A Business Plan for DonnaJ Events, Event Design and Coordination

A Senior Project

presented to

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Bachelor of Science

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this project was to create a business plan for a new event planning and design company, DonnaJ Events. By following industry standards and the rules for writing a business plan, a business plan was created. This business plan is to be used as a guideline for DonnaJ Events in the beginning stages of the company and is to be constantly updated as changes are made to the business.
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Chapter One

Establishing a Business Outline for A New Event Planning Company

In order to run a business one must become established and build a foundation. With event planning it is crucial to have knowledge of the industry and be able to share industry facts with clients. By creating a base for which to start a company the realm of success is much greater. This project will aim to build a new event planning company by following the list of objectives below and by understanding the problem, importance, and purpose of the project.

Statement of the Problem

The event company that is being established needs a foundation. Without a foundation the company will have a small likelihood of being successful and will not be widely known. A common occurrence in event planning is planning an event without any background or guide which can lead to unsuccessful events. Situations like this can leave guests and clients unsatisfied after events and in return these clients will not use the same business again. The event company being established does not have a foundation.

Importance of the Project

The importance of this project is to establish building blocks for the event planning company to benefit the company itself and the agriculture industry. New opportunities for agriculture awareness will arise with this new event planning company. Opportunities for the
event planning company could be hosting agriculture seminars or using a facility, such as a winery to hold an event. Creating a foundation for the company will help the company become profitable by giving the company direction. The company will be knowledgeable about the industry and will be able to properly inform their clients about the company, which will increase the chances of gaining clients. Both parties will benefit when the company is succeeding along with the agriculture industry.

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to establish a business plan for a new event planning company.

**Objectives of the Project**

The objective of this project is to establish a starting point for the new event planning company by 1. researching business plans and 2. writing a business plan. The sub-objectives of this project are:

- **Sub-Objective 1:** Write the Company Description section of the business plan.
- **Sub-Objective 2:** Write the Executive Summary section of the business plan.
- **Sub-Objective 3:** Write the Market Analysis section of the business plan.
- **Sub-Objective 4:** Write the Organization and Management section of the business plan.
- **Sub-Objective 5:** Write the Service and Product Line section of the business plan.
- **Sub-Objective 6:** Write the Marketing and Sales section of the business plan.
Sub-Objective 7: Write the Financial Projections section of the business plan.

Definitions of Important Terms

**Quote:**

A layout of an event cost that includes a deposit price, an estimated total cost, and the remaining cost after the deposit is paid. The cost is contingent on the amount of guests, hours, or days the event will take place. The event layout also includes packages that the company is willing to offer and a list of included materials in each package.

**Event Planning:**

The process of organizing an activity for a group of people. The activity that is being organized can be large or small and usually involves contacting vendors and communicating with the person/people the event is being planned for. The event planner is usually the liaison between the vendors and the people/person the event is being planned for.

**Vendor:**

An individual who will participate in the event that is being planned. Vendors include caterers, rental companies, florists, photographers, and other people of this matter.

**Summary**

By aiming to create a foundation for the event planning company, a successful event planning company can potentially be established. The establishment of building blocks and the creation of the event planning company can gain more awareness for the agriculture industry and through this the event company will hopefully be able to expand. Items such as a business plan,
brochures, a quote, business cards, and organizing strategies will be created to market and ground the company.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

This project will focus on establishing a business outline for a new event planning company and discuss essential aspects of starting a business. This business is an event company that will focus on design and coordination for events such as weddings, athletic races, formal dinners, small parties, and private events, etc. The goal of the new company is to provide clients with an experience and give clients their “dream event.” Chapter Two will focus on organizing events, how to market a company, establishing initial inquiries with clients, event follow-ups, and writing a business plan.

Organizing Events

Organizing an event takes several resources and planning and can include, but is not limited to the following: organizing transportation, volunteers, funds, and permits.

Transportation can be a crucial part to an event. Whether it be a small party or a large wedding, getting the guests to the venue is important. An article written by Vi-An Nguyen (2014) on the website, theknot.com, gives some helpful tips about planning transportation. When booking a company it is important to book the transportation company at least six months out in order to make sure that the vehicles are available and the company does not have any conflicting dates. Another piece of advice this article offers is to not leave your guests stranded (Nguyen,
These transportation tips will allow the transportation to run smoothly and will help the guest enjoy the event by not having to worry about transportation methods.

Volunteers make events happen. Without volunteers many events would not occur or the event would run less efficiently. Wakelin (2013) states “the concept of volunteering embraces many different types of activities…[which] include, but are not limited to, campaigning, advice, educating, fundraising, working with dependent individuals, and helping at events” (p. 64). With many event companies volunteers are necessary for helping at events and possibly with educating the public and campaigning for events. Many races such as triathlons and marathons would not exist without volunteers. The study that Wakelin performed focused on why volunteers choose to volunteer and what is their motivation behind volunteering. The study concludes with the following idea:

To ensure that volunteers continue to contribute to the success of events, understanding their motivation to give up their time is essential. Volunteers will, over time, develop core event management skills, reducing the time and cost associated with training new volunteers for each event (Wakelin, 2013, p. 73).

It is important for event companies to establish volunteer guidelines and to have a group of volunteers that will grow with the company while the company gains a better understanding of them. If volunteers are passionate about what they are volunteering for, many times they will return to volunteer again.

In addition to establishing loyal volunteers, it is important to understand the cost behind starting a new business and how to create one. The United States Small Business Administration features an article explaining steps of estimating a cost for a new business. Some of the key
points include “[defining] what you need to spend money on” and “[assigning] costs.” Beesley (2011), the author, goes on to say that “Whatever you do, don’t underestimate your costs, or try to force your costs to fit the amount of money you have available. If the costs are too high, consider another approach to starting a business” (Beesley, 2011). Organizing the costs and establishing a base-line is an essential part of creating a price for clients and for becoming successful.

In order to be a legal business permits need to be filed for and obtained. The U.S. Small Business Administration website explains eight categories of licenses and permits that businesses could potentially need and are as listed:

i. General Business License

ii. Professional and Trade License

iii. Home Occupation Permit

iv. Sales Tax Permit

v. Health and Safety Permits

vi. Sign Permits

vii. Construction Permits

viii. Check with your Homeowner's Association (HOA) (Beesley, 2012).

To legally be a business and to obtain benefits from the government, most companies must have a general business license along with the other items listed.
Marketing

Marketing is a crucial part to being successful and allows people to become aware of a company. Marketing can be done in several methods such as such as social media (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter), fliers, online calendars, radio, newspaper, a website, brochures, etc.

An article by Schulaka (2010) states that the goal of any marketing plan is “to generate leads and eventually convert those leads to new clients” (p. 8). Generating leads is an essential goal and mindset that companies need to take as they are establishing themselves. A study conducted by the FPA Research Center found that 77% of people requested referrals from current clients to market their company and 54% of people used a website for their self practice (Schulaka, 2010, p. 9). It is important to gather a clientele and then build the business up.

Social media plays a huge role in the success rate and clientele of a company. Dangelo and Geho (2012) found that “it’s no secret that for marketers-particularly small business marketers-that social media is now the price of admission to reach a mass audience” (p. 62). Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other types of social media need to be implemented in the marketing plan in newly established companies, and even current businesses, to help businesses progress. Based on the study done by Dangelo and Geho (2012), Facebook Insights, Facebook Business Pages, and Twitter are the top sources of social media marketing for a small business (p. 64).

Despite the fact that social media is gaining popularity it is necessary to implement other types of marketing. Integrated advertising is using both traditional and online advertising and “when both [are] used with the right target consumers [this] can enhance the emotional appeal of brands while also creating a buzz and [share] relevant brand messages or content (Grondlund, p.
According to this research companies should focus on several types of marketing methods including Facebook, Instagram, a website, brochures, and newspapers.

In addition to using social media for marketing methods, creating a brochure, business cards, and a website can prove to be an asset to a company. Building a website can help establish a business and in the article “Launching a Website for your Small Business” this is discussed:

“The substance and quality of the information, as well as making sure the navigation or path of the site follows an underlying rhythm, that all the links work, and that the site has a consistent presentation are all key components of building a website” (Roseti and Mascone, 2004, 55-58).

Putting together a website can help market a new and upcoming business. Karen Thickstun (2012) talks about how people have to see something three different times in three different ways before knowing they have seen it and creating business cards and brochures can help do this (p. 48). Creating business cards and brochures are another way to market a new business.

**Initial Inquiry**

After obtaining clients from marketing, it helps to establish a quote and contract in order to inform clients about what the company offers and pricing. Abrams describes in her book how “an attorney might offer a ‘small business startup’ package that covers incorporation, a trademark search, lease review, and writing a standard personal contract. In this way, clients know exactly what they get for their money” (Abrams). Clients of any company should understand what they are getting involved in and what agreements are made between a client and an employer before making an agreement. This goes for establishing a price as well. A study
done by the Harvard Business School lists five principles that could help businesses become more profitable and goes on to say that “a single inflexible price often limits a company’s ability to share value equitably with customers and to responds to changes in their needs” (Bertini and Gourville, 2012). Prices should be established for new companies but with the idea in mind that the pricing could change based on the market and clientele.

**Event Follow-Ups**

After an event has occurred a procedure needs to be established in order to follow up with clients, venues, and any other members involved in the event. Surveys serve as a great tool for gathering feedback and SurveyMonkey advises sending a post-event survey shortly after the event, being specific, and making the survey anonymous (Party, Event, and Meeting Planning Survey Templates). By having a survey and gathering feedback companies are able to learn what they need to improve on for the next event.

**Writing a Business Plan**

Creating a successful company starts with writing a business plan. The U.S. Small Business Administration website offers step by step instructions on how to create a business plan. Sections of a business plan listed on the website include the following: executive summary, company description, market analysis, organization and management, service or product line, marketing and sales, funding request, financial projections, and an appendix (https://www.sba.gov/writing-business-plan). Each section listed on the website includes a
description and what to include in each section. These categories are all aspects of a business plan that will allow a business to become established in the United States.

An executive summary includes several pieces which enable a reader to understand the general message of the business plan. The executive summary starts with a mission statement about the business and is followed by company information. Company information lists founders of the company, general contact information, and employee information. Growth highlights is the next segment of an executive summary which describes financial and marketing growth. Products and services follow along with financial information. The executive summary ends with a brief explanation of the company’s future plans.

A company description is important in the business plan as well. It includes the idea behind the business and how the services and products of the business meet the needs of the intended market. The company description also describes the clientele of the business and advantages of the company that will allow it to compete in the market.

Following the company description should be the market analysis of the company. The market analysis is comprised of several pieces. The industry description and outlook should be present along with information about the company’s target market. Characteristics such as needs of customers and demographics should be described in the “distinguishing characteristics” section. In regards to markets, the primary market size, information about market shares, and pricing/gross margin targets should be discussed. Based on this information a competitive analysis must be included and then any restrictions that would apply to the company.

The organization and management section must come after the market analysis section. This section will discuss the people involved in a business and how it is organized, stating each
person’s role in the company. Most often business plans will include an organizational chart that shows the layout of the company as this provides a visual for the person reading the business plan. Ownership information also needs to be included in this section such as what type of legal business it is. Personal information about each owner must be included such as past work experience, education, common stock, among others. If a board of directors is existing in the company, this information needs to be included as well.

Next is the service or line product section of the business plan. Information about the company’s product or service is described as well as details about how long the product or service will last for a consumer. If any products have a copyright or patent or are awaiting one, they need to be listed. In addition, any research and development activities that are ongoing need to be listed.

The marketing and sales section of a business plan follows the service or line product section. A marketing strategy must be included in this section which encompasses a market penetration strategy, a growth strategy, channels of distribution strategy, and communication strategy. Also included in this section must be an overall sales strategy. This discusses the sales force strategy of a company along with sales activities.

A funding request is used in order to request funds for a company. Funding requests must include the current funds of a company and any future funding required for the next five years. Intentional use of the funds must be listed along with financial plans for the company. This enables the reader to understand where the requested money will be going and what the company’s intentions are. Financial projections must be included in the business plan to support the funding requests.
The financial projection section lists the financial projections, historic financial data, and the prospective financial data of a company. The historical financial data is comprised of the last three to five years of data (this could be different depending on the creditor) and should include “income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements.” The prospective financial data must include projected use of funds over the next five years. The SBA website states that “each year's documents should include forecasted income statements, balance sheets, cash flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets” (https://www.sba.gov/writing-business-plan). The entire financial projection should be followed by an analysis.

The last section of a business plan is an appendix. The appendix is used as a place to put information the company does not want everyone to see but is still accessible if necessary for a creditor. The appendix could include items such as a credit history, reference letters, permits, leases, contracts, and others.

Summary

A new company is in the process of being established as an event company that designs, plans, and runs events such as weddings, races, small parties, formal dinners, etc. By focusing on the organization aspects of the business along with marketing methods, initial inquiry details, and event follow-up information, the company will be able to create a foundation and begin serving clients.
Chapter Three
Materials and Methods

Creating a business plan for DonnaJ Events was done by following a step-by-step process. Both research and time were put toward the creation of the business plan. The business plan was guided by the instructions that the U.S. Small Business Administration gives for writing a business plan.

Executive Summary

The executive summary was the final step in creating the business plan. Sections in the business plan included the mission statement, company information, products and services, and future plans for the company. By gathering information from the entire business plan, executive summary was able to be completed.

Company Description

Writing the company description was the first step in creating the business plan for DonnaJ Events. During this step the author had to come up with a main goal for the company along with who the company would reach out to. Included in the company description is the idea behind DonnaJ Events and the products/services that the company provides. In order to write this section of the business plan the author had to come up with services that DonnaJ Events would provide to the market, along with deciding what type of market DonnaJ Events would target.
Along with these aspects, the company description needed to include the competitive advantages of DonnaJ Events and in describing this, the author had to determine these factors. The location and the area that the company would provide services to had to be decided as well.

**Market Analysis**

In order to complete the market analysis section of the business plan, several sections had to be completed through research and writing. The market analysis contained several sections with those being listed as follows: industry description and outlook, target market, distinguishing characteristics, size of primary target market, market share, pricing and gross margin targets, competitive analysis, and regulatory restrictions. Research had to be done in order to complete these sections.

For the industry description and outlook section, I had to look into websites that listed event planning companies along the central coast. Information from the textbook *Special Events: Creating and Sustaining a New World for Celebration*, written by Joe Goldblatt, was also used to describe the industry.

The target market and distinguishing characteristics sections were established by looking at the industry trends and making a decision based on industry trends that would best fit the goals of DonnaJ Events.

The size of the primary target market was established by researching the population along the central coast in the areas where DonnaJ Events will serve.
The market share was established by looking at the amount of events that DonnaJ Events would like to plan each year and the amount of available weekends in the year. By taking this information into account the market share was established.

The pricing and gross margin targets were created by looking at industry trends and making a decision that would best fit the goals of DonnaJ Events. The hourly wage was determined by looking at the mean hourly wage for the industry.

The competitive analysis was written by combining information from the market analysis and determining how DonnaJ Events compares to the industry.

Regulatory restrictions was created by looking at San Luis Obispo county regulations.

**Organization and Management**

The organization and management section of the business plan was written based on decisions made by DonnaJ Events. Due to DonnaJ Events being a new company, not much information was needed to create organization and management for the business. In order to complete this section, I had to update my resume and insert it into the section.

**Service or Product Line**

The service or product line section of the business plan was determined by the goals of DonnaJ Events.
Marketing and Sales

The marketing and sales section of the business plan was based on the goals of DonnaJ Events along with industry standards.

Financial Projections

The financial projections were based on industry standards and what is feasible to the company. In order to determine the projected budget for years 1-5, DonnaJ Events had to look at industry standards for event coordination at both the average events and prices. The rest of the budget was based off of industry standards and company situations.

By completing each section of the business plan for DonnaJ Events, the company now has a finished business plan that can be used to help move the company forward.

Timeline

Week 1: January 7-January 14

This week the company description was completed.

Week 2: January 14-January 21

This week research was done on event companies on the Central Coast and the industry in order to help write the market analysis section of the business plan.

Week 3: January 21-January 28
This week the market analysis was completed.

Week 4: January 28-February 4

This week the organization and management section for the business plan was worked on.

Week 5: February 4-February 11

This week the services and product lines for the company was worked on.

Week 6: February 11-February 18

This week the marketing and sales section of the business plan was created.

Week 7: February 18-February 25

This week the financial projections for the company were established.

Week 8: February 25-March 4

This week the executive summary section of the business plan was worked on.

Week 9: March 4-March 11

This week the chapters were compiled together and the document was formatted.
Chapter Four
Results and Discussion

A complete business plan for DonnaJ Events was created for this senior project. The business plan showcases current details about the company along with future projections such as coordination packages and finances.

The Business Plan can be seen in the Appendix.

The objectives for the project were met as follows.

Objective 1: Researching business plans.

This objective was met by looking at different companies and organizations who have steps listed on how to write a business plan. The main source used were the steps listed on the U.S. Small Business Administration website.

Objective 2: Writing a business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by writing a complete business plan for DonnaJ Events.

■ Sub-Objective 1: Writing the Company Description section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by writing a company description for DonnaJ Events. The introduction of the company description is as follows:
DonnaJ Events is an event planning company that specializes in weddings, corporate parties, and formal events. DonnaJ Events offers a variety of products and services to our clients. Services offered from DonnaJ Events include event design, rentals, and event coordination. Clients can purchase services separately or can choose to purchase all services that are listed.

- Sub-Objective 2: Writing the Executive Summary section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by writing an executive summary for the business plan for DonnaJ Events. The executive summary includes a summary of the mission statement, company information, the products and services offered, and future plans for the company. The mission statement is as follows:

DonnaJ Events strives to plan and execute both weddings and large parties on the California Central Coast. By providing clients with current industry information and design plans, along with friendly customer service, DonnaJ Events looks to satisfy customers with their dream event.

- Sub-Objective 3: Writing the Market Analysis section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by analyzing the market for DonnaJ Events. The market analysis section includes the industry description and outlook, the target market information, distinguishing characteristics of DonnaJ Events, the size of the primary target, the market share, pricing and gross margin targets, a competitive analysis, and regulatory restrictions.
Sub-Objective 4: Writing the Organization and Management section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by writing the organization and management section of the business plan for DonnaJ Events. This section includes information on the organization structure of the company, ownership information, and Donna Packard’s resume. The company’s organization is a sole proprietorship.

Sub-Objective 5: Writing the Service and Product Line section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by explaining the services and products that DonnaJ Events offers. Listed below is a short summary of the product/service description:

DonnaJ Events offers full service wedding coordination packages, along with design and decoration packages. These services provide clients with lifelong memories. Clients enjoy these packages because of the unique offerings of the business. DonnaJ events provides exclusive packages to clients while paying close attention to details. DonnaJ events put the clients first and strives to fulfill all of their needs. Clients can get coordination, decorations, and wedding design through one company instead of using several companies for these aspects of an event.

Sub-Objective 6: Writing the Marketing and Sales section of the business plan.

This objective was fulfilled by writing the marketing and sales strategies for DonnaJ Events. The marketing strategy is described as follows:
DonnaJ Events will offer packages to clients at different rates depending on the event. For example, some events may require more or less hours and more or less labor. The packages will be distributed on an internal vertical level.

The sales strategy is described as follows:

DonnaJ Events will use internal representatives to sell the packages to clients. During the initial phases of the company Donna will hold the only sales position for the company.

- **Sub-Objective 7: Writing the Financial Projections section of the business plan.**

  This objective was fulfilled by creating financial projections for the next five years and by creating a five year budget for the company. The total gross sale projections for year one are $27,125. The total gross sale projections for years two through five are $67,000 per year.
Chapter Five

Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

Chapter Five includes a summary of the senior project, recommendations for the project, and conclusions of the overall project.

Summary

The business plan for DonnaJ Events will provide the company owner with direction and guidance for the company. The business plan should be continually updated as changes are made in the business and employees are added.

Recommendations

Overall, developing a business plan for DonnaJ Events went well. However, someone who decides to complete a senior project like this would benefit from the following recommendations.

i. Research current business plans.
   ■ Looking at current business plans would help the writer understand the professional layout of business plans.

ii. Speak with current event and design companies to gather information about their business plans.
   ■ To better allow the business plan to be fit for a certain industry, the writer should understand how businesses within the industry are writing their business plans in terms of layout and design.
iii. Attend regular meetings with the senior project advisor.

iv. Create an outline for a business plan.

- The writer used an online source for writing a business plan, however, having an outline or template for a business plan would have been helpful to the writer.

Conclusions

Overall, creating and writing a business plan for DonnaJ Events went well. This business plan should be used as a guideline for DonnaJ Events as the business becomes established. The business plan should also be constantly updated as changes are made to the business.
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Executive Summary

The Mission Statement

DonnaJ Events strives to plan and execute both weddings and large parties on the California Central Coast. By providing clients with current industry information and design plans, along with friendly customer service, DonnaJ Events looks to satisfy customers with their dream event.

Company Information

DonnaJ Events was formed in October 2014 with one owner, Donna Packard. Currently there are no employees and the business is a home-run operation. DonnaJ Events is located in San Luis Obispo, California.

Products/Services

DonnaJ Events provides design, coordination, and rental packages for weddings and private parties.

Future Plans

DonnaJ Events is currently located on the Central Coast, from Paso Robles to Santa Barbara. In the future DonnaJ Events is looking to expand statewide and nationally. DonnaJ Events wants to bring event satisfaction to clients throughout the nation.
Company Description

DonnaJ Events is an event planning company that specializes in weddings, corporate parties, and formal events. DonnaJ Events offers a variety of products and services to our clients. Services offered from DonnaJ Events include event design, rentals, and event coordination. Clients can purchase services separately or can choose to purchase all services that are listed.

This event planning company aims to provide clients with services to design an event to their expectations with everything from the center pieces to the invitations themselves. DonnaJ Events also offers decoration rental products for clients who are interested. If clients choose to purchase the design package, clients must rent a minimum of 25% of the rental items that DonnaJ Events has. Products include love seats, shepherds hooks, signage, table runners, flower boxes, etc.

Another service that DonnaJ Events offers is event coordination. This service provides clients with an outline of events and activities going on during their event along with the execution of the activities and event itself.

DonnaJ Events serves brides and clients along the California Central Coast. Organizations, businesses, families, and individuals can reach out to DonnaJ Events for event planning services.

With experience planning and designing weddings, along with executing large parties and triathlons, DonnaJ Events is able to satisfy the market needs and clients on the California Central Coast. Donna has had experience designing and planning her own wedding. She has also had experience organizing and executing a triathlon exposition and finish line which included sponsorship, food donors, awards, and layout. Donna has experience planning fundraising dinners as well.

DonnaJ Events is located in San Luis Obispo, CA, a central part of the California Central Coast. The company will serve clients from Santa Barbara to Paso Robles. The small size of the company allows for personal communication with clients and the ability to clearly understand what each client wants for their events.
Market Analysis

Industry Description and Outlook
The wedding and private party industry on the central coast is currently expanding. With the up and coming trend of old barns, the central coast is a perfect place to hold weddings along with the great weather, beautiful landscape, and small town feel that the central coast offers. The central coast is a place to relax and have fun, drawing people from around the nation to the area for weddings and private events.

Throughout the central coast, there are about 200 different wedding and event planning companies. The industry has been growing within the last decade with the increase in event planning majors at colleges and certifications that are offered. The event planning industry is looking to grow over the next several years.

Event planning season is year round. High wedding season begins in May and ends in October, however weddings can be year round. Other events such as bridal showers, baby showers, corporate parties, and other events are year round.

The major customer groups within the industry are women ranging from 19-28 in age. Private parties and corporate events target women ranging from their late 20’s to their early 50’s.

Target Market
The target market for DonnaJ Events is women ranging in ages from 20-50. More specifically, the target market for weddings is women ranging in ages from 20-30 and the target market for private parties is women ranging in ages from 25-50.

Women typically are ones who want to plan and design a wedding and also hold events. By aiming to reach these target markets DonnaJ Events will be able to gain clients.

Distinguishing Characteristics
The clients that DonnaJ Events will be working with are women who would like to plan/design a wedding or host parties. These clients need a company to help them plan the event, design the event, and carry out the event on the day of. Most companies are currently offering packages for event planning and event coordination on the day of, however several companies are not offering design packages. This forces clients to outsource their design for the event or the end result is clients having to do the design on their own.

The seasons for event planning vary. Wedding season runs from mid-March to October. However, private party coordination runs year round and is heavy around holidays.
Size of the Primary Target Market

The targeted market on the Central Coast reaches out to 712,140 people (The population in San Luis Obispo county as of 2013 is 276,443 people. The population for Santa Barbara county as of 2013 is 435,697 people).

Market Share

Expected events will be 32 per wedding season and 30 per offseason. This number has been determined by the number of available dates for events. Typically weddings are held on the weekend and only one wedding will be booked per weekend. There are 32 weekends in the six month period from mid-March to October. The off season is based upon the same calculation. During the four and a half month off season there could potentially be one private event per week. This would account for weeks that have no events and other weeks that have several (such as during the holidays). 18 events could potentially occur during this time.

Pricing and Gross Margin Targets

The pricing structure is based on the three packages that DonnaJ Events will offer. The design package will be $1,200. The coordination package will be $1,300. The combination package of design, coordination, and rentals will be $1,400. The combination package of design and rentals will be $2,000. There will be no packaged offered with the combination of rentals and coordination. A discount will be included with the design, rentals, and coordination package of 5%. The mean hourly wage for event planning in the nation is $24.13 (http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes131121.htm). Clients will be charged $25 per hour that goes over the allotted hours in their designated package.

Competitive Analysis

DonnaJ Events offers event coordination services, design services, and rental services. DonnaJ Events has advantages in the market due to what the company offers, as several event planning companies only offer a limited amount of services. DonnaJ Events is a new up and coming company that will need to gain experience through clients and different types of events.

Establishing a target market is important to be able to compete with other companies in the industry. This allows for other companies to understand the market that DonnaJ Events is aiming to reach.

The event planning market on the Central Coast is quickly expanding and can make it difficult to enter the market if a company does not establish themselves properly. Companies entering the event planning industry need to reach a niche of people or have a unique aspect about their company in order to be successful.
The window of opportunity to enter the event planning industry is January through February. These months occur prior to heavy wedding season and are shortly after the slow season. Event planners can also enter the market just after wedding season and prior to event planning season (October) to have initial experiences with the holidays.

Regulatory Restrictions

DonnaJ Events must comply with all San Luis Obispo county and California business terms.
Organization and Management

Company’s Organizational Structure
The company is organized as a sole proprietorship.

Ownership Information

Legal Structure
Additional labor will be secured through independent contractors when needed.

Management Profiles
Donna Packard is the sole proprietor of the company and runs all aspects of the company.
Donna Packard is a soon to be graduate of Cal Poly State University with a degree in Agricultural Communications and a minor in Agricultural Business. She has had experience planning small events for the Cal Poly Triathlon Team along with planning an exposition for a triathlon. Donna has also had the experience of planning and designing her own vintage, rustic, barn wedding. See the resume below for further information.

Resume:

Donna Packard

1145 Murray Ave, Apt 1    •San Luis Obispo, Ca 93405    • 805.440.2680    •djpackar@calpoly.edu

Education
Cal Poly State University | San Luis Obispo, CA
B.S. Agricultural Communications  Minor: Agricultural Business
Study Abroad | Cal Poly in Valladolid, Spain Program
Expected Graduation-Dec 2015
Fall 2013

Marketing and Event Planning Experience
Public and Alumni Relations Coordinator | Cal Poly Triathlon Team  June 2014-Present
• Solely plan and execute two events for 100 guests-Alumni Dinner and Parents’ Weekend
• Communicate with vendors, the team, alumni, and other personnel via emails and newsletters
• Organize small activities
• Manage social media including: Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram

Events Intern | Center for Sustainability, California Polytechnic State University  January 2015-May 2015
• Organized two events: a two-day conference and a potluck meeting with 100 attendees
• Created and designed brochures and programs for events
• Marketed a two-day conference through emails and online calendar submissions

• Created brochures and designed layouts for Fluid packaging and customers
• Wrote post-race and quarterly newsletters; distributed up to 100 letters to customers and interested clients

Field Marketing Specialist Intern | Slime (Tire Repair)  
May-July 2014  
• Organized and attended expo events during Bike Month to promote Slime tire products  
• Planned/outlined events and marketing tactics for a month long event in 2015

March Triathlon Series Expo Coordinator | Cal Poly Triathlon Team  
Jan 2013-April 2014  
• Planned and executed the expo for the March Triathlon Series triathlon, reaching 1,000 people  
• Contacted sponsors for donations and collected $1,200 worth of donations  
• Contacted expo participants and organized prizes/awards

Community Service and Additional Experience

Head Lifeguard and Swim Instructor | SLO Swim Center  
May 2012-Dec 2014

Cashier and Stocker | Avila Valley Barn  
October 2014-December 2014

Assistant | Preheim and Company Accounting Firm  
February-April 2014

Orientation Leader | Cal Poly Orientation Program  
March-Sept 2012  
• Organized and planned week long activities for a group of 10 incoming students  
• Participated in a 10 week leadership training

Skills

• CS5-InDesign, Photoshop  
• Intermediate Spanish  
• Public Speaking  
• Newsletter Writing and Design  
• Marketing Plans  

• Social Media  
• Presentations  
• Professional Communication  
• Event Design and Layout  

• Basic Accounting  
• Tractor Operating  
• Marketing  
• Agriculture
Service and Product Line

Description of Product/Service

DonnaJ Events offers full service wedding coordination packages, along with design and decoration packages. These services provide clients with lifelong memories. Clients enjoy these packages because of the unique offerings of the business. DonnaJ events provides exclusive packages to clients while paying close attention to details. DonnaJ events put the clients first and strives to fulfill all of their needs. Clients can get coordination, decorations, and wedding design through one company instead of using several companies for these aspects of an event.

The packages offered through DonnaJ events provide clients with the essential components of an event. When going to an event most people want to have their guests leaving with a memory of what the event looked liked. DonnaJ events offers services to provide clients with their ideal set-up and design for an event. Along with this, top of the line rentals can be included in the design package. This allows clients to not have to purchase decorations or rent items from yet another vendor. The rental items are unique, family collected antiques that are one of a kind. Items range from colored vases to beautiful love seats. These rentals meet a wide range of customer demands, needs, and budgets. In addition, the flow of an event is crucial. DonnaJ events allows clients to feel calm during their event as DonnaJ events coordinates the activities and flow of an event.

Currently, DonnaJ events is working on establishing a finalized contract and package descriptions for clients. DonnaJ events is also looking into creating packages that can be determined by the client based on the clients needs and desires.

Services Life Cycle

The services listed are controlled by industry demands. The packages will remain options so long as clients are interested in them.

There are two business seasons for DonnaJ Events. Busy season occurs from March through October and off-season occurs from October through the end of February. Busy season will mainly be filled with weddings. Off-season will be filled with event shows, fall festivals, corporate parties, engagement parties, other home parties, and off-season weddings.

Research and Development Activities

DonnaJ events aims to supply clients with their ideal event while implementing current trends in the industry. The traditional event is not as common anymore with events ranging from different locations, themes, and details. Whatever the ideal event may be for a client, DonnaJ events provides packages that will serve clients and make lifetime memories.
Marketing and Sales

Marketing Strategy

DonnaJ Events will offer packages to clients at different rates depending on the event. For example, some events may require more or less hours and more or less labor. The packages will be distributed on an internal vertical level.

DonnaJ Events will reach out to clients in several ways. Social media will be a huge marketing aspect of DonnaJ Events through the use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and a company website. DonnaJ Events will also send out a press release and market through local companies. Fliers will be produced and distributed throughout the county. DonnaJ Events will also be featured in local magazines and newspapers. Overtime, DonnaJ Events will featured on local wedding websites such as Wedding Wire and Central Coast Brides as a possible vendor for brides. DonnaJ Events will also be attending wedding shows on the Central Coast, both in April and January at the Madonna Inn Expo Center.

Sales Strategy

DonnaJ Events will use internal representatives to sell the packages to clients. During the initial phases of the company Donna will hold the only sales position for the company.

DonnaJ Events will market the business towards Central Coast Brides and small businesses. The brides will hold initial priority during the months of May through October and the small businesses will be incorporated during the off season, November through April. Calls will be made to other wedding and party distributors, not to clients directly.
Financial Projections

Year 1:
- 2 weddings per month (May-September)
  - Average income: $1,475
  - Total income: $14,750
- 1 wedding per month (March, April, and October)
  - Average income: $1,475
  - Total income: $4,425
- 2 private parties per month (November-February)
  - Average income: $1,000
  - Total income: $8,000

Total Gross Sales Projections (Year 1): $27,175

Years 2-5:
- 4 weddings per month (March-October)
  - Average income: $1,600
  - Total income: $51,200
- 1 wedding per month (November-February)
  - Average income: $1,600
  - Total income: $6,400
- 2 private parties per month (November-February)
  - Average income: $1,200
  - Total income: $9,600

Total Gross Sales Projections (Years 2-5): $67,200/year

See the Projected Budget for further information.
### Projected Budget

#### Projected Yearly Budget Year 1

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Weddings</td>
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<td>Private Parties</td>
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**Total Income** $32,425  
**Total Expenses** $12,491  
**Total Profit** $19,934

#### Projected Yearly Budget Years 2-5

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<th>Cost</th>
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**Total Income** $78,200  
**Total Expenses** $50,842  
**Total Profit** $27,358