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Creating Your Own Business: BB Photography

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Creating Your Own Business: BB Photography Marketing Plan 2023 Senior Symposia

Brylee Banuelos

Abstract

It is no easy task to build a brand from scratch. The decisions that you make about your brand play a major role in its success. The goal of this marketing plan is to ensure that the decisions that you make are structured and relevant. This paper analyzes the current and the future market of the photography industry and sets up a structure to formulate a functional photography studio. It assesses both strengths and weaknesses of creating a photography business as well as look into factors that may externally affect the nature of the businesses growth. You will be provided three major marketing objectives and various options that the business may take in order to fulfill these objectives. Through this paper, you will learn the importance of planning and research of the market, the target audience, the internal/external factors, and many others when building a brand.

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Executive Summary

BB Photography is a small, locally owned and operated photography studio located in the heart of downtown San Jose. BB Photography will offer photographic services, both in studio and on-location, to anyone that wants to capture the most important moments in their lives. We at BB Photography want to highlight our customers milestones and accomplishments while also making them feel at home in our studio. A major challenge that BB Photography will face, however, is to grow our client base and increase retention. While being located in a highly populated area, BB Photography will attract customers via social media and word of mouth.

This plan will analyze both internal and external factors that will affect the growth and development of BB Photography, while suggesting ways in which we can overcome the obstacles that stand in the way of success. We will work diligently on social media and other digital platforms to continue to develop our online presence and drive customers to interact with our brand.

Vision

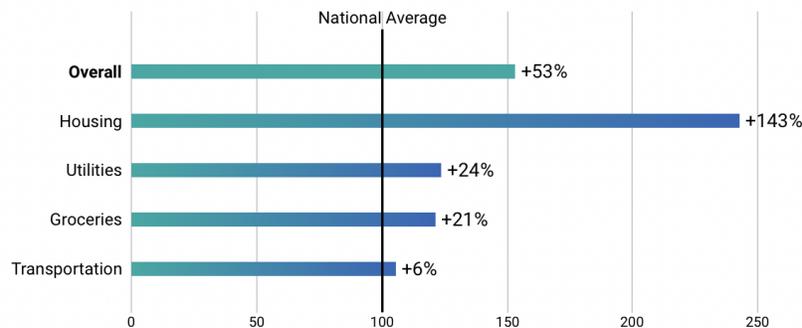
The vision for BB Photography is to tell the story of every individual that is photographed. As a photographer, the goal is to make our clients feel comfortable and confident in front of the camera so that they can let their personality shine. In order to make this happen our employees will strive to present customers with an enjoyable experience from the very first interaction with our brand.

Environmental Research

1. **Competitive Forces:** The photography industry is highly competitive. For many customers, they choose photographers that are local, not expensive, and have good reviews. This is because consumers are driven by services/ products that are convenient and accessible to them. BB Photography will compete with other local studios and freelance photographers that already have loyal clients. BB Photography must work to beat its competitors through accessibility, price, and overall experience.
2. **Economic Forces:** As a profession that is heavily based on equipment and facilities, much of my overall budget will be designated to obtain the needed equipment to run a successful photography studio. This, however, means that the remaining expenses will be those to fulfill the marketing strategies, such as advertising via social media, promotional campaigns, events, etc. Another factor that will affect BB Photography is the overall cost of living in San Jose. According to PayScale, "the cost of living in San Jose, California is 53% higher than the national average." The cost of living incorporates categories such as housing, utilities, groceries, and transportation. As seen below, just the cost of housing alone is 143% higher than the national average. This means that many people

living in this area may not have the ability to invest in leisure services such as a photographer.

Cost of Living in San Jose, California by Expense Category



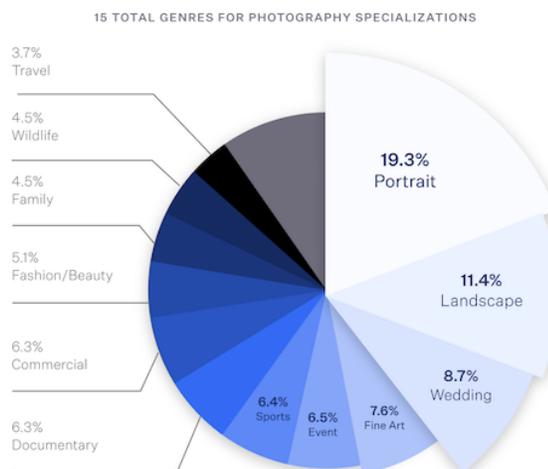
3. **Political Forces:** With the era of COVID-19, there has been a vast amount of new rules and regulations regarding close contact events/gatherings. While the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has eased up mask mandates and gathering regulations, there are still requirements for COVID-19 in the workplace. The CDC oversees the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) which lays down policies requiring employers to record work-related illnesses and injuries, which includes COVID-19. BB Photography will need to adhere to the guidelines placed by the CDC as well as be enforcing OSHA policies.
4. **Legal Forces:** As a business starting up, there is one major legal component that would need to happen. This would mean that BB Photography would need to be registered as a business and register as an LLC(Limited Liability Company). Following this, BB Photography will need to obtain federal and state tax ID numbers or the Employer Identification Number (EIN), this will allow BB Photography to hire employees, open a bank account, and take the next steps in applying for relevant business licenses and permits.
5. **Technological Forces:** Technology plays a huge role in our society today. There are new forms of technology everyday. Also, there are constantly new trends that will come along with these new technologies. For example, the development of the drone has been very popular in recent years because of its ability to get impossible angles of landscape that many photographers would not be able to get with a regular camera. BB Photography will need to be able to keep up with these trends and technologies so that we do not fall behind our competition.
6. **Sociocultural Forces:** Our culture has adapted the desire for documentation. With social media and technology, it has become easier than ever to snap a picture or a video of whatever is happening in one's life. The desire to document major events, accomplishments, etc is at an all time high.

Marketing Environment

The photography industry, like many others, took a major hit as a result of COVID-19. During unknown times, many people felt fear and uncertainty about close social interactions. For photographers, this posed quite the threat to their profession. According to a survey of approximately 1,000 professional photographers and videographers, “more than 96% of respondents stated that they were negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic”. With an abundance of new rules set in place for social distancing and limiting the amount of group gatherings, it became nearly impossible for photographers to book any appointments. For many, they identified the greatest impact during the months of April and May where “60% of videographers and photographers reported most to all of their bookings were canceled”. Another major factor impacting photographers was that many Americans were now forced out of work in the early stages of the pandemic and did not have the income to involve themselves in services such as photography which made getting clients to book an even harder task.

However, as the pandemic continued, the production of vaccines and the slow lifting of strict gathering policies have allowed the photography industry the chance to emerge from the fog of COVID-19. People became more optimistic about the pandemic and less fearful about the uncertainty of the situation. With the call for life to get back to normal, there has been an increased demand for photographic services. According to an analysis of the state of the photography industry by BusinessWire, “the world spent just under \$33 billion on photography in 2020, that number is expected to exceed \$44 billion by 2025.” The Photography market is expected to make a comeback in terms of overall output which makes it the perfect time to create a startup studio photography business.

About the Business of the Business



Demographic Profile

BB Photography will be based in San Jose, California. San Jose is located in Northern California and has a current population of 1,033,430, making it the third largest city in California, following Los Angeles and San Diego. According to Population USA, San Jose holds the nickname “Capital of Silicon Valley’ due to its economic, cultural, and political center”. Silicon valley is known to be “the world’s preeminent hub for technology and a byword for innovation” making it the perfect location for the creation of BB Photography. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, “the median age of someone living in San Jose is 37.1, where 21.9% is persons under the age of 18 and 13.2% are persons over the age of 65”. Our ideal customer is between the ages of 17 to 30 who enjoy having photographs of lasting memories to look back on.

In the market of professional photography, there are many target markets to appeal to. BB Photography will opt to offer customers general photographic services. This means that BB Photography will provide a large range of service options from studio and on-location portraits to event and product photography to a large range of customers.

SWOT analysis

Strengths

1. Location:

Being located in Downtown San Jose or near, makes With the BB Photography studio being located near a university, it allows easy access to our target demographic. The need for photographic services will be in high demand especially in the season of graduation. By building a community with students of San Jose State University, it will provide the opportunity to increase our brand's presence in and around the area.

2. Purpose:

BB Photography has a very strong purpose to fulfill the needs of the customer. We want to provide the most comfortable and personalized experience so that our customers will continue their loyalty to our brand.

Weaknesses

1. COVID-19:

The photography industry is still on the rebound from the impacts of COVID-19, While statistics have shown that the industry is on a positive trend, there is still no certainty about the route that COVID-19 may take on a developing business.

2. Gear:

Photography is a profession that relies heavily on equipment. BB Photography will need to invest a good amount of money into the necessary equipment and accessories needed to be a fully functioning studio. Equipment may include:

- Studio Lights
- Backdrops
- Softboxes / Reflectors
- Tripods
- Photoshoot Props
- Cameras and Lenses
 - Batteries / Memory Cards
- Computers / Printers (if necessary)
- Photo Editing Software

3. Single Location:

BB Photography will be a single studio based in Downtown San Jose. While this is a densely populated area, it will limit in-studio visits from those in neighboring cities. It is still possible to reach our non-local clients, however this means that we will need to invest some portion of our money for travel costs. It will also mean that we will have more competition if we choose to market in a neighboring city.

Opportunity

1. Large target market:

BB Photography will offer basic photographic services to a wide range of customers. A large target market will allow for a larger amount of people to connect with on social media platforms and, in turn, create lasting relationships with customers.

2. Growing Industry:

There has been an increased interest in documentation following the COVID-19 pandemic. BB Photography will not only document events/achievements that one has, however we want to strive to creatively capture a memory that may be looked back on and appreciated in the future.

3. Trends:

There are always new trends arising from social media. This allows BB Photography to attract certain target groups. It will also allow the photographers a chance to be more expressive and creative in their photographs.

4. Social Media:

One of the main goals of BB Photography is to build an online presence via social media. When starting, it will be difficult to generate engagement, however social media becomes the perfect place to interact and build loyalty.

Threats

1. No fixed client base:

Photography is difficult in terms of client base. With the competition from various other local brands, BB Photography may only have a few loyal customers. Other than that, we may be a family's choice for one Christmas or a graduate's choice just for one photoshoot. While BB Photography may face the threat of no fixed client base, we will strive to prove to our customers that they made the right choice every time.

2. Competitive Market:

Having such a competitive makes gaining recognition and clients very difficult. If BB Photography is not able to set ourselves apart from other photography studios and freelance photographers, we will struggle to financially get ourselves going as a small business.

3. Covid regulations(Unknown:

With COVID-19 still lingering, there is still instability in our society. There are many unknowns about where we are headed next, economically and, in terms of, rules and regulations. With the prices for our basic needs such as housing and food rising, there is this sudden influx in a customer's desire to invest in services such as photography. This unknown poses a threat for anyone and everyone as there are so many aspects of our lives constantly changing.

Marketing Objectives

BB Photography has the main goal of generating brand awareness via social media and word of mouth. In a highly populated area, BB Photography has a lot of opportunities to gain loyal customers. With the development of BB Photography, there are 3 main objectives that we want to focus our marketing strategies on. These objectives include:

1. Driving First Interactions
2. Growing Client Base
3. Increasing Customer Retention and Loyalty

Marketing Strategies

Product

For those looking to capture the most important moments in their life. BB Photography is a photography studio that provides customers with personalized photography sessions that appeal to their needs. Unlike other photography studios that throw you in front of the camera, we at BB Photography strive to offer a pleasant, personalized experience to all of our customers.

Price

The pricing at BB Photography will vary based upon what services the customer needs. Not only do we account for the time spent during the photoshoot but also time spent downloading and editing photos. Our basic prices that we will offer will be based on the length of the photoshoot. For most portrait sessions, either in studio or on-location, they will be \$75-\$100 for a one hour session and every additional 30 minutes the price will increase \$25. For event or product photography, the prices will vary and will require consulting with the customer to settle on the appropriate pricing strategy. Prices at BB Photography are not meant to be fixed. We will offer a variety of discounts and special offers throughout the year. Many of these will appear on our social media accounts to encourage engagement with our brand.

Place

The BB Photography studio will be located in the downtown of San Jose. This will allow a lot of foot traffic with San Jose State University being less than a mile away from the downtown district. Parking will pose an issue for the studio due to its crowded, city environment, however customers may find parking in nearby parking structures. Below are two potential locations for the studio.

Option 1: A potential location to open up a studio will be at 438 Auzerais Ave in San Jose. This is a 2,100 square-foot property with private parking included on the lot. The space is listed at \$37.20 / sf / yr and is located only 7 minutes from the University making it very accessible. The studio has one main window that allows potential customers to view the inside of the studio from the sidewalk as well as this window lets in natural lighting that may be useful from a photoshoot. There are also 3 oversized roll up doors that would be great for transporting larger props or equipment into the studio, an easy task.

Option 2: Another location option would be at 82 North 2nd Street in San Jose. This property is 2,274 square-feet and is listed at \$35.40 / sf / yr. This studio is located in the core of Downtown San Jose making foot traffic not an issue. This property has not only private parking on the lot, additionally it has direct access to a public parking garage. Another opportunity for an increase in foot traffic is the property's location to the VTA (Valley Transportation Authority), a form of public transit. This will provide constant attention from commuters coming to and leaving the Downtown San Jose area.

Promotion

One of the main goals for BB Photography is to build an online presence. This will be done through social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram as well as through our website. We want to optimize the engagement with our customers so that

we may build a community that ultimately builds trust. We want to make sure that we are posting on our social media accounts consistently, while giving customers a variety of content. Content may include past work, client testimonials, our story, surveys, and special offers. Another goal of BB Photography is to build our website, so that when potential customers are presented with it, they will be able to understand our brand as a whole including our values, goals, and our work.

Costs

Facilities:

- 2,274 square-feet
- Listed at \$35.40 / sf / yr
 - Decor & Furniture
~\$3,000

Equipment:

- Lighting
(YICOE Photography Lighting Kit)
\$81.99

- Backdrop Support
(Studio Essentials Wall Mounting Kit for Paper Roll)
\$71.49

- Backdrop Paper
(Savage Widetone Seamless Background Paper)
\$72.99 per roll

- Tripods
(Magnus TR-13 Travel Tripod with Dual-Action Ball Head)
\$74.95

- Camera
(Canon EOS 5D Mark IV DSLR Camera with 24-105mm f/4L II Lens)
\$3,599

- Cameras Equipment
 - Batteries
(Canon LP-E6Nh Lithium-Ion Battery)
\$79 per battery

- Chargers
(Pawa Compact Charger)
\$19.95
- Memory Cards
(SanDisk 256GB Extreme PRO UHS-I SDXC Memory Card)
\$39.99 per card

- Computers
(Apple iMac Retina 5K 27" (2020))
\$1,499.99

- Photo Editing Software
(Creative Cloud All Apps)
\$84.99

Cost of Startup: \$89, 527.85

Appendix A

Design Mood Board



Figure A1: This mood board showcases important design aspects that BB Photography will incorporate, including fonts, logo, color scheme, slogan, etc.

Appendix B

Sample Social Media Post

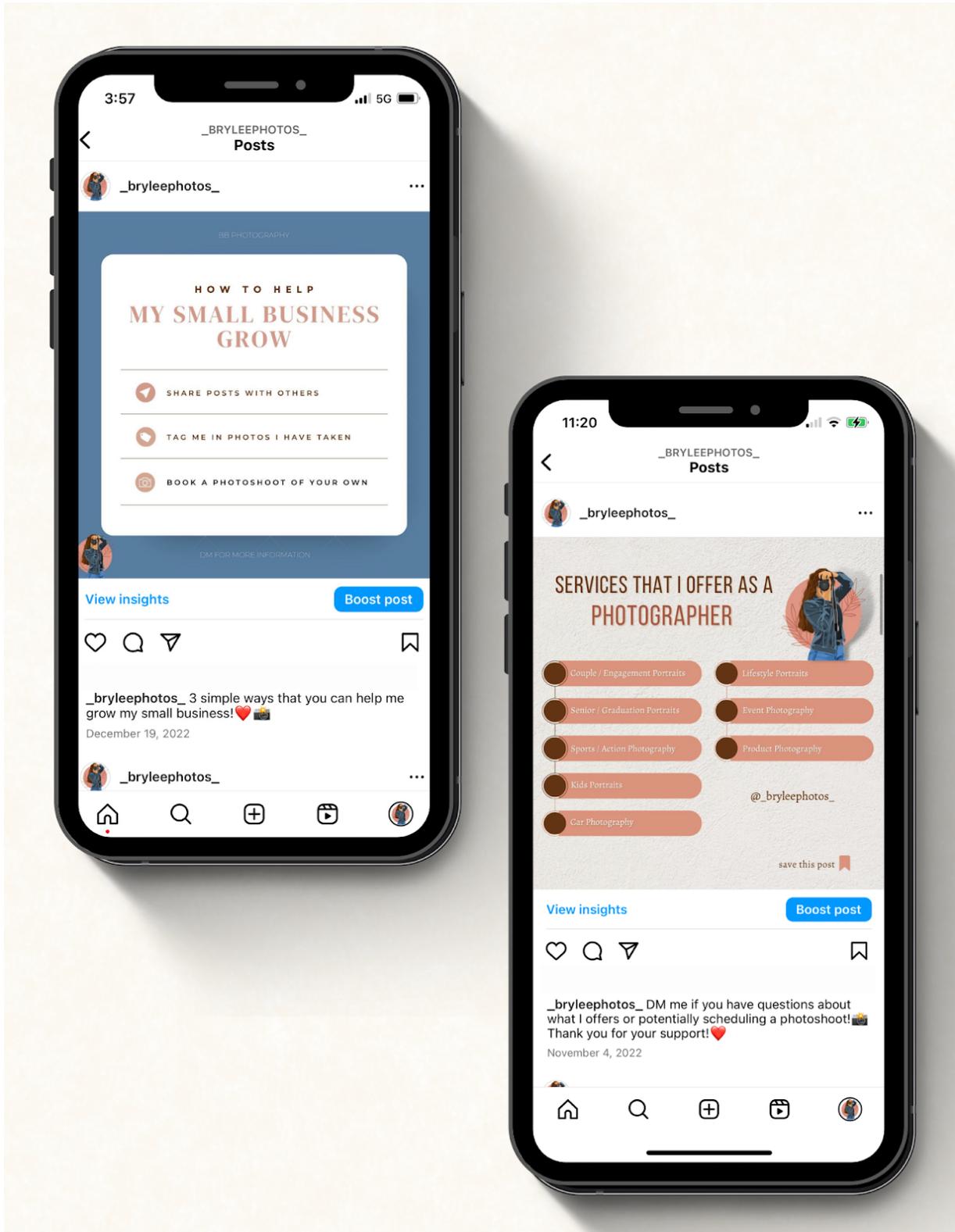


Figure B1: With the goal of building our online presence, social media will play a huge role in generating interest in the brand. The examples above showcase two different posts that would appear on social media, specifically Instagram. The first post, on the left, offers 3 simple ways that anyone may help in the process of building foot traffic, both online and on social media platforms. The second post, on the right, provides another way that potential customers may understand the services that BB Photography offers. Both of the posts utilize the BB Photography logo as well as the color scheme, so that the brand can be recognized while potential customers are scrolling through their feed.

Appendix C



Figure C1: Above is an example of a promotion piece that could be used on all digital platforms, including social media and our website. It may also be displayed in the store window so that potential customers can see it as they pass by. Promotions will set our brand apart from our competitors by offering incentives to interact with our brand. (e.g. limited time offer, seasonal sale, giveaways, etc.)

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