**S-Mart: Interview/Research Questions for Internet**

About the business

1. What does the business do?

S-Mart is a medium sized department store like Wal-Mart or Target where the sell hardware and tools, groceries, sporting goods, and housewares.

1. What makes the company special?

The company is special because of their size. They are smaller than stores like Wal-Mart, but much larger than a “mom and pop” shop. So, they can utilize their size and serve customers in more rural areas with lower incomes by offering lower prices than big brand stores.

* 1. What can we use for a design/marketing focus?

A wide variety of options offered just like Wal-Mart, or big brand stores, but for much lower prices.

1. Who are the competitors of the company?

Competitors would include stores like Wal-Mart, Target, Dollar General, Sears, etc.

* 1. What makes you different?

The store was opened to tailor its inventory prices to lower income markets, and even after international expansion it continues to operate with the same mindset. S-Mart is determined to offer the same, or better, quality products as the big brand stores at the lower prices like “mom and pop” shops.

1. What is the company’s mission statement and objective(s)?

S-Mart believes in shopping smart and strives to provide quality products at fair and affordable prices.

1. They want to help shoppers shop smart by guiding them to the best deals
   1. Create a price comparison tool against competitors
2. The want to provide quality products to their customers
   1. Ensure fresh groceries by purchasing inventory from vendors nearest individual stores instead of one wholesaler supplying all stores.
   2. Offer lowest prices possible to customers to ensure fair and affordable prices
3. How is inventory managed?
   1. How does the online prices remain consistent with brick and mortar prices?

As an employee in a brick and mortar location makes a price change at the shelf, there is a small barcode that they will scan. The scan retrieves the product’s price data and allows the employee to make the change updating the database and the website.

* 1. Plans to sell on third party platforms such as Amazon?

Not initially. Perhaps in the future.

The project

1. What type of website needed?

The site will be an ecommerce site presenting S-Mart’s product catalog that is database driven featuring a simple content management system to update products and essential store data.

1. What is the target audience for the website?

Households in lower income areas, usually homeowners and families.

1. What do you want to people to do on the website?

Shop for their household items by registering with the website, building orders/carts, and checkout using a credit card (possibly pay pal).

1. Do you have an existing website?

No

* 1. If yes, what are pros and cons of the current website?

1. What are the must have features? (Ex: Mobile friendly? Animations? Product carousel? Etc)

Friendly, yes. Must be able to scale. Animations are not necessary, but if appropriate. The carousel or something similar could be nice, but not a requirement. Mostly looking for an elegant and simple design based on the S-Mart logo with a list of products in a grid view that are appropriately categorized.

1. Is there currently implemented analytics?

No.

* 1. If no, is analytics necessary and what is the strategy?

A simple setup would be great. Just something free initially such as Google Analytics.

1. Will, and what, assets will be included?

Some provided. The logo, company history, and mission statement are available.

1. Is there a design scheme/mockup for the website project?

No mockups. Free reign with design if it meets the requirements in a simple interface.

1. Will a color palette or brand book/style guide be provided?

No style guides. Color palette are the colors in the logo along with black, white, and gray of course.

1. Will the website be database driven?

Yes, it will be database driven with products and information being stored in a central database to allow reaction to brick and mortar store price changes.

1. What payment options will the site support?

Credit card. Possibly PayPal.

* 1. How will sales tax be calculated and collected?

Investigate further as it will depend on state and/or federal regulations.

1. What are the shipping options?
2. How will the site be hosted?

Although and international chain, to cut costs we will start hosting on shared servers. As, and if, the online customer base begins to outgrow the shared server it can be migrated to a dedicated one later to increase server performance.

1. What is strategy for security?
   1. How to protect customer information?

Clean up/remaining questions

1. Will any sort of support be necessary after launch?

Yes. Mostly maintenance (updates, etc.) and monitoring. The S-Mart IT is building the website and will continue to maintain it after launch.

* 1. If yes… for how long?

For as long as S-Mart has an internal IT team.

1. Provide three to five websites you really enjoy.
   1. Are there features on these sites that would be nice to have implemented?
2. What is the budget?

$10,000

1. What is the timeline?

Projected end date is late April / early May of 2019.

1. What are the preferred forms of contact throughout the project?

Communications will be handled through chat programs, phone calls, mostly email, and, if necessary, in person meetings.

1. Will any training be necessary?

Training for how to add and update products using the CMS will be necessary. Once the UI is functional, interaction with the database should be limited.

1. If necessary, how quickly can usernames and passwords be provided?

Within 24 hours.