

SportzMatch:

Assisting Parents with Children's Sporting Needs since 2010

A project prepared for DTC 338

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SPORTZMATCH

Matching Children with
Activities

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SPORTZMATCH

SportzMatch is to provide parents, sports programs, and coaches with a tool in which they can promote, engage, and inform communities on the benefits that physical activity has on the life of children, and above all, to assist children in becoming healthier and happier through sports.

Design Concept

This social network has a minimalistic design. Since the target audience is parents who are looking to get their children involved in sports, the network site reflects this. The use of colors is attractive to parents and the interactivity and movement on the site gives the site dimension, but never distracts from the focus of sports and children. Advertising on the site is focused on sports stores and programs.

The color scheme uses contrasting warm and cool colors. The color green is used to mimic a sports field. In order to give the website a comforting feeling, shades of green were the primary colors used on both the primary and secondary pages. However, the site needs to provide some excitement. This is done by adding accents of warm colors. Two shades of yellow are used to establish sections of the site.

The interactivity of the site is very limited. The main use of interactivity is within the links. When hovering over a link the color of the link will change to signify that it is a link. Interactivity is limited so that it does not distract from the information at hand. The site is used to disseminate information to parents, so interactivity is not necessary.

Overview

Childhood is a time of fun and games as a young person learns lessons in life. Some of the most important lessons are learned when a child plays team sports. They learn about working with others, how to be a good winner (and even better, how to be a good loser), and how to work in order to accomplish goals. This being said, it can be a challenge for a parent to place their child in their first team sport.

What sports are good matches for my child? Will the Coach's style mesh well with my child's personality? Will my child be placed at the right level in the sport?

These are all common questions that a parent may ask himself or herself at one time or another. Choosing a child's afterschool activity is a very time consuming and difficult process. That is why we are developing a revolutionary website that will not only assist a parent in placing their child on a sports team, but where they will be able to complete a survey that will offer suggestions based on their child's personality type. At SportzMatch, they will be able to research sports leagues and coaches. Making a well-informed choice is key to parents when placing their child in a recreational activity. In addition, Coaches will be able to post information about themselves and about their coaching style so that parents can make an educated decision about their children's activity.

User Profiles

Coach Profiles

It is not only the parents searching for sports teams that will be important for this website to work. It will also be necessary to have buy-in from different sport leagues and coaches. SportzMatch will depend on these coaches and leagues for validity as well as access to information for the parents that wish to place their children in an after-school sports activity.

It is more than likely that they currently have their own websites but are more than likely not getting the amount of new visitors that will enable them to recruit new players. Some of these organizers may use Facebook or MySpace currently but have yet to find a Social Networking website that applies to them directly as coaches or administrator for recruiting purposes. SportzMatch would allow coaches and leagues to be able to convey what they can offer a child and their parents.

SportzMatch would allow all users with a posted profile to confirm the recommendations or testimonies before they are posted on a profile. This allows the users with profile to see who is giving them testimonials as well as avoid overly negative information to be posted about them.

Profile 1:

Coach: Coach Carl

Age: 28 years old

Background: Recent graduate from the University of Montana with a degree in Sports Medicine with a minor in Education. Played high school and college Basketball

Coach Carl takes an approach about coaching that is more about learning team-building skills than winning. He asks that all his players call him Carl, his first name. He likes to get to know his players and their families. Coach Carl also likes to let the children be active decision makers when it comes to the team. Coach Carl lets it known that winning isn't the most important thing about playing basketball so he chooses to coach children under the age of 12. He has the parents of his team sign a paper that the parent will not interfere with his coaching decisions and that no negative comments are allowed during practice and/or games.

Profile 2:

Coach: Coach Ennis

Age: 54 years old

Background: Graduate from the University of Washington. Currently works as a high school Physical Education instructor. Coaching football at the high school level for 30 years as an Assistant Coach and Head Coach

Coach Ennis prefers to be called Coach Ennis or Sergeant Ennis. He focuses on learning how to take care of your teammates because it takes care of yourself. He uses things that he learned while in the military to "whip" his players into shape. Winning is

very important to Coach Ennis since it teaches young men to be successful. Absences and tardiness is considered inexcusable to Coach Ennis, he holds both the parents and the child responsible for this. 85% of Coach Ennis' players go on to college where some also play football. He coaches spring and summer football leagues for kids that choose to play all year long.

Parent Profiles

Profile 1:

Parent: Carol Unique

Child: Xander Unique

Activity Level: Typical

Personal Needs: Necessary to have a coach that understands special needs children.

Summary: Carol is a single mother with a mildly autistic child, Danny. Carol recently relocated to the area and is in search of a sport to involve her child in. She is concerned about finding coaches that understand the needs of autistic children and who would be willing to work with Xander to make participation a positive experience for him. Our coach profiles section will be of particular interest to her because of the coach bios and information. She can pre-screen coach information to see if it would be a fit even before taking the time to meet in person or sign up.

Profile 2:

Parent: Jack and Denise Couch

Child: Riley Couch, 13 year old boy

Activity Level: Extremely low, prefers playing video games and staying in the house.

Personal Needs: Would like Riley to learn social skills and learn healthy lifestyle choices.

Summary: Jack and his wife are desperately searching for an activity to get their video game addicted son into. He is getting overweight due to inactivity and has never participated in sports before. This couple will value our site due to the ability to read about the sports leagues that are available locally and get recommendations about what would be appropriate for their son's level of activity, abilities and schedule. Once they decide on an appropriate sport for their child, they can read about local leagues, coaches and schedules to make sure that this would all be a fit for their family.

Profile 3:

Parent: Jane Gumptious Mother, 29, with a full time job.

Child: Johnny Gumptious, 7-year-old boy

Activity Level: He is very active, with lots of energy but lacks direction.

Personal Needs: Would like the sport to take place in close proximity to home and school. Would like to have a coach that knows how to deal with exuberant children.

Summary: Jane is looking for an activity in which Johnny can use his never-ending supply of energy. It would be nice to find an activity that will help him with his social skills. He is

very shy and quiet when it comes to talking and usually prefers to play by himself, but when left to his own devices, chaos ensues. Ultimately, she hopes to find a coach that can help Johnny come out of his shell. Jane would be able to find a coach on SportzMatch that knows how to structure practices and games that allow energetic children to have fun but also learn discipline. Additionally, Jane would be able to find coaches in her own area without so that she would not have to make a long commute to the activity.

Profile 4:

Parent: Dennis Butterfly

Child: Cassie Butterfly, 8-year-old girl.

Level of activity: She is bubbly and outgoing.

Looking for: A social sport that will allow her to focus her chatterbox tendencies.

Summary: Cassie is a beginning dancer that loves to be the center of attention. While she enjoys dancing, Cassie has a competitive nature and would like to be part of a group rather than always practicing on her own. Would prefer an activity that is convenient with Dennis' current work schedule. Dennis would be able to search cheer teams that have schedules that fits into his already full schedule without having to take off additional time from work.

Organization Profiles

Description: Program involvement is essential to the networks success. The first type of program that would use this site would be an organized program that currently recruits players. The program will leave a description of the goals of the program, how players are selected for teams, and essential information on the program. The program would then present a list of all the programs under which would be a list of all the coaches available. The user can then browse through the coaches profiles, which give a brief description of the coach and the style of coaching offered. The members are able to contact the coaches in order to ask questions of the coach. The profiles will help the parents target the coaches that best fit their child. Although the parents are unable to request an audition with that coach, they will be able to touch base with a specific coach to help bring awareness to their child. The social network would still identify which coaches best suit their child.

Profile 1:

Program: All about Sports

Sports offered: Soccer, football, baseball, and tennis

Ages: All Ages, broken into groups based on ages

Program Goals: To develop strong teams and help people of all ages maintain a healthy lifestyle

Summary: At All about Sports teaching people how to play sports and greatly improve their skill level is what we seek to achieve. Our teams are created through a recruiting process. Recruiting occurs 2 months prior to the start of the season. Coaches decided who

they want one their team based on several factors such as current skill level and personality. Browse through our coaches to see what each coach bases their decision on who to recruit on.

Description: The second type of program would be one that has the child try out for a specific coach or allows the parents to select the team that their child will join. The social network would identify the programs that best suit the needs of the parents and ones that contain a majority of coaches that match the child's personality. These profiles would be very similar to the recruiting programs, but will have a calendar feature that will allow the parents to set meeting with the coach. The parents can message the program with general questions and directly contact coaches in order to join the team or set up auditions. One these pages the parents would be able to access information on other players on the team in order to determine if the child's personality will be similar with the other players on the team.

Profile 2:

Program: Boys and Girls Club

Sports offered: Soccer, football, baseball, tennis, track, swimming

Ages: Youth ages 6 to 18

Program Goals: To enrich the lives of children and develop team skills at a young age

Summary: At the Boys and Girls Club we seek to help children grow and develop. We seek to teach children respect and responsibility, while helping them learn life skills through sports. Our program forms teams by creating a well-rounded group of children.

Decisions are not based on skill level. Each team has a variety of skill levels, which means the children will be able to improve their skills with the assistance of not only the coach, but also the other teammates.

**SportzMatch L.L.C.
Business Plan Model**

Prepared for investors' meeting April 19, 2010

Principals:

**Samantha Goelze
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SportzMatch L.L.C. Business Plan
Prepared for investors' meeting April 19, 2010

Executive Summary

SportzMatch is a start-up organization whose vision is to create a revolutionary website that will assist a parent in placing their child on an appropriate sports team. This L.L.C. was formed by four partners: Samantha Goelze, Spring Atkinson, Sarah Richards and Scott Fraser. The genesis of this company stemmed from a college course in social media. The company is based out of Vancouver Washington.

Start-up Summary

SportzMatch is a start up organization. The following assets and professional services will be needed for the implementation and start of operations:

- Legal services for company formation
- Accounting services
- Programmers (3 on staff, consultants as needed)
- Web server backend hardware
- Office Space for 506 employees
- Phone and communication equipment
- Marketing services for national exposure and promotional materials
- 4 regional executive sales representatives

Estimated start-up expenditures \$500,000.

Mission

At SportzMatch, we strive to create a positive childhood sporting match that offers the child, parent and coaches a rich and rewarding experience. By offering our revolutionary tools in a way that has never been implemented before, SportzMatch will position itself as the defacto resource for childhood sporting information.

Concept Summary

Much like a dating website, at SportzMatch, the parent will be able to complete a survey about their child's personality type, needs and interests. Our innovative site will match the child with an appropriate sport for their personality and a coach that will suit their needs. Utilizing our website will save parents countless hours of researching, inquiry and false starts down the wrong path. Recognizing that every child is unique, it is important to find both a sport and a coach / organization that will be a good match for the child. Taking the data from the parental survey about the child, our site will match the child to both a sport (based on personality and temperament indicators) and a coach (based on coach /

organization profile). For a parent who does not know where to start but wants to get their child involved in a sport, SportzMatch will be their reference.

The Market

SportzMatch has identified 3 distinct market segments that will be interested in our site. The segments are as follows:

- **Parents of children interested in sports** – Tools on our site will allow parents to match their child to a sport as well as a coach / organization. Access to our coach bios, information about local organizations and general information about each sport will save parents time.
- **Coaches of local sports teams** – Coaches will have the opportunity to publicize their teams / sport and offer information about their coaching style, level of competitiveness, experience and contact information.
- **Local sports organizations** – Sports organizations will utilize the site to provide information about their organization, schedules, fees, contact information and other pertinent information.

Revenue Generation

SportzMatch is a free resource to end user parents and coaches. Individual coaches can register and post to the site for free and parents can use all of the free resources on the site. The operating revenue for the company is generated in three ways. The primary revenue generation comes from organizational registration fees. Anytown U.S.A. recreational soccer club pays a fee to list on the site. There is a second tier “featured” fee that can be paid to have a featured ad box on the site (according to zip code or county entered into the site). In addition, top-level site ad boxes are available to larger, regional or national sports organizations such as the National Youth Sports Safety Foundation and other sports companies (such as UnderArmor and Diadora). Utilizing 4 regional sales executives we intend to aggressively pursue ad revenue from youth sports organizations and equipment manufacturers. Regional and local organizations will not be aggressively targeted for advertising. Our intent is to have 4-5 “marquee” sponsors on the level of Adidas or UnderArmor to provide subsidy for the smaller regional and local organizations.

Competitive Edge

As of the filing of SportzMatch L.L.C., it was completely unique in concept. There simply is no other resource like it that incorporates all of the elements in one location. We believe that this resource will prove to be a very useful and valuable tool for parents, coaches and organizations. It will also provide a very targeted advertisement opportunity for sponsors.

Keys to Success

- Develop a website that is simple and kid friendly, yet a powerful resource with that ability to accurately match coaches / organizations with players.
- Implement a strong marketing campaign to grow the regional databases, offering additional choices for parents.
- Provide accurate information about sports and what types of sports are best suited to what type of child.
- Gain marquee top-level sponsors to provide sufficient operating revenue.

Objectives

- Gain 300,000 registered users per year.
- Maintain uniqueness of service via Registered Trademark
- Gain national recognition as an authority in children's sports information.
- Promote and encourage participation in childhood sports by promoting a positive experience.

Summary

SportzMatch will fill a unique niche market that is not currently being tapped by any other company. We will fulfill our goal of creating a positive childhood sporting experience while giving parents peace-of-mind, good information and a venue to connect with coaches and sports organizations in their area. The revenue plan is strong, scalable and sustainable. There is also the potential for an endless stream of new users as children reach sporting age on a continual basis. Therefore, we do not see any foreseeable erosion in our market share and a large growth potential.

Marketing Plan: SportzMatch

1. Executive Summary

Refer to Section 1: Overview

2. Strategic Focus and Plan

This section covers the three major aspects of the SportzMatch strategy, which influences the marketing plan. The major aspects to follow include: 1) mission statement, 2) goals, and 3) core competency/sustainable competitive advantage.

Mission

At SportzMatch, we strive to create a positive childhood sporting match that offers the child, parent and coaches a rich and rewarding experience. By offering our revolutionary tools in a way that has never been implemented before, SportzMatch will position itself as the defacto resource for childhood sporting information.

Goals

Within the next five years SportzMatch wishes to achieve the following goals:

- Non Financial Goals
 - To ensure the children are placed in sports which best suits them
 - To enable children, who come from a family which struggles financially, to have the same opportunities to join sports programs
 - To become a parents primary source for information pertaining to sports for children
 - To assist programs, both large and small, in increasing enrollment in programs
 - To enter all regions of the United States effectively
 - To be the top social media network for sports information
- Financial Goals
 - To obtain profits which could then fund sports program scholarships, workshops, clinics, and allow for a growth in staff

Core Competency and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

SportzMatch seeks to achieve the ability to 1) provide accurate placement of children within a given sports, 2) provide parents with the necessary information to select

the correct program for their child, and 3) provide programs with a way to further reach out to communities and child.

SportzMatch will maintain a sustainable advantage over other possible competitors by developing strong consumer trust before other networks have the opportunity to recreate the network. The network will be highly developed and seeks to become well established from its start.

3. Situation Analysis

In order to understand the current environment in which SportzMatch finds itself a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis must be complete.

SWOT Analysis

Internal Factors	Strengths	Weaknesses
Management	Creative and innovative	Limited experience with social media network development
Offerings	Unique, free, and easily accessible network	Easy ability for other social media networks to recreate
Marketing	Sports Programs are highly demanded by consumers, but no central location for information	No awareness of the network
Personnel	Knowledgeable staff, little turnover	Small staff size may be unable to handle a large demand for the network or a loss of a staff member
Finance	Low pay and ability to gain volunteers	No revenue at start up

External Factors	Opportunities	Threats
Consumer/Social	Social Media Networking is growing rapidly and easily reaches to a large amount of people	Consumers may prefer to visit programs in person over trusting a website

Competitive	No similar social media network currently available	Product can be duplicated
Technological	Creation and maintenance of websites is becoming easier	Other networks can recreate the network, rules for social media networking have not been developed so risk of failure can be high
Economic	Social Media networking is easy and convenient for consumers and advertiser	Companies are not willing to place advertisements within the site
Legal/Regulatory	Legal and regulatory issues are currently not as developed as other fields	Sports Programs may be unable to participate in 3 rd party applications

4. Market Product Focus

This section will detail the marketing objectives, target markets, points of difference, and positioning of the SportzMatch social network.

Marketing Objectives

SportzMatch marketing intent is to take full advantage of pre-existing sports programs and assuring that the social network provides accurate and consistent information to the users of the site. The primary objectives are listed as is:

- Target Market. The social network will focus on targeting specific programs to participate in its use of the network. Parent and coach interest in the social network must be developed and maintained.
- Authentic Representation. The social networks manager must approve all programs before the programs page is posted on SportzMatch. This ensures that all programs are authentic and certified as reliable.
- Equal opportunity. In order to ensure that every child has a chance to enter a sports program, SportzMatch will sponsor events that will a) raise awareness of the

social network and b) raise funding for parents whom are financially unable to pay for the program that is hosting the event.

Target Market

The first target market would be the sports programs, which are essentially the foundation of the network. Sports programs that are reputable will be the primary programs contacted for use of the social network. The programs would then provide the coaches to use the site. Coaches are a sub-target market. Coaches will be targeted due to the fact that they can persuade the sports program in which they coach for to use the social network. The coaches can be very influential in the use of social networks. However, coaches will need to be listed under a program profile instead of a fully independent profile.

The second target market is parent(s) with children ages 6 to 14 with a smaller focus on ages 15 to 18. Children in grade school (6 to 12) and middle school (12 to 14) are much less likely to be involved in a school sports program and more in an external sports program due to a lack of sports program available at schools at this time, which means that many parents will be looking elsewhere for information on sports programs and sports to consider for their child. Children aged 15 to 18 are more likely to be involved with school sports programs that are pre-determined. However, this age group is still important because many children and parents of children in this age group can still be unaware of what sport is appropriate, so they can still give valuable insight on the different types of sports and discover which sport suits the child.

Points of Difference

The characteristics, which make SportzMatch unique from other competitors, are separated into these sections:

- **Authentic Programs and Coaches.** All sports program profiles and coach's profiles are approved by the networks administration. This ensures that the programs and coaches, which are listed under the program, are authentic. This guarantees that the programs are not 'scams' and that the coaches are verified as being who they say they are. No other social networks require programs, companies, or people-of-importance to verify their reputability and identity.
- **Parent Interest.** Childhood obesity is on the rise and is leading many parents to highly consider enrolling their child in a sports program. Not only this, but parents are looking for ways to get their child involved and active. This network focuses solely on sports, information on how to find the correct sport, sports program, and coach for their child.
- **Social Networks Layout.** The webpage is very professional and clean in order to attract the eyes of parents, but still provides a hint of excitement through its use of color and interactivity.

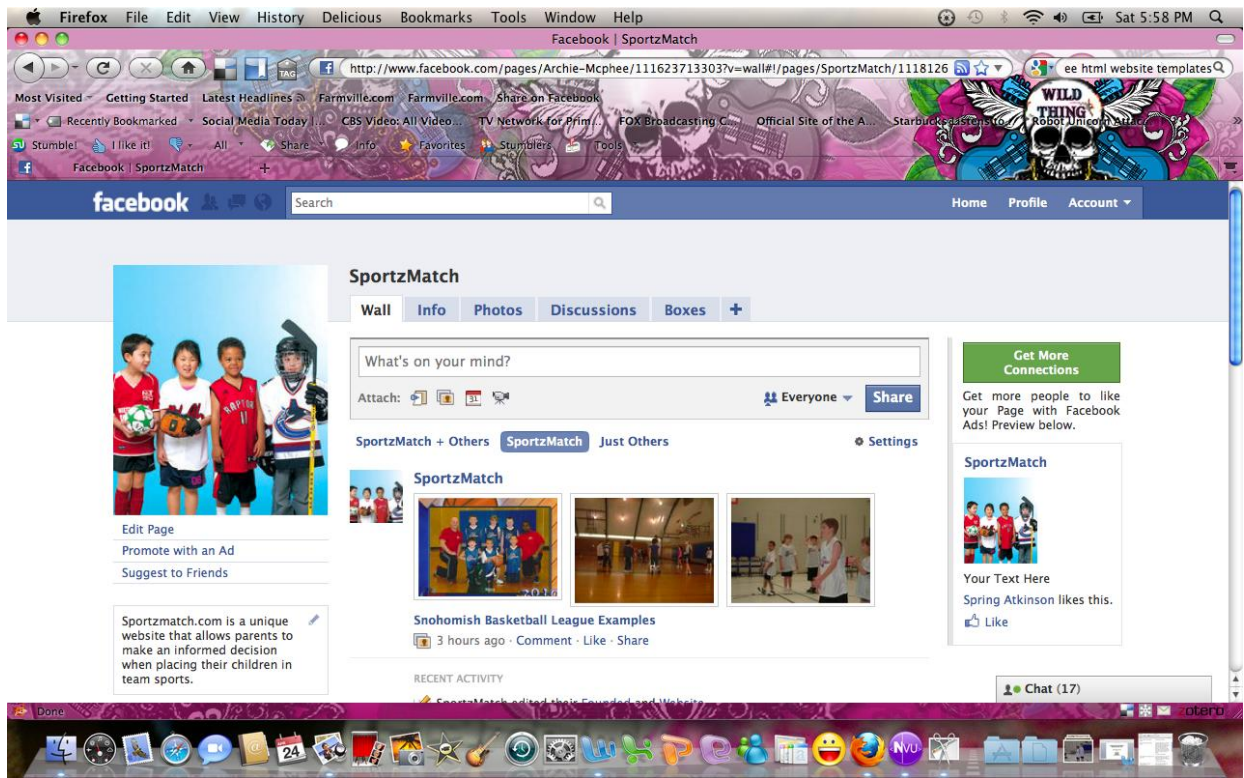
Positioning

In comparison to the other social networks, none of them have a focus on a specific theme. SportzMatch specializes on sports for children. This specialization provides a sense of security and high product value for the user due to the fact that sports are the one and only focus of the network. The social network is simple and easy to use, and is very informative.

5. Product Promotion through Social Media

SportzMatch will promote the network and the programs offered through the network by using other social media networks. These networks include but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Facebook



Facebook will be used to promote sports programs for children. The site will include links to the main social network page, the YouTube account, and other important information pertaining to the benefits of sports at a young age. The Facebook account will be promotional and informative. Not only will it link to research on sports, but a large portion of the use of Facebook will be to encourage discussion among users of SportzMatch and parents/programs whom are interested in becoming involved.

Parents will be the primary target for the use of Facebook. The message sent through this site will be one of genuine interest in developing healthy children, physically and mentally. This will be conveyed through the posting of articles, videos, case studies,

and other research based information. This will also establish the mission of SportzMatch, as stated above. Another portion of the site will show how much financial aid was given in previous years and estimates of what will be provided in the years to come. Facebook will also help the program to develop personal relations with parents.

Twitter

Twitter will be used specifically to promote events being sponsored by SportzMatch, a calendar of sorts. It will include links to advertisements for specific events. On top of this, the Twitter page will work as a reminder system of when tryouts for specific areas will be held. The Twitter page will include some links to consumer reviews, but it will be less focused on consumer suggestion like the Facebook account.

The Twitter account will target sports programs and coaches. The Twitter page will include the same research based information as provided on the Facebook page, which will help to engage the parents. This means that there will be some targeting of parents, but there will be less of a focus on personal interaction. Sports programs will be able to gain information on upcoming events being held by SportzMatch and how the programs can become involved in the events.

YouTube

YouTube's purpose is to engage and excite. There will be public relations, event promotion, and research based videos. The videos will focus on SportzMatch and how it reaches out to communities, information on different sports programs, child health research, and the benefits of physical activities as a whole. These videos will be useful since they can easily be linked to on the social network itself, Facebook, and Twitter.

YouTube will be a center ground of the three social media networks used. It will engage and excite parents through promotional videos. There will also be parent's reviews of the social network available. This encourages personal interaction with the program and gives insight into the benefits of the network. The site will also target the programs and coaches due to the fact that there is interactional information on the success of programs due to the assistance of SportzMatch. Programs will be able to learn about the success rates, such as increased enrollment and profits, created after using SportzMatch.

Social media use as a whole

Overall, the use of sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube are greatly beneficial to the SportzMatch program. Each of the networks would be used in different ways in order to encourage members and members to visit multiple sites and engage with the program. These sites will be used for public relations, product information, supporting research, and program promotion with dates to remember.

6. Financial Data

Estimated Cost of Start Up

In order to develop the SportzMatch social media network a small business loan valued at \$500,000 is needed to fund the start up cost. This loan will be paid back in about three to four years. The sole purpose to the loan will enable the hiring of staff members, web development, advertising, and promotional events.

	Cost (dollars)
Staff salary	300,000
Website cost	5,000
Advertising	100,000
Promotional Events	95,000
Total	500,000

Revenue Generation

In order to pay off the business loan described above revenue must be generated. The primary source of generation is through on-site advertising. The cost for a company to place an advertisement on SportzMatch will be based on a per click basis and companies will bid for the price paid per click, the highest bidder will be awarded more space than those who place lower bids. These advertisements will come from various companies: sports outfitters, party-hosting restaurants, and sports programs.

Sports Outfitters

Sports outfitters will be the first source of revenue generation through advertising. Nike, Adidas, Sports Authority, Sportsman’s Warehouse, and other distributors of sports attire will be the primary target companies for advertising space on-site. The reasoning for sports outfitters being the primary target for use of advertising space is due to the fact that the parents, sports programs, and coaches will find them appealing. This means that advertisements will be effective when displayed on all the profiles.

Party Hosting Restaurants

Party hosting restaurants will also have priority for advertising space on SportzMatch. As the second source of revenue, party hosting restaurants will not be allocated less space than the sports outfitters since the primary targets for sales for party

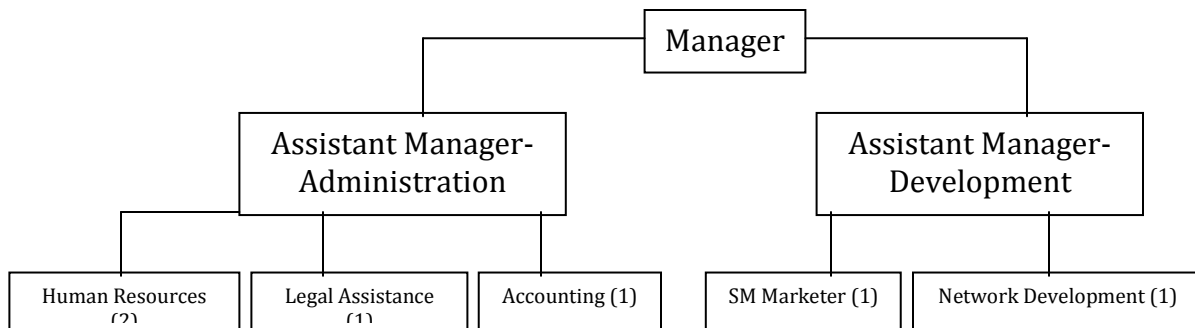
hosting restaurants would be the sports programs, and more specifically the coaches. Considering that parents are not a primary target for party hosting restaurants fewer advertisements for the restaurant will be displayed on profiles for parents and more advertisements will be displayed on profiles for sports programs and coaches.

Sports Programs

Sports programs will also have the ability to place advertisements on SportzMatch. These advertisements would only be displayed for parents using the site, thus giving it less attention than those of sports outfitters and party hosting restaurants.

7. Organization

SportzMatch organization is shown below. It shows people reporting to the website manager. Listed below are paid part-time and full-time positions. Not included are volunteer employees. The organization of the company is subject to change due to growth in the network.



8. Implementation Plan

Raising awareness of the SportMatch.com social network is a difficult task. Creative and lucrative marketing campaigns must be implemented. To begin the process, two cities will be selected from each region, both from different regions within that region, of the United States: Northeast, South East, Midwest, South West, and West. These cities will be trial runs in order to assess differences in needs within the different region, assuming there will be a difference in needs from the region. Also, starting with specific cities and the programs within that city will ensure that the network does not grow too rapidly and become too large for the small workforce to handle, thus resulting in a failure to launch the social media network and opening a window for competitors to develop a similar product while restructuring of SportzMatch occurs.

9. Evaluation

SportzMatch has a great advantage given the current lack of competition or previously created social networks. Development and testing of the network will be extensive prior to the formal release of the social media network. This is done to decrease two risks, 1) unsuccessful launch and 2) opportunity for competitors to develop a similar network which could cause a collapse of the SportzMatch social media network. The amount of marketing allocated to a given region of the United States will be determined when there is an understanding of the demand of the social media network in each of the regions.

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