Alorian Web Solutions

ISM4480 | Ref # 448388 | Professor Karen Walker

Group Project Part 2: E-Business Plan

Eric Barrier

2017

1 | Executive Summary

Alorian Web Solutions (AWS) is a small but talented company based out of Jacksonville, FL, spearheaded by co-owners Eric Barrier and Susan Ayers. Mr. Barrier carries with him 14 years of web design, development, and project management experience. He fulfills a myriad of roles from project-to-project, sometimes acting as tech lead, a senior developer, or a business analyst. Ms. Ayers is a skilled UX designer and expert business analyst, boasting 10 years in the field. Her ability to translate business requirements into designs that are both eye-catching and functional is rivaled by none.

AWS offers our clients web applications which are uniquely designed and tailored to meet their specific needs. Our designers and developers have all spent years working in the field on major production projects, bringing with them a wealth of knowledge and experience. A run-down of services we provide are the designing and developing of web applications, hosting, and providing ongoing maintenance for the applications we build.

Web development is a rapidly exploding field, and the market is in high demand for companies with knowledge of the latest technologies, frameworks, and user experience design standards. Businesses today want their websites to have much more than a generic, homogenized look and feel – they want sleek, interesting designs that are captivating to the eye, with a little bit of flashiness to really make their brand pop.

Many of the modern user interfaces seen on the web that achieve these standards are built in the Facebook-engineered React JavaScript framework, supplemented with the Redux JavaScript framework from Dan Abramov for application state management. High speed read-only database operations are managed with MongoDB, with standard transactional database exchanges for data-writing operations handled by DB2. Because AWS possesses a diverse staff with a collective expertise in all of these technologies, we are primed and ready for success in today’s market.

Below you will find our projected company profits for the next 3 years, which will be poured into company infrastructure, R&D, and office expansion. These figures are considered after employee salaries and taxes are subtracted:

2 | Management Team



Eric Barrier has 14 years of experience in web design and development. Before co-founding AWS in late 2016, Mr. Barrier worked for a web design company that heavily relied on the use of predesigned templates to build customer websites. Thinking this to be an inferior design method that limited customization for the client, he set out to make his own success, thus Alorian Web Solutions was born. Mr. Barrier also serves different roles depending on the project, including senior developer and business analyst.



Susan Ayers is the other co-founder of AWS and boasts 10 years in the fields of user experience design and IT business analysis. Ms. Ayers shares in the same vision of creating custom solutions for clients. She serves as the lead designer and lead business analyst on the majority of projects.

3 | Organization History & Product Description

*Organization History*

Alorian Web Solutions was formed and incorporated on August 15th, 2016. Operating out of Jacksonville, FL, AWS is a smaller-sized S corporation. The co-owners are Eric Barrier and Susan Ayers, both long-time players in the information technology field. As of the date of incorporation, AWS had 6 employees including ownership. In the last 7 months, that number has expanded to 8 to keep up with the increasing work load from contract acquisitions.

The graph below displays financial details from the first two quarters of operations, which demonstrate that we are on track for our projected financial goals for the first year:

*Product Description*

To put it succinctly, AWS offers fully-featured, custom-designed, built-from-scratch web applications for our clients. Our team is small, but contains some of the best developers and user experience design staff in the field. The frameworks we use for the front-end development of user interfaces are React and Redux, with back-end data services written in Java and managed by MongoDB and DB2. We have the knowledge and expertise to build cutting-edge applications, as well as stand up the full technology stack required by the application for operation, from front to back. We offer our customers a fully serviced experience which requires as little legwork on their part as possible.

4.1 | E-Marketing Strategy

*Situation Analysis*

Due to our small size, AWS has a primary focus on building web applications for other small groups and organizations, but is certainly capable of and possesses staff with the necessary experience to take on projects which are larger in scale. Our ideal clients will be those that need more robust applications which require database operations and dynamic content – preferably single-page applications for the sake of user experience. However, clients looking for a simple website just to get their foot in the door of the online world will not be turned away.

Our primarily targeted segment will revolve around smaller businesses for two key reasons: smaller projects are less costly from the perspective of a time/money ratio, and the competition for contracts is less fervent when marketing to small businesses versus larger corporations. AWS realizes web development is a relatively saturated market, especially when bidding for larger contracts, but the demand for web development services from small businesses is very high with far fewer bidders, so this decision will help to prevent us from edging ourselves out of the market.

*E-Marketing Objectives*

Many companies offering web development services are geared towards large corporations, which are perfectly fine *for large corporations*, not small businesses. Clients that are smaller in size do not have the level of investment income required to pay for services from companies which are used to charging top dollar for a contract. Not to mention, many small business owners are not even sure where to begin when it comes to migrating portions of their company online. Enter Alorian Web Solutions, a web development firm that offers expert analysis and high-end development services at a much lower price point to fit within the budget of small businesses. AWS wants to be the go-to name for web application development in the small business game.

*Strategies for Target Markets*

While larger clients seeking our services will not be dismissed, AWS is aimed at and built to serve small businesses. This gives us a competitive edge in this particular market segment and will result in a much greater success rate when bidding for small business contracts. There are two key items to remember when making a bid to small business owners: 1) while professionalism is important, they are not corporate board members and many prefer a more down-to-earth conversational pitch versus a slide deck and 40 page report, and 2) the pitch should be simple in its explanation to avoid confusing small business owners who may not be terribly familiar with the particulars of how the Internet complements the business world.

It is also important to keep in mind that, in many cases, for a small business owner their company is their life. They have put their blood, sweat, and tears into building something from the ground up, and it is our job to acknowledge and respect that when we interact with them.

4.2 | E-Marketing Strategy Cont.

*Tactics for Marketing Mix*

We will offer 3 major application development packages, along with hosting and maintenance services, and our pricing will be straightforward and simple. The below table illustrates our pricing model:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Services | Pricing |
| Basic Web Application | $1,500 |
| Midrange Web Application | $3,000 |
| Premier Web Application | $5,000 |
| Hosting Service | $20 to $40 per month |
| Maintenance Contract | $60 per hour |

The basic application package is for small businesses looking to kick-start their online presence and get their names out there. There are very few POST or GET data operations, if any at all, so the majority of the work is front-end. Midrange covers a bit more than the basic package, and is meant for clients looking to migrate pieces of their business over to the Internet. This package requires full stack development as there will be at minimum GET data operations, with the strong likelihood of POST, as well. Premier is the top tier package offered, and is usually reserved for clients who are looking to do a large volume of e-commerce. We highly recommend to our clients to utilize both our hosting services and sign a maintenance contract at this level, as managing applications of this complexity long-term can be difficult.

*Actions, Control, and Monitoring*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Task | Task Owner | Associated Department |
| Project Discovery | Susan Ayers | Analytics |
| Project Budgeting | Eric Barrier | Accounting |
| Application Design | Susan Ayers | Design |
| Development Roadmap | Eric Barrier | Development |
| Application Development | Eric Barrier | Development |
| Development Milestones | Eric Barrier | Development |
| Design Updates | Susan Ayers | Design |
| Design Quality Assurance | Susan Ayers | Design |
| Application Testing and QA | Lilyan Dean | Quality Assurance |

5 | Competition

1. **Brockmire Innovations**: Web development and graphic services.

*Strengths*: Brockmire has a very strong and loyal base of clients. Their positive reputation is already established.

*Weaknesses*: Brockmire’s owner, Wayne Brockmire, is the only employee working for the company out of his home. Brockmire also requires all clients who operate an e-commerce website to pay his company a commission on the revenue generated by the site, on top of the development fee.

1. **J2 (JavaScript Junkies)**: Web development services targeted at small businesses.

*Strengths*: J2 has a large market share in the area, offering a very broad range of services from web applications, e-commerce, and graphic design.

*Weaknesses*: J2 is a fellow young company, but with a much higher overhead due to an expensive office space and larger workforce than is necessary. They market themselves as "The Small Business Internet Marketing Professionals of Northeast Florida," but the types of services they offer and their very high prices do not reflect the needs of small business owners. It is also noteworthy that while their development skills seem up to par, their design staff is sorely lacking.

1. **MVW (Man Versus Web)**: Wide range of business-related Web services.

*Strengths*: Alongside their web development and marketing services, MVW has a popular community portal website that serves Jacksonville and surrounding areas with information regarding community events and business listings. This is attractive to prospective clients because it gives access to a marketing site which is already an established destination for local consumers.

*Weaknesses*: MVW does hardly any advertising of their own brand which hinders their ability to land clients outside of Jacksonville proper. Also, the long list of services offered by MVW splits their focus and puts them in the category of a “jack of all trades, master on none” company. This lack of particular expertise is a detriment, for certain.

6 | Financials

We expect to make $60,000 in profit after expenses and salaries from contract work in the first year, which will put us at a net profit of $80,000 when combined with what we have received from our external investors. These profits will be re-invested in company infrastructure, equipment, office space expansion, and adding new employees as needed.

Once we have burned through our initial investor capital, it will become increasingly important to focus more on marketing our services. We feel that after a year to establish ourselves as major players in the game, doubling our profit margins through the first 3 years should not be an unreasonable goal to accomplish.