



Business Plan

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October 2017

Table of Contents

1.0	Executive Summary.....	3
1.1	The Problem	3
1.2	The Solution.....	3
2.0	Business Description.....	4
2.1	General Problem.....	4
2.2	Root Problem.....	4
3.0	Design and Development Plan.....	4
4.0	Market Analysis	5
4.1	Threat of New Entrants.....	5
4.2	Bargaining Power of Suppliers	5
4.3	Power of Customers	6
4.4	Threat of Substitutes	6
5.0	Competitive Analysis	7
6.0	Operations and Management Plan.....	7
7.0	Conclusion	8
8.0	Works Cited.....	9

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 The Problem

This fall, Purdue University welcomed over 7,500 new freshmen students to campus. On the positive side, this means that there are literally thousands of new potential friendships and connections to be made. But on the negative side, a number that large can seem extremely overwhelming. Where does one even start to sort through a group of people that large in search of someone they would connect well with and share common interests. This is where extracurricular clubs and activities become such an integral part of the college community. They link people together who are interested in the same thing whether it be a sport, religious group, or charity. From here, new friendships can more easily form because people with similar passions are grouped in the same room all together. You have the opportunity to meet people that you might not have ever had a class with or otherwise ever crossed paths with during your college career. However, there are over 1,000 student organizations here on campus and new ones forming all the time. Finding one that is the right fit for you can be like finding a needle in a haystack. Yes, there are club callouts and flyers posted around campus at the start of the semester. But with the amount of information thrown at you in the first few weeks of school, it is difficult to absorb all of it and some of those call out meeting emails in your inbox are deleted without ever being read.

1.2 The Solution

There has to be a better way to organize this information so that students can more effectively filter through it to find the organizations that are most applicable to them and their interests. This is where I feel a networking and social connection app directed towards Purdue students, and especially new students, will really make a difference. The application *CampusConnect* will be a resource Purdue students would have access to for free via the App Store. It's purpose is to aid in campus unity and inspire connections and greater student involvement here at Purdue University.

Thus far, there is nothing on the market that offers as many features as this app will include. There are websites out there such as BoilerLink, which provide limited information about campus clubs and activities. There are also plenty of networking applications that can be useful for incoming freshmen whether it be Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Instagram. However, *CampusConnect* will work to bring these two components together into one central application. It will not only provide information about how to get involved with different organizations on campus, but also link students together based on common interests and similar backgrounds. I believe one of the most unique capacities this application

will have is its ability to really organize and narrow down the plethora of opportunities present here on campus. Most importantly, it will guide students to the few that best fit their needs and the time they are willing to commit.

2.0 Business Description

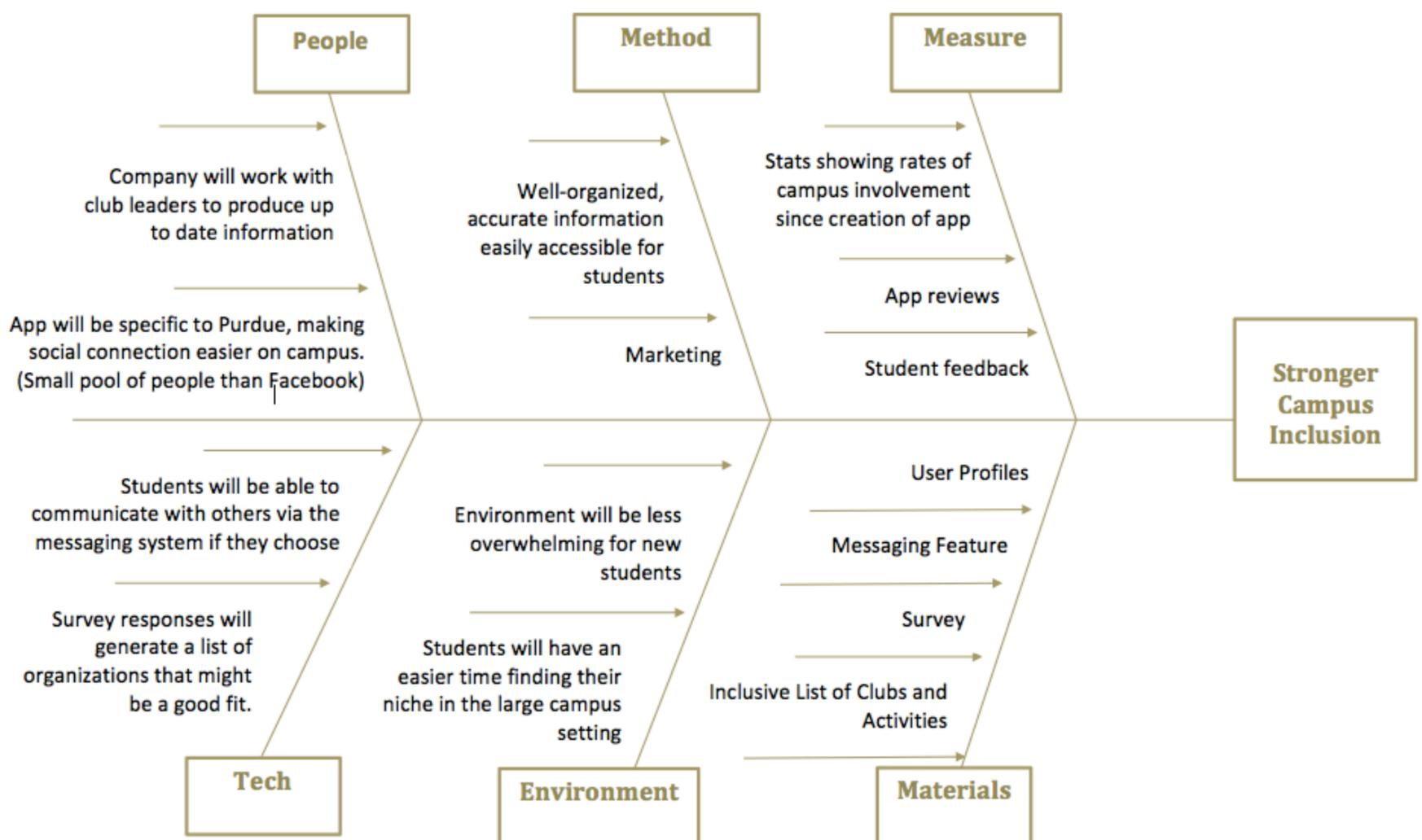
2.1 General Problem CampusConnect will solve:

There is not an inclusive and up to date list of all the campus clubs and organizations at easy access for Purdue students.

2.2 Root Problem CampusConnect will solve:

It will allow for a stronger sense of inclusion on campus.

3.0 Design and Development Plan



3. How much time are you willing to commit to a new extracurricular activity? 🗨️

1 hour per month
 5 hours per month
 1 hour per week
 5 hours per week
 Other (please specify)

0 of 3 answered

This is a sample of the questionnaire new users would take in order to get grouped with an assortment of clubs that would fit their interests and the time they are willing to commit.

HELEN STORMS

YEAR: SENIOR
 MAJOR: PROFESSIONAL WRITING
 MINORS: POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY
 HOMETOWN: NOBLESVILLE, IN

CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS I'VE TAKEN PART IN:

- ✓ KIDS HOPE USA
- ✓ THE PURDUE EXPONENT
- ✓ THE ODYSSEY
- ✓ ALL FOR AUTISM CLUB

INTERESTS/HOBBIES

CONTACT INFO

- Email: storms0@purdue.edu
- LinkedIn:
- Other Social Media Platforms:

This is an example of what a user profile would look like. It includes a brief overview of the student, the organizations they are a part of, as well as the option to include contact information.

4.0 Market Analysis

4.1 Threat of New Entrants

To avoid the threat of new entrants, I hope to eventually pursue a patent for the *CampusConnect* idea. No matter how unique a business idea can seem, there is always the threat of new entrants bringing fresh competition to the market. Although I do not personally have a lot of background in the business area, I would make sure to get someone on my team who would know how to go about seeking a patent. This way I could avoid new entrants from copying the idea of the application. The ultimate goal would be for the rights of this application to be owned by Purdue University alone, so no other companies or universities could take the business idea and alter it in any way without permission. Obtaining a patent would be an extremely valuable step as a new entrepreneur in order to protect the intellectual property at stake.

4.2 Bargaining Power of Suppliers

Ideally, I would gain control over the aspect of bargaining power by selling this product to Purdue University. This way, it would be owned by the university and benefit incoming freshmen classes for years to come. As a best-case scenario, *CampusConnect* would be available via the App Store to be easily downloaded onto mobile devices. The goal would be for it to be totally free, because I feel this would be necessary in order to begin building a user base when first starting

out. As a college student myself, seeing that an app I am considering downloading requires a purchase often deters me from getting it. I think that if this application is viewed as a free resource that students should take advantage of, it will be most prosperous. College students love free products. If this app starts out free I will never have to worry about a new application being created that includes the same features for a lesser price.

4.3 Power of Customers

Campus wide advertisement will be one of the biggest steps in convincing freshmen they need *CampusConnect*. This can be done via emails sent to incoming freshmen, and through club callouts. Organizations can put up flyers about their clubs around campus asking interested students to check out their page on this app for further information. Price sensitivity should not be an issue in this case because the app will be free. I believe the biggest hurdle would be to persuade the student community that *CampusConnect* will offer them features that no other platform can. For example, some students turn to the Purdue Facebook page to make connections with other freshmen before the start of the school year. Therefore, I will need to show them that this application will provide information that is more specific to their particular needs than what Facebook can give them. My biggest asset here would be the questionnaire each new user would fill out upon creating a profile. This will essentially ask them about their interests, hobbies, major, and background, thus directing them to other like-minded people. Because no other resource available provides a service similar to this, I can avoid the threat of customers trading in my product for one that does this more efficiently.

4.4 Threat of Substitutes

In order to avoid the threat of substitution, my goal would be to set my app apart from anything else available that is similar, by making it as specific as possible to Purdue University. If someone wanted to look up more information about a particular club on campus, I would want *CampusConnect* to be the first place they would turn to conduct research. Thus, the application needs to be as simple and user friendly as possible. I want to ensure that the steps to create a new account are as quick and easy as possible so that my potential users don't decide to go to with another platform instead that might require less of a time commitment. Consistent updates would be important as well. If a new club or group is established here on campus, it would be added to the platform as soon as possible. Club founders or leaders would eventually view this app as their best possible resource to advertise their organization, get information out to new members, and to keep track of club activities. Transferring information from app to app can really be a hassle that many people don't want to deal with, so starting newly founded organizations out on this platform right away would likely be one of my best ways to begin growing my user base.

5.0 Competitive Analysis

As far as competitive rivalry, once again strong advertisement would be my first step in pushing students to utilize this resource as opposed to other more established sources that might be out there.

- **Facebook:** I would view Facebook as one of my central competitors simply because of how many different features it offers. Almost everyone already has a Facebook page, so it is something that is readily available and can also be used for club advertisement purposes.
- **Facebook Messenger** (specifically): One of Facebook's most useful features is their messaging service, which allows you to reach out to virtually anyone who has an account with Facebook. I would like to incorporate a similar messaging service within *CampusConnect* so that Purdue students could get to know one another better prior to ever coming to campus. Incoming freshmen from out of state would no longer have to fear coming in blind. Instead they would have the opportunity to use this resource to connect with students in search of roommates or even simply find friends with common interests. The first semester of college would be far less intimidating for new students if they had a resource like this to help them get a jumpstart on finding their niche at Purdue. In order to advertise this, information regarding the app could be put into all new student's acceptance letters. In addition, students could be further encouraged to make a profile during their Boiler Gold Rush orientation program.

6.0 Operations and Management Plan

- **Setting:** *CampusConnect* will be a virtually run company and will not require a physical office space at this stage in the business.
- **Staff:** 1-2 Internet technology personnel will be required to help with the initial coding and creation of the app itself. They will also be the go-to troubleshooting people if there are any technical issues with the app. Any aspects of the company that involve writing, marketing, or design I can do myself in the early stages.
- **Financial** (How will this app make money?)
Although downloading the app itself will be free the potential areas of which to gain money is through ads and paid updates to access more advanced features.

7.0 Conclusion

To conclude, I am asking Purdue University to purchase this app and aid in the financing necessary to get it up and running. Based upon my research on app development for

small start-up companies, the financial estimate that will be necessary is around \$24,000 (“How much does it cost to make an app”)?

With this amount of money the app would include:

- IOS compatibility
- The ability to link other social profiles like Facebook and Instagram
- The ability to create personal profiles
- A ranking system that allows users to review the app
- The development of the app icon

This does not include the money that would be necessary to hire an IT person to aid in the coding and initial development of the app (“How do Free Apps Make Money”).

➤ **Why Say Yes?**

With this app students would have an easily accessible resource to turn to in order to learn how to get involved on campus. Thus, it would be easier and less overwhelming for new students to find their niche on campus and adapt to college life. This resource would aid in student sustainability by fostering new connections among students, which has been proven to lead to greater academic success. Finally, this app would lead to greater campus inclusion thus benefiting this university as a whole.

8.0 Works Cited

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