021)

The demand for cyber security is rising and is becoming one of the fastest growing markets. According to New England Institute of Technology Demand for cybersecurity professionals is on the rise. “The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the industry will experience job growth of 31% between 2019 and 2029. That is a much faster rate than most other industries will experience.” (Bureau,2021) The quote above also shows the development over the next ten years to 2029. The industry shows growth and for my business it will grow with the market because as the industry grows you take the opportunities to grow with the market and meet the demand.

The biggest barrier to entry for my industry is the schooling needed to obtain the knowledge to develop the cyber security program. The ethical hacking portion of Digital Shield would need to take the EC-Council LPT Master Exam. Other legal fees include an LLC license, and copyright fees for our cybersecurity code. Physical barriers of entry would include laptop computers and desktop computers for in office and on the go cybersecurity checking. Company vehicles and liability come from the in-person service of ethical hacking.

My business is going to be constantly updated and changing with technology. According to Moore’s Law technology is ever changing and will constantly do so. My company will have to keep up and advance with times through constant training and schooling. Government regulation do not affect my industry as much but if laws for certifications change then we will have to adapt. The economy will not be as big of an issue because with internet usage increasing its as much as a necessity as a job itself. We have a diverse market so we can adapt to any all-economic issues. Technology and industry changes are one in the same because they both influence one another. As the other advances the other will too.

The customer’s perspective my product has two points of views, one from the everyday person, and the small business. From the everyday person view people will see that we like to focus on our customer service. We will provide the best service with around the clock help and support. On top of the service our product will offer constant updates like our advancement in the industry so we can stay ahead of the dark parts of the cyber world. On top of that we will also offer password mangers and safe keeping so only you will have access to all your private content. From the business perspective they will receive the same support but also have an on-call security specialist so if they have a problem, they can trouble shoot and detect problems before they happen. Business’s will also have an ethical hacker not on their payroll so they can recruit us for the service and not have to worry about the cost except for the service fee. In short, the product will provide well in-depth cyber security with customer support to back it up if they need any issues resolved.

**Operational Plan**

The main sales will be driven by the advertising and marketing department. It will be with ads on Facebook and You Tube. This will create brand awareness and eventual sales through repeated sightings of the advertisements. For the business side of selling, we will have to be mainly word of mouth and let customers aka (other businesses) talk about us. We will stimulate that as well with the advertisements as well to show what we offer.

To facilitate the product, we will have constant customer contact through email and constant customer connection with problems. We will be available to fix and troubleshoot the problems that do arise. With our customers we will provide the most informative casual conversation to create a setting of ease and relaxation so that the customer is well fit to buy our product.

Our main product will mainly be delivered through online marketplace where they can download the software directly from our website. As for other businesses wanting the ethical hacker portion of the business, they will be mainly in contact with us through digital messaging, email, or phone. After this point we will get connections set up to have one of our personal on site to conduct the hacking portion and pinpoint where they can use improvements.

**Management**

Digital Shield’s organizational structure is one that will work with a horizontal structure. This will be so that our team will be able to have the most contact and communication between development and management. This will also help in getting rid of the corporate latter, so information is flowing smoothly through the organization. This in turn will help our strategy because employees will feel as if there a part of the management. It will create the environment of teamwork and dedication to the product and the company.

Along with the structure management will embrace the structure by having a laissez fair style of management. Thus, making an environment where employees will not feel micromanaged and have more time to devote to the product(s). This will mainly be in effect when a team will need to be hired on. Exceptions to this style of management is when the track starts to lead off course then and only then will management take action to bring it back on target. This type of structure and management are crucial for development and will in turn yield a better work environment and make for better product devotion.

**Market Analysis**

Digital Shield’s distribution of product will be through online subscription for the customer portion. The Target age for my product will be in the 18-64 age range because that is the group that is most ownership of computers. (Anderson,2020) My product does not have a specific gender associated with it. The location is anyone with internet access. The income level can be the average of 50,000 a year. (Anderson,2020) Middle class and typically urban, suburban households will need my product. (Anderson,2020) Education level of my customers will range from some college-to-college degrees. (Anderson,2020)

For my business side of the product, I will mainly be targeting small business and other LLC’s. Their location will start off with customers in Arizona but slowly expand. Their size will range on the smaller side, ones without a well-developed IT or cyber security sector.

The two main competition for my company will be Norton, and Mcafee. Their products include the software protection and cyber security. They will be my main competition in cybersecurity, and they will compete in all locations. The only indirect competition will be the production of computers with their own internal security. We will offer the same protections but mine will have the ability to put in multiple computers and have a security cloud. They will have the advantage of a million-dollar protection plan. On top of that they also have the manpower and money to help fund their projects where I will have to build up.

Products: Ethical Hacker Availability, in depth cyber security threat monitoring, limited by area, Norton does not offer ethical hacking but does offer LifeLock, Mcafee does not offer but does offer gamer protection, 3.

Price: 300 a month or 3000 a year, better price in long run, not in short run, Norton offers 199.99 in first year after that it will be for 349.99 a year (Norton,2021), Mcafee offers a 39.99 a year protection after first year it goes to 119.99 a year (Mcafee,2021), 1.

Quality: Most in depth for business provide a direct way to detect vulnerability, Vulnerability protection and detection, availability of the service, Norton offers many plans ranging in price but mainly offers a safety net if your identity is stolen (Norton,2021), Mcafee offers the basic nothing unique compared in quality (Mcafee,2021), 1.

Selection: 3 choices, Easy to choose options, limited number of options, Norton offer 4 options with each have varying different amounts of service (Norton,2021), Mcafee has 6 options varying on 2-year subscriptions and 1-year subscriptions (Mcafee,2021), 2.

Service: Online/ In person, in depth service person to person, must be in area, Norton is online, Mcafee is online, 3.

Reliability: We proactive not reactive and provide security before they breach your information, stops problems before they happen, might see as a insurance rather than a service, Norton offers million dollar safety net for identity theft, Mcafee it works as intended get what you pay for, 1.

Stability: We are still built up, so we are not known if stable yet, the plan accounts for many obstacles, unknown if stable, Norton is a long last brand since 1982, Mcafee has been around since 1987 and is stable, 2.

Expertise: Our education is our main expertise, we know what we must do from educational standpoint, no real-world expertise, Norton has 39 years of expertise, Mcafee has 34 years of expertise, 1.

Location: We are online for two of our services and state by state for our ethical hacker program, Norton is complete online, Mcafee is also complete online, 3.

**Logo**

Digital Shield’s logo represents protection and safety. The Spartan in the background represents the employees behind the shield that work it and use it to help protect you. They also have the “D.S” on the helmet for the initials of the company name. Our employees and developers are the true warriors of the company doing all the hard work, so they are represented by the Spartan.

The shield in the forefront is the second part of our name “Shield”. Every warrior needs a good defense to have an effective offense, so the shield represents that. Inside of the shield design is lines of code representing what we do and develop. The bold black ring around the shield can also be seen as a protector of the code.

The color scheme of the logo is mainly to have a darker theme because of the nature of what we are fighting against. The dark web is what we fight against so got to be in the dark to blend in and show we can defend against it.

The logo makes us different because it shows that we are putting defense first, not our name. It shows what we value and compare to other we do not just brand the name we prove our name.

**Branding Strategy**

Our image to the public will be a visual representation of our mission which is to hold our customer as number one priority through safety and protection. Our logo does exactly that with the “DS” Spartan behind the coding shield. On every piece of advertisement or piece of communication will be our logo to ensure our brand starts to get recognition. For every interaction we hold in person like with our ethical hacking portion of the business we will hand out business cards. Like the card to the right, it will show our logo and contact information to get a quick access to our contact information and the specific person that helped with your problem. This little card will also be included digitally through any email or survey sent out so that the customer will always have some form of contact to us. For business cards we used Vista print to help in our making. (Vistaprint, 2018)



**Digital Shield**

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With every form of online advertisement there will be displayed slogan “Life’s better left Unhacked”. This slogan represents us and what we do. It is short and simple, so it gets to the overall main idea of what we do. It will not be displayed everywhere like the logo only in area where it will attract new customers. This is so they get an idea of what we are all about.

Along with the slogan we will incorporate it with our slogan on advertisement on Facebook and YouTube. With face book it will be like a digital billboard while on YouTube it will have more movement and animation. The Billboard version on Facebook will be hyperlinked so that when it is clicked it will lead them to the cite. While the YouTube ads will end with our logo and slogan proudly displayed like it is to the right. The colors of the YouTube ad also match the business card so that we have consistency between the branding strategies. They have the same color scheme so that they can be correlated with each other.



Life is better left Unhacked

All these advertisements contribute to the brand showing our logo that represents the protection and safety of the customer. These also represent who we are as a people. This is so because it puts a name to the brand, and we are easy to contact so that nay issue can be resolved.

**Market Strategy/ Price**

I will be taking advertising to the online realm of social media and YouTube. We will have our own site that will be the main hub for information and product offerings. The reason we are choosing this form of advertising because it is the cheapest and gives the most results. The amount of volume that YouTube’s “user base is 1.9 billion and counting” (*How Much Does YouTube Advertising Cost?2020*). 1.9 billion people have a user account with YouTube is more than any other entertainment service. With that is more exposure and the word about digital shield gets out faster. On top of that social media and YouTube are cheaper to advertise on where YouTube is .10 cents to .30 cents a view. (*How Much Does YouTube Advertising Cost?2020*) T.V is around 115,000 dollars to 5.6 million for one showing. (Main,2021) Besides price and viewers its wide reaching anyone in the world can have access. On top of that it is more controlled so you can advertise more directly to your customer.

Non digital methods of advertising will only be carried out through word of mouth. I feel that this is most effective because advertising a digital product is more effective to go through digital advertising rather than physical. Word of mouth being the only exception because it is free. We would stimulate it with digital ads. Mainly to focus on talking about the product in full.

A picture containing calendar

Description automatically generatedOur image that will be portrayed is one of friendliness, protection, and security. This will touch on animal like aspects of humans making people react fondly to my product. Our log will also contain the same message so we will have the same consistency. Our company will have a system of staying contact with the customer but only to keep them in touch on their devices overall health.

Our budget for advertising will start small with targeted YouTube ads and social media like Facebook which can run an ad for a month at any given price based on the budget you want to spend. We will start with a low cost of $200 a month in advertising. This will not start until the project is about a month before completion so that any alphas and beta testing can be dealt with.

**Testing Procedure**

My target market is the age group of 21 to 41 making around 50,000 a year and up. Since we are an Arizona based business, our testing will mainly occur here. It will occur in Arizona because of its development of technology is rapidly increasing and will be a great area to test new products. A quote from Az Big Media shows the data to prove Arizona’s technological growth “The new data shows a 29% increase in STEM job postings in December 2020 vs. December 2019 and a 4.3% growth in Arizona technology companies year-over-year.” (Blufish, 2021) To test this market we will deploy three types of market testing which will include surveys/ census, focus groups, and casual interviews. Since we are a predominantly an online business we will rely mainly on surveys/ census because they can be conducted through many social media cites alongside our ads. They are also cost affective in that we can produce and use them in a short notice. These will tackle the big picture and get what the public wants out of a product like ours. Focus groups will come into play mainly to test out new features and ideas for an innovation. We will get more detailed work from these and get a full experience on how the product will test with our specific market. Our casual interviews on the other hand will come into play when the ethical hacker portion of the business is ready to launch. The person who conducts testing will just have a casual conversation with the client and get ideas and criticisms from the customer directly. It will typically take place throughout the whole session of the pen testing, so it feels like a place where the customer has a voice in how the company runs.

Our testing structures were specifically chosen to help save money on development while getting the most data that we can. For example, our survey and census can be very cost effective and give us information about our target market that we would not have thought of. It could reveal that we are more into other markets than other such as age or income. The other two are more costly and require more effort but will provide more crucial information that the survey cannot. We will get more structured information alongside more detailed information from our focus groups and casual interviews.  
 At first, we will start with the focus groups and surveys. This is so we can a more concrete view of our market. Our surveys will go out first over social media and You Tube to get the market data and after that we use that data to make the focus groups to get more detailed information about our markets needs and wants. The causal interviews will specifically be with ethical hacking only so they will provide a one-on-one experience with the customer and be the last market testing deployed mainly because it is better for the B2B side of the business.

**Distribution**

Our Products distribution will mainly be online except for the ethical hacker program which is based on location and direct sales. We have three programs that we sell and their price according to what they offer. Our lowest option is Cyber Shield at $15 dollars a month or $100 a dollar a year. This includes the basics like VPN, Firewall, and secure cloud storage. This is justifiable to pay minimum price for maximum protection. Our second plan includes everything the first offers plus dark web monitoring and privacy monitoring. The price is at $20 a month or $120 dollars a year. This is justifiable because of the extra features and competitive price with other competitors like Norton with an equal value plan at $29.99 year for the first year and $124.99 there on after. (Norton,2021) In the short run yes, it is more expensive to go with us but in the long run we are cheaper and offer better service.

**Financial Plan**

General Administrative budget includes an office space of 500 sq ft costing about 1.33 a sq ft a month so that will come out $665 a month. (LoopNet.com,2021) This will take into effect once staffing becomes needed. Now it will just be me working on the coding. For utilities for a space of this size which includes water, electric, garbage and heating will be around 159.19 a month in Arizona. These two prices will be ongoing for the time being. The current business will start off at home with my self being the only employee.

Equipment will just require a desk chair and computer set up this will cost around 1599.99 for all-in-one desk top computer by HP, the desk itself would cost 76.49 off amazon, and lastly a chair would be about 109.99 from amazon. Once these are bought it is a one-time thing unless repairs are needed.

Our website to build will be a DIY build it will cost around $200 startup and a $50 a month to maintain the website. (Carney,2021) This will be the directory to all our products and the main source of our revenue. All ads related to digital shield will bring them to this site, so it needs to be crucial in its design. This will be our main way of distribution of our products. This is so we can keep cost low and provide to the most amount of people. These prices will not take effect until a month before launch.

Food will also be a factor in cost because must feed yourself and it is a hefty expense. Over the course of a month an average male will have to spend about $275 a month. (One Frugal Girl,2021)

**Capital Request**

Another form of startup cost will be the program development and it will range in the $250,000 dollars. The cost to maintain that code will be about half the initial cost at about $125,000 dollars.

How I expect to get the capital to build my products and sustain the business will be done through multiple ways. Loans and investors will be the main avenues for gaining funding. I mainly will seek an investor and be willing to give up a portion of the company. I will only accept an investor that can not only hold monetary value but also help in insight of the program development. We will be needing $400,000 in investments so that we can operate in our first year. There will also be the need to boost the development so that we can build the project.

The project will start at a lost. Once the project gets up and running it will take time because the word needs to get out through social media. It has a response rate that is just under a percent for both YouTube and Facebook. This will be about an average of the year 3 when we will be more profitable.

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**Appendix**

Text

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A picture containing icon

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