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Marketing and Sustainability
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Innovate 120 Sustainability Marketing Plan

I. Executive Summary

Innovate 120 is located in the heart of Maquoketa, Iowa. Maquoketa is a small town that prides itself in its community. Even so, many people choose to leave the town to find better opportunities elsewhere. Innovate 120 was created with the purpose of creating new opportunities in Maquoketa so that more people choose to stay in town in the hopes that the economy of Maquoketa will grow.

Innovate 120's goal of keeping people to stay in the small town is no easy task. However, by creating a study and office space, being seen as a sustainable brand, working with high school students, universities and community colleges in the area, and community leaders, Innovate 120 is taking the necessary steps to not only grow their business but achieve their end goal of helping the Maquoketa community.

To help achieve Innovate 120's goals, the company has come up with some marketing strategies. The company will increase its presence on several different social media platforms. Furthermore, the company will finish its website and become active in email marketing. Email marketing means reaching out to different clients in order to get individuals to think about the brand. Email marketing will also be utilized to ask important questions and get feedback.

In the end, when the marketing plan is implemented, it is important for Innovate 120 to evaluate its marketing strategies. The evaluation methods Innovate 120 can use are to evaluate the target audience and use marketing research to ask clients important questions needed to know what direction Innovate 120 is headed and what, if anything, needs to be changed. Innovate 120 is a new and growing business with a mission in mind. Following the marketing plan and being flexible, when necessary, will allow Innovate 120 to accomplish its end goals.

II. Market Research

In conducting research on Innovate 120's target market, it was essential to understand what keeps the residents of Maquoketa to stay in the community. Maquoketa is small town, with a population of around 6,000 people. The population of Jackson County is a little above 19,000. Even in such a small town, there are many reasons that keep current residents from leaving, as well as drawing in others to visit.

One of the largest industries that has a presence in the community is arts and entertainment. Some of the experiences individuals can take advantage of are the Maquoketa Art Experience, Summer Music Series, and the Jackson County Fair. Maquoketa is also home to the Ohnward Fine Arts Center and Old City Hall Gallery (Niche, 2021). With art and entertainment so prevalent in the town, this shows consumers' passion for creation. Consumers in Maquoketa value the experiences and the places that bring them together and drive this creativity.

Additionally, there's a great appeal to the nature and environment that surrounds the county. The Maquoketa Caves State Park is one of the attractions that brings in countless visitors and is not only valuable to those in the community, but to all who live in Eastern Iowa. The Maquoketa River Water Trail and Prairie Creek Recreation Trail also showcase the natural beauty that can be found in Maquoketa (Niche, 2021). These places hold much value to the residents of the community because they make Maquoketa unique. While it's a small town, this shows how the community values the aspects that bring in visitors every year.

1 Million Cups is an organization that Innovate 120 can draw inspiration from. Both 1 Million Cups and Innovate 120 are organizations that work to encourage entrepreneurship and empower individuals with resources. 1 Million Cups' website is set up to highlight the culture and growth of the organization to increase credibility (1millioncups). This would be a great guide for Innovate 120 to follow with its own website because 1 Million Cups has seen a lot of success.

The Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce also provides the community with many resources and services that could be opportunistic for Innovate 120. There are local incentives set in place that encourage the development of new businesses (Maquoketa Chamber). Financial development assistance and other businesses resources are also available which is a great first-step for these small businesses are start-ups to begin their journey before turning to Innovate 120. In a community as small as Maquoketa, it's important for those with the drive to create a business or follow through on a start-up idea to have access to the resources and services that will get them on their feet and keep them motivated to continue.

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths:

Innovate 120 has received numerous donations already towards the construction of the building as well as a 500k grant. Along with this Innovate 120 has a partnership with the local schools resulting in a strong community relationship. Finally Innovate 120 also has a unique presence on Main St. which will create a lot of buzz for the construction of the building.

Weaknesses:

Innovate 120's first weakness involves the direction of the company. They aren't selling a direct product but instead a service center so as of right now they don't know exactly what direction to market the company. Innovate 120 also lightly staffed but that's common with a brand-new business. Finally, the school system doesn't have a direct need for the business so they might potentially leave in the future.

Opportunities:

Innovate 120's mission to gain more members could create more buzz around the company. This could lead to more potential small businesses relocating to Maquoketa as well as the growth of the local businesses that have already set up shop in downtown Maquoketa. Finally, the development of the website could draw traffic to the development of the company and could increase awareness of Innovate 120 through the public.

Threats:

There's no guarantee people will respond to the survey if emailed, and students won't want to pay to study if they could go to the library or study at home.

III. Goals and desired outcomes

The main goal of Innovate 120 is to bring awareness and increase the population of Maquoketa by becoming a business hub for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

The desired outcomes of our projects include:

- 30% response rate to the email survey
- 45-50% of positive responses
- 8-10 investors on board
- Creation of the website

The statistics we hope to accomplish from these projects include a response rate of 30% (5,821 people) from the email survey, which is the mean percentage response rate for online surveys. Along with this, we also wanted to see 45-50% (2,736 people) of the answered survey responses to have positive feelings towards the services that Innovate 120 will offer as well as the likelihood that they will utilize the workspace. Another goal is to have at least 8-10 big name members on board for the construction of Innovate 120 by the end of August who would invest in the business. Innovate 120 currently has 5 members so we would like to see a slight increase to ensure the business can grow. Finally, we would like to see the creation of the Innovate 120 website by the end of August. The website needs to be created so people can understand why Innovate 120 is being created and inform them about the features that will be included inside of the building.

UN Sustainability Goals:

Three goals that seem most fit are #4 Quality Education, #8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, and #9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. Quality education is supported by providing students with the resources necessary to succeed in their future endeavors. An example of this is the Startup Bootcamp that Innovate 120 hosts for the local high schools. The next goal, decent work and economic growth, is supported through Innovate 120's goal which is to help these small businesses thrive during a time where the economy is at a low point. The last goal is industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and Innovate 120 helps Jackson County by hosting pitch competitions that allow businessmen and women to bring their creative ideas to life.

IV. Strategies and Tactics

There are two strategies that we recommend Innovate 120 use to increase awareness in Jackson County. The first tactic is email marketing. Email marketing is the #1 ROI driver for marketing strategies. Since Innovate 120 is still so young this is a great idea because it'll be able to inform more residents in the area about what the organization has to offer in hopes of gaining more

interest. Email marketing is low cost, and it is easy to measure so that one can optimize the results. Also, almost everybody checks their primary email, so giving consumers a reason to open the email will start to gain more attraction for Innovate 120.

An example of an email Innovate120 can send out can be a promotional email that informs Jackson County about the organization. The survey can be attached to this email and include a FREE 30-day membership trial to those new members that fill out the survey. This not only is a call to action for them to fill out the survey, but it's a great opportunity to bring in more Jackson County residents.

Having a strong social media presence is key to a lot of businesses' success these days. Since Innovate 120 is promoting small businesses and startups in the Jackson County area, the organization should be constantly posting on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram. Followers need to constantly see organic content so that Innovate 120 will always be in the minds of its members and followers. Use social media as a messaging channel to find high school and college graduates so that the organization can connect with them and show them what it has to offer. The new facility is a great opportunity to boast all the great amenities it has to offer and make Innovate 120's followers feel like they need to be a part of the Innovate 120 community.

We will meet our desired goals by first sending out an email survey to Jackson County which is made up of 19,401 residents. Inside of the survey will be a Likert scale which would depict whether the population of Maquoketa would want the construction of Innovate 120. A follow up to this would be the attendance of to the Jackson County Fair. At the fair, Innovate 120 would set up a tent section and share flyers that would include information about Innovate 120 as well as a raffle where participants could win a free month pass to use the Innovate 120 building. We believe that with all three of these projects we can hope to achieve our main awareness goal.

V. Partners and Stakeholders

The key partners and stakeholders critical to achieving the desired outcomes are the high schools Innovate 120 has partnered with in the area, the universities, and colleges in the state of Iowa, and the private/public community leaders. The Startup Bootcamp that is hosted throughout the Jackson County high schools is a great way to gauge interest in Innovate 120 early before these students reach a critical point in their future careers. Reaching out to colleges in the state of Iowa and hosting pitch competitions could show these students the potential growth of Jackson County and could interest them in starting a business or working their post-graduation.

The private and public community leaders are key stakeholders to pay attention to. Continue growing the relationships with community leaders such as the Maquoketa Chamber of Commerce, Community Foundation of Jackson County, and many others so that the organization can show off what it has to offer. These community leaders could also have potential to become board members for Innovate 120, so this is a way to reach the desired outcome of attaining 8-10 board members.

VI. Evaluation

Innovate 120's marketing strategies and tactics play an important role in the success of the company's business. The strategy of expanding the company's social media presence will help to capture the attention of prospective partners and stakeholders. Therefore, it is crucial to continually evaluate the effectiveness of the business's marketing strategies. There are two key evaluation methods that will help determine the effectiveness of the company's marketing strategies.

The first method is to evaluate the target audience. It is important to reflect on the company's intended target audience and see if they are still the audience that fits the business plan. There are many ways to go about evaluating this. First, it is important to consider the company's current partners and stakeholders. If Innovate 120 plans to target high school students, universities and colleges in the state of Iowa, and private and public community leaders, it is important to later reflect and decide if these partners and stakeholders still match the goals and strategies of Innovate 120. Another way to evaluate the target audience is to look at the company's current social media followers and clients. Social media followers tell a lot about who is interested in the brand.

The second evaluation method is to generate information directly from asking clients questions through market research and analysis. Implementing different social media platforms and email marketing is a great way to communicate with clients. It allows the company to stay in contact with different partners and stakeholders. Therefore, using market research to ask clients questions will give the company timely answers. For example, sending out a survey to a client. Sending an online survey is low cost and is easy to create. Giving clients an incentive, such as a reward, will increase the response rate. Another way to gather information is by using polls. Polls can be quickly shared on any of Innovate 120's social media platforms and will give instant results.

After evaluating Innovate 120's marketing strategies and tactics, the company will know its strengths and weaknesses, the direction the company is going, what the company is doing well, and what needs to be changed moving forward.

VII. Appendix

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Exhibit 1. Webpage mock-up

