ROI

IT Strategic Plan

Red Opal Innovations
Version 1

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Brief description of business

Red Opal Innovations is an information technology company that commenced operation in 2004. The focus of the business at that time was IT and network consultancy services for small to medium size businesses. Three years ago the company decided to add services for the design and development of websites, multimedia products and customised applications.

There are two areas of expansion identified in the next year:

- Increase our client base for website and multimedia products with a focus on budget solutions for small businesses.
- Offer hosted network solutions to small and medium sized enterprises.

Mission statement

Our mission is to provide innovative solutions that support your business and allow you to focus on achieving your goals.

SWOT analysis

Strengths

- Business network (including Chamber of Commerce and small business owners support group) to enable us to identify and access the target market.
- Staff capability in network architecture design and management.

Weaknesses

- Existing staff don't have full range of technical skills in the area of multimedia and content management systems.
- Internal network infrastructure is near capacity and needs re-designing to meet the increase in network traffic if new business is generated.

Opportunities

- Large number of small businesses that do not have a current web or social media presence.
- Small to medium size enterprise lack the expertise to manage cloud-based storage or virtualisation solutions for their organisations.

Threats

- Small business website developers operating as contractors and supplying low cost website solutions in the local area.
- Cheap offshore cloud hosting available.

Goals

- To increase website design and multimedia production clients by 20% in the next 12 months.
- To identify and add new lower cost products to attract small business owners, with the aim of signing 50 new clients in this demographic in the next 12 months.
- To identify contract staff with skills in website and multimedia product development.
- To become more environmentally sustainable by implementing IT virtualisation in the next 12 months.

To increase our network infrastructure capability to offer hosted solutions.

Target customers

According to local council statistics there has been an increase of 65% in small to medium sized businesses in our target area, with the majority providing services or operations such as:

- Cafés and restaurants
- Home services, such as lawn mowing and cleaning activities
- Accounting and tax agent services
- Medical practices
- Legal services
- Manufacturing and warehouse/factories

Web and multimedia expansion

Preliminary research has shown that more than 50% of these businesses have minimal use of website and social media to market their business. These businesses will be one of the targets of our expansion goals for this year. Other businesses that have been operating for a longer period will be the secondary target as our marketing plans will allow us to reach both groups.

The aim is to provide a website and social media presence for these small businesses. It has been identified that these businesses do not generally have the capability or the time for this type of technology work. Cost is of great importance to these prospective clients and it will be necessary to provide evidence of the potential return on investment for these small businesses. Maintenance of these websites needs to be easily accessible and the use of content management systems such as WordPress may provide a suitable option.

Networking infrastructure expansion

Cloud computing and virtualisation is outside the current skill set of the identified business sector but they have increasing requirements for data storage and managed services. Adherence to a high level of data and system security is identified as a key requirement for more than 50% of these businesses. An Australian based option will be an attractive option for this target market.

Industry analysis

After reviewing available data, it is considered that there remains a strong opportunity for growth in offering:

- Low cost website and associated multimedia products in our target area. There has been a continual growth in new businesses starting up and this provides the opportunity for marketing of our products.
- Cost effective and secure network solutions for small to medium sized enterprises.

Competitive analysis

Web and multimedia

Traditionally, competition in the website and multimedia development area has come from small contractors who operate out of a small or home office, and outsourcing to overseas developers via posting jobs on websites.

The overseas contract option is not considered to offer a strong threat to our target market as they are not generally comfortable with accessing these services, and being very time poor, may not be able to manage this process.

Small, low cost local website development contractors provide more competition but lack the reach and backing of our larger organisation. The opportunity exists to partner with these small contractors particularly if they are able to provide technical skills that we currently do not have.

Network infrastructure

There are no local competitors who offer the large scale cloud computing and virtualisation solutions that are proposed. Overseas hosting is the current option available.

Marketing plan

- Add a new page to our company website promoting our new products, with a discount to be offered for the first 10 new clients in both the website and network solution area.
- Use of social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to increase awareness of the new products.
- Attend WordPress and other user support groups to increase network of contacts in this field.
- Breakfast presentation at Chamber of Commerce and small business support group planned.

Team

- Website Development Manager and Network Manager to work closely with Marketing/Sales team.
- Permanent staff of five developers to be used as required for the website development.
- Permanent staff from the IT support/networking section – selection to be made by Network Manager.
- Recruitment of two new trainees – one for web development and the other for network support.
- Identification of a pool of contract staff and graduating students to use as interns.

Operational plan

- Marketing Department to work with both website development and network support teams to organise the new content to be added to the company website and social media sites. Marketing of new products to commence during the first week of April.
- • Website development and network support team members to identify meetup and user groups and attend next meetings with the aim of identifying potential clients and possible contractors/interns.
- Human Resources to create contracts to cover this type of work and organise recruitment of new trainees. The recruitment of the new trainees should be completed by March.
- A representative from the Marketing Department and the Web Development and Network Support Departments to present at the Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Association breakfast meeting in April.
- IT Support Department to work with both departments to identify new equipment and software that can be used by the new contract staff. It will need to allow for some aspects of the work to be completed offsite.