

1 – Summary of Key Facts and Information.

The paper "BEWÖÖD – An Entrepreneur's Pricing Question" was an interesting case study focused on the entrepreneurial challenges and obstacles faced by founder and CEO Laury Bonjean [1]. The company that is the subject of the paper is called BEWÖÖD – a French company specializing in wooden fashion accessories and founded by Bonjean in 2015 [1]. The company was an innovator in the wooden fashion accessories market in France, seeing a rapid rise in sales and popularity of her product. The paper explains that the company rose out of her combined passions for woodworking and fashion and her product was a great market fit, as the company has gained a significant market presence. The paper explains that the company's signature product is a wooden bowtie (named "Mr. Divergent") which is a best seller. The company, under Bonjean's leadership and direction, has established itself in the market as a good choice for consumers who are eco-conscious, and interested in sustainability (as well as stylish design options). The company appeals to this demographic in large part because of their mission promise of reconnecting with nature, using responsible production sources and renewable materials. This noble focus is also backed up, as the paper explains that the company's products are all made "using renewable woods such as pear, mahogany, oak, and walnut, and are not only stylish but also a statement against the pervasive use of synthetic materials" [1]. However, despite the company's success and growing market position, the case study is primarily centered around Bonjean (CEO and founder). It focuses on the choices she must make, what her decision-making process is, how she deliberates on options, and ultimately concludes her decision-making process – regarding four new projects the company is considering pursuing. These decisions must be made within time limits, in consideration of many factors and unknowns, and are not the only obstacle that BEWÖÖD and Bonjean are currently facing. As the company faces other challenges that must be addressed with thought and focus, there are several concerns and problems that could potentially threaten to disrupt the company's growth and market position (if not effectively addressed). For example, one key issue they face is that the landscape of non-fabric fashion accessories is getting more intensely competitive, as new companies and brands enter the market, with each new competitor offering their own stylish products with their own brand message invoking sustainable concepts. Additionally, consumer expectations are evolving, with a growing demand for new and innovative products that maintain the ethical standards the brand is known for. I think that these market pressures are intense and growing, as we learn that Bonjean is considering some new strategic initiatives. Her projects (that must be decided on) are aimed at diversifying the product line and expanding the company's distribution channels. These four projects include the introduction of new products such as a Father's Day box set and a subscription service. Additionally, she is exploring new sales venues (e.g. pop-up stores or boutiques) which I think could be very important for BEWÖÖD's continued growth and a sustainable presence in this competitive market. Each project she is considering carries its own set of risks and rewards, and so each requires careful thought and evaluation, to ensure they align with BEWÖÖD's vision, mission, core values and long-term goals. I have created a summary table of critical elements (below) which provides some of the key information I think is relevant

for this case study. The table also includes a summary of some of the core features of BEWÖÖD, its business model, strategic challenges, obstacles the company faces, and their market opportunities which were described in detail in the case study.

<i><u>Summary Table of Critical Elements</u></i>	
Element	Details
Founder	Laury Bonjean
Company	BEWÖÖD
Industry	Wooden Fashion Accessories
Launch Year	2015
Product Examples	Wooden bowties, jewelry (e.g., earrings, necklaces, bracelets)
Unique Selling Points	Handcrafted, eco-friendly, locally made, employs technologies like laser cutting
Pricing Strategy	Initial experimental pricing: considered lower end of market spectrum to appeal broadly
Growth Opportunities	1) Father's Day Box Set. 2) Pop-Up Shop. 3) Retail Opportunity in a boutique. 4) Subscription Box.
Challenges	Developing robust pricing strategy, increased competition, ensuring operational capacity meets demand
Market Strategy	Emphasizes 'slow design' movement, sustainable development, and craftsmanship
Key Costs	Material and labor costs for products. Marketing and overhead costs
Financial Strategy	Survey-based pricing analysis, cost management, potential high-margin opportunities through new product configurations
Competitors	Melissandre, Oncle Pope, Focalimum, among others; prices range from €30 to €95
Marketing	Heavy reliance on social media, community engagement via contests, strategic use of digital and physical marketing channels
Customer Demographic	Primarily urban, chic, environmentally conscious consumers aged 18-40

2 – Primary Challenges and Key Issues.

Throughout the case study, several key issues and challenges were encountered by the BEWÖÖD company. These challenges and other market pressures are facing the company externally, and meanwhile the company is also faced with internal challenges related to its choice and consideration of four new projects. The key challenges and obstacles faced by BEWÖÖD as outlined in the case study are in fact challenges facing BEWÖÖD related to strategic pricing

decisions. For example, a central problem the company must address is the need to set the right price for new and existing products (with the goal of maximizing profit without deterring customers). Another key challenge the company had to address was its need for information about pricing options and other topics requiring market research. So, it was necessary for Bonjean and the company to conduct a survey to hopefully gain a better understanding of customer perceptions (regarding price points for the new gift box). The need for this kind of market research is essential for the company's ability to remain profitable and continue its successful growth. Additionally, this information will be pivotal in guiding the company's pricing strategy. Another challenge that could potentially arise is around the company's operational readiness, and its ability to meet demand (given the approval and success of the project proposals). However, on this issue the case study explains that Bonjean is confident that her current production capacities (and the operations setup) will be able to handle the proposed expansions. Adding to this pressure is the fact that each project is different and requires a detailed analysis and discussion of project goals as well as the key factors involved in the decision-making process about each project. The first project Bonjean must decide on is called the "Father's Day Box Set" and the project comes out of the idea for the company to create a special edition box set for the holidays (i.e. Father's Day), featuring the popular Mr. Divergent bowtie and additional interchangeable ribbons to allow for customizations. The second project under consideration is about the prospect of the company offering a subscription box service. This project would center around the idea of launching a subscription box that delivers new designs for the center of the Mr. Divergent bowtie quarterly, allowing customers to continuously update the style and look regularly (of a highly popular bowtie). This project is based on the growing market trend for subscriptions as well as the company's interest in becoming more engaged with its customers. I think it's pivotal for Bonjean to consider this project carefully, as I think it could be very beneficial to the company as subscription boxes are a large growing trend with a large market of consumers. Additionally, I think that this project could enhance customer loyalty (to the company's products) and provide steady revenue. However, this project could result in more challenges for Bonjean (in the long run) due to its operationally complex nature. Managing subscriptions will require a different business model and could also potentially involve increasingly complex logistics issues and customer service challenges. Another challenge that could be created for the company is again related to pricing options (as well as the value proposition). For example, the paper explains that the results of the market research (from surveying consumers about product pricing options) suggested that setting a price that justifies the periodic delivery of new designs and aligns with customer expectations for value and novelty could be challenging, as there was an asymmetry in the opinions of what was "too expensive" and what was "too cheap" in the French consumer market [1]. The third project revolves around a recent development Bonjean has experienced relating to a retail opportunity in a trendy boutique that was quite popular [1]. This project overview is primarily about the opportunity and benefits possibly to be gained from placing BEWÖÖD products in a premier boutique in Old Lille. This boutique sales opportunity could additionally benefit and enhance the brand presence.

The fourth and final project that she must decide on is related to a pop-up shop opportunity for the company. This project can be described as a big opportunity for the brand to participate in a pop-up store in downtown Lille, which would feature twenty young independent designers [1]. This temporary retail setup was aimed at boosting visibility and sales during a key shopping period around Father's Day. Additionally important for Bonjean to consider was that the store's prime location and timing (coinciding with Father's Day) offered a potentially high-traffic sales opportunity as it places the products in a prime location during a optimal timeframe – a high-end retail environment during a holiday (Father's Day). However, pricing options and strategies are a key challenge to evaluate here as well (in addition to the other new products pricing options), and it will be critical to assess rental costs and other related expenses, against the expected increase in sales, so that the company can ensure profitability. This project, and all but the third project (listed above) are all on tight timelines and must have a decision made by June 2018 (3 months away in the case study). While only one of the projects was on a long-time horizon (as Bonjean viewed it as a strategic decision), the fact the other three were quickly approaching, I think only magnifies the challenges the company faces, as these decisions must be made on an approaching deadline and meanwhile require deep thinking about a variety of factors, and elements. Which not only interplay with each other but are also difficult to quantify (especially in a short time frame). Also, for each of these projects, Bonjean faces a variety of different kinds of challenges that she will have to evaluate while considering the potential impact of the projects on BEWÖÖD's brand, finances, and operational capacity. I think she will also need to deeply consider the second and third order consequences of the projects, as I think it's important that she makes sure any newly approved project or initiative will align with the company's long-term goals, plans, vision, as well as the company's sustainable and artisanal corporate brand. I think that the decisions and challenges facing the company are primarily involved with considerations about how they can effectively balance immediate opportunities for growth, with their long-term strategic positioning and brand values. However, she must also take into consideration other factors that will affect her business growth. For example, I think that the company faces increasing market competition as the market for wooden fashion accessories is becoming increasingly crowded.

3 – Alternative Courses of Action.

I think the company needs to address these challenges head on. I think BEWÖÖD is facing several different types of challenges (identified previously in the case study), and because of these I think the BEWÖÖD should deeply consider the various downstream effects of the decisions made, regarding the four project proposals. In consideration of these aspects, I think it is important to reason through the alternative strategic courses of action for each project and the reasoning supporting each alternative course. The first course of action that the company can take is related to the "Father's Day Box Set" and I think some alternative courses of action for this project are as follows. The first is that I think the company could accept it and launch it as a limited-edition item, which would support the item's exclusivity and drive immediate sales,

which is in line with observed consumer trends about unique and seasonal gifts. Additionally, I think it's worth noting, the company could introduce it as a regular product line, as introducing it as a standard offering (that can be customized for various occasions beyond Father's Day) provides additional revenue opportunities. I think the strength of the limited-edition alternative is that it generates buzz and can potentially help increase customer interest and allow for premium pricing as well. However, it comes with the disadvantage that it may not establish a long-term revenue stream if consumers perceive it as only a seasonal product. However, introducing it as a regular product has benefits as it provides steady revenue and broadens the market opportunities throughout the year. While it does have the disadvantage of potentially diluting the exclusivity and premium feel of the product. The second strategic course of action that the company could take would be related to the "subscription box service" and the alternative courses of action for this project are twofold. The first is that the company can (assuming project approval) offer a high-frequency subscription or they can offer a seasonal subscription product. By offering a high frequency option, I think they could pursue an offering of monthly subscriptions, as this benefits the company with its constant engagement. The other course of action for the company is to offer seasonal subscriptions, and this course of strategy could entail offering quarterly or bi-annual subscriptions that align with fashion seasons or popular holidays. The third project is centered around decisions about the retail opportunity they are offered inside a fashionable boutique. The alternative courses of action for this project I think are primarily concerned with (assuming project approval) the company's stance on exclusive partnerships versus a broader distribution. I think the exclusive partnership course of action could be implemented by allowing the boutique to be the exclusive physical retailer for certain items (or exclusive retailer for some products perhaps). While pursuing a broader distribution strategy would involve the company placing products in multiple boutiques to widen availability (avoiding any kind of exclusivity). However, this is an important project to consider as it addresses several market challenges, I think. Firstly, it taps into new customer bases, which is in line with the company's goal to increase its market share. Secondly it addresses the challenges the company faces of insufficient customer information, as it provides valuable insights into customer preferences and their behaviors when they are shopping in a physical retail environment. The last project Bonjean and the company were considering was related to the pop-up shop. The first course of action for this project could be to follow a single pop-up event strategy, which would essentially be an experiment, as it tests the market response using a one-time event. However, the company must also consider another alternative course of action which is to follow a strategy of multiple series/events of pop-up shops. This course of action could be implemented by planning a series of pop-up shops in various strategic locations. The market challenges addressed by these strategic courses of action are that they facilitate direct customer engagement which can improve brand loyalty, awareness, and customer feedback. Also, it enhances brand experience and recognition in highly traveled consumer environments, such as city centers. These strategic alternatives each come with their unique set of pros and cons. Laury Bonjean must weigh these against BEWÖÖD's core competencies, operational capabilities, and long-term strategic goals to make informed decisions

that will drive growth and innovation in a competitive market. For example, I think that the company faces increasing market competition as the market for wooden fashion accessories is becoming increasingly crowded. Although competition is still fragmented, the presence of several competitors with varied pricing and offerings puts pressure on BEWÖÖD to differentiate itself and maintain its market share.

4 – Evaluation of Alternative Courses.

All the alternative courses of action facing the company have its own set of benefits and drawbacks, and deciding which aligns best with the company's long-term goals requires careful deliberation. The first set of strategic alternative courses of action, that the company can pursue, are related to the "Father's Day Box Set". Some alternative courses of action for this project are as follows. The first is that I think the company could accept this project proposal and proceed to launch it as a limited-edition item, or the company could introduce it as a regular product line introducing it as a standard offering (that can be customized for various occasions beyond Father's Day) provides additional revenue opportunities. I think the strength of the limited-edition alternative is that it generates buzz and can potentially help increase customer interest and allow for premium pricing as well. However, it comes with the disadvantage that it may not establish a long-term revenue stream if consumers perceive it as only a seasonal product. However, introducing it as a regular product has benefits as it provides steady revenue and broadens the market opportunities throughout the year. While it does have the disadvantage of potentially diluting the exclusivity and premium feel of the product. The second strategic course of action that the company could take would be related to the "subscription box service" and the alternative courses of action for this project are twofold. The first is that the company can (assuming project approval) offer a high-frequency subscription or they can offer a seasonal subscription product. By offering a high frequency option, I think they could pursue an offering of monthly subscriptions, as this benefits the company with its constant engagement. The other course of action for the company is to offer seasonal subscriptions, and this course of strategy could entail offering quarterly or bi-annual subscriptions that align with fashion seasons or popular holidays. Evaluating the higher frequency course of action, this option could benefit the company as regular customer touchpoints could enhance loyalty and their lifetime value. Also, it is a strong option because it provides a steady revenue stream and builds a loyal customer base. While the less frequent option also has the benefit of aligning with consumer buying habits and reducing the company's operational demands. In addition to this it would align with market trends towards personalized and direct-to-consumer retail models. However, the weak points of these options are that the high-frequency option may lead to subscription fatigue if new designs do not consistently excite customers. While the low-frequency option may result in fewer customer engagement points and could therefore limit relationship building and immediate revenue potential (as well as long term revenue potential). The third project is centered around decisions about the retail opportunity they are offered inside a fashionable boutique. The alternative courses of action for this project I think are primarily concerned with (assuming

project approval) the company's stance on exclusive partnerships versus a broader distribution. I think this course of action would be useful because it builds a strong brand association and can possibly command higher prices. However, the weakness of this option is that it limits market exposure and depends heavily on the boutique's performance. While pursuing a broader distribution strategy would involve the company placing products in multiple boutiques to widen availability (avoiding any kind of exclusivity). It would be beneficial to the company as it Diversifies risk and increases the company's overall market presence. However, it does entail the disadvantage that it could potentially dilute the brand's premium perception if not managed carefully. However, this is an important project to consider as it addresses several markets challenges, I think. The last project Bonjean and the company were deciding about was related to the pop-up shop. The first course of action for this project could be to follow a single pop-up event strategy, which would essentially be an experiment, as it tests the market response using a one-time event. The strengths of this option are that it Lowers risk and investment, provides valuable market insights. While the downside is that it may not gather sufficient data on customer preferences or establish lasting customer relationships. However, the company must also consider another alternative course of action which is to follow a strategy of multiple series/events of pop-up shops. This course of action confers benefits such as the fact that multiple events will increase brand exposure and capture attention and different market segments. However, the disadvantage to this action is that it encompasses higher costs and logistics complexity, as well as the potential for inconsistent sales performance across locations. Finally, I think it is necessary to reflect on the fact that each of the four growth opportunities involves serious financial and market risk. Decisions need to be made quickly, especially as some projects need to go live within three months. Yet, I think that the financial implications of incorrect pricing strategies or failed product launches could be significant and detrimental to the company. These challenges are intertwined with the decisions Bonjean must make regarding new product introductions, market expansion strategies, and overall business growth. Addressing all of this thoroughly and effectively will be required for BEWÖÖD to continue its success.

5 – Recommendation.

I think that each of these alternative courses of action presents viable paths for the company to follow, yet it is critical for the company to choose the one that optimizes success and ensures strategic alignment of the company's goals and vision. Therefore, my recommendation for the company is based on the strategic course of action which I think is optimal for creating synergy with the broader strategic goals of product diversification, market expansion, and brand loyalty. My recommendation is to accept the "Father's Day Box Set" project proposal. My rationale behind accepting this project is that it aligns well with the goal of product diversification and offers a unique, targeted product that can tap into seasonal sales boosts. It also allows for testing new market segments with limited risk, while also benefitting the company as the limited-edition product can be integrated into broader marketing campaigns and used to enhance customer engagement and uniquely collect data, providing insights and tangible

information for future product developments. Secondly, I think that the pop-up shop project proposal should be accepted and implemented as a multi-event if possible. I think this is because pop-up shops are a great way to increase brand visibility and also a good way to directly engage with customers without having the long-term commitment of traditional retail spaces. Pop-up shops complement the company by providing an integrated retail strategy linking online and offline experiences. They can also be used to promote the launch of new products like the Father's Day Box Set. Regarding the project involving the retail boutique opportunity, I think the company should reject the proposal. I was torn on this decision but after consideration, I think that the amount of detailed brand management that will be required to ensure carefully managed operations do not dilute the brand's artisanal image is massive, and I think the negatives of this greatly outweigh the benefits of accepting the project proposal. I would also recommend that they reject (or potentially re-evaluate) the subscription box service project proposal. I say this because while subscription services are popular and can provide steady revenue, they also entail significant logistical and operational infrastructure. The success of such a program depends highly on the company's ability to maintain interest and deliver value consistently across the long-time horizon. As such, while the project has potential, it does not align immediately with the current operational capabilities and brand strategy (of the company) which is focused on exclusive, handcrafted products. In conclusion, I think that the company can effectively expand its market share, grow its customer base, and increase its product offering by accepting the pop-up shop and the Father's Day box set project proposals. I think this because the accepted projects (Father's Day Box Set and Pop-Up Shop) allow for a more controlled, experimental approach to expanding product lines and customer base interaction while also avoiding the negatives of substantial long-term commitments. Also, by accepting these two projects (versus the others), the company maintains brand consistency better. Maintaining the artisanal, exclusive nature of the brand is crucial for BEWÖÖD, which is why entering a trendy boutique is rejected along with the consumerism focused project of subscription box services. Another key factor supporting this recommendation is related to the operational viability of the projects. For example, the subscription box, while no doubt attractive for its recurring revenue, the scalable nature of the endeavor may result in the unintentional strain on the company's current operational capabilities. It also is a distraction which diverts company focus and resources away from establishing a stronger presence in existing and new market segments through innovations. In conclusion, I think that the selected projects for approval will effectively complement BEWÖÖD's goals and strategies of enhancing its market presence, broadening its product offerings, and deepening customer engagements.

[1] Dolansky, E., Ruaud, S., & Didier, H. (2020). "BEWÖÖD – An Entrepreneur's Pricing Question" (HBP No. NA0625). *Case Research Journal*.