

Developing Effective Sales and Marketing Plans Exercises

(Updated: June 16, 2017)

Case Study

Jan operates a gas station / convenience store in Church Point, Louisiana. The name of the establishment is "Jan's Place" (no surprise there!).

The business location creates significant "foot traffic," both among "locals" and the visitors passing by on Church Point Highway headed up to Route 190 on their way to the jobs located off the I-49 corridor.

Revenues and profits over the last few years have been down slightly as the price of gasoline has declined. At least customers spend a bit more on high-margin convenience store items when gas costs less.

Competitors - especially those affiliated with major oil companies - have more advertising dollars to spend. Unlike Jan, though, they pay franchise fees to their corporate sponsors.

Dissatisfied with a declining income, Jan worked with a few employees and friends to develop a bullet point business plan to launch the enterprise under a new name: **The Bear Den**. (The bear is the mascot of the town's high school.)

Discussion Questions

Please be prepared to provide written responses and/or discuss the following questions:

- 1) What benefits does Jan expect to achieve by renaming the business?
- 2) How is this new name an example of "differentiation?"
- 3) What are some steps that would enable this business to take advantage of this differentiation?
- 4) Is this differentiation "defensible?"

Written Assignment (after students take notes during a class discussion)

Develop a bullet point sales and marketing plan for **The Bear Den**. Make sure this plan includes the following sections:

- 1) Executive Summary
- 2) Concept Overview: Challenge / Opportunity
- 3) Customer Analysis / Target Customers
- 4) Competitor Analysis / Response
- 5) Tactics (Promotion, Pricing, Product)
- 6) Budget / Financial Projections (including assumptions on additional marketing costs, revenues and margin)

Sections 1 and 4 must be written as a narrative (real sentences and paragraphs). Sections 2, 3 and 5 can be bullet point sections. Section 6 should include a spreadsheet.

Role Play

Ask your teacher to send your marketing plan (along with this assignment resource) out to a local business mentor or a Nepris mentor.

Your goal will be to determine the reaction of your mentor to your plan, and to see if the mentor has any observations or recommendations that didn't occur to your team.

Step 1: develop a questionnaire for this interaction. Include questions about this person's reaction to your plan, seeking candid feedback.

Include in the questionnaire specific questions about each section of the plan.

Step 2: conduct the mentor interaction. Afterwards, determine what you think were the key insights you learned during the interaction.

Step 3: write a Thank You note to your mentor(s), indicating in your note what you believe were your key lessons learned