



## Marketing Plan

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## **I. Executive Summary**

AmyHissom.com deals in a variety of products and services, which include Website design, graphics design, digital photography, customized team or school spirit winter hat sets, and customized photo gifts. Our company is located in East Liverpool, Ohio and is dedicated to serving Columbiana County and its surrounding areas through our storefront, as well as customers and clients throughout the United States via our online store.

AmyHissom.com has the creative talent to appeal to your sense of style, the training and knowledge of current Web standards and practices, and the ability to turn your ideas into reality. We are dedicated to helping small and medium sized businesses prosper online. It's simple - we offer professional, affordable Website design and development services along with friendly customer service at great rates!. We can design (or redesign) every aspect of your site, from graphic design & copywriting to complete development. From simple text & graphics to more intricate designs, we provide you with amazing services at very affordable prices. No matter what your budget is, AmyHissom.com will give you the absolute best solution to accomplish every one of your goals. Advertising in the local newspapers is very expensive and usually lasts for just a couple of days. Imagine being able to advertise everyday for a whole year at a one time, very low price. Having a presence on the World Wide Web will allow potential customers to visit your business everyday of the year. Adding your Website address to your business card is free advertisement. (Hissom, 2010)



It's hard to imagine the Web without visuals; in fact, we strongly feel that the Web became so popular because images could be embedded inside Web pages. AmyHissom.com can create visual communications that influence the way people perceive your organization. We have the skills and proficiency that you are looking for to create the look and image you want.

(LearnKey, 2010)

At AmyHissom.com we take pride in offering an affordable alternative to all your photography needs. Whether you need copies of a photo, a special photo restored, or a photo taken, we specialize in all areas of digital photography. Customers can order reprints and enlargements by the sheet or as packages. Package prices vary. Pricing for restoration and enhancement is based on the amount of art work needed. AmyHissom.com must limit its freelance photography to Columbiana County and its surrounding areas. Those who are looking for beautiful and professionally made gifts from their favorite photos can find them at AmyHissom.com. Our customized photo gifts are perfect for those who are having trouble finding that unique gift to give a special person. They include customized photo clocks, calendars, shirts, quilts, and DVD photo shows. (Hissom, 2010)

For those wanting to give a gift that's sure to touch one's heart, AmyHissom.com can create a DVD photo show. We can transfer your cherished photos to DVD as an automated photo show complete with background music and animated transitions. Customers can watch their favorite

photos flipping all by themselves as they sit back and enjoy their photos to their favorite music enlarged to 32” or even a big screen TV. Customized DVD photo shows can be up to an hour long depending on how many photos the customer includes, and pricing is based on the number of photos included. (Hissom, 2010)

## **II. Environmental Analysis**

Currently, the environment is somewhat competitive for a type of company like AmyHissom.com. Stores in the area such as Wal-Mart, also offer some of the same products and services as AmyHissom.com in their photography departments. However, they do not offer products such as customized photo quilts. Also, there are many freelance Website developers and graphics designers in the area, as well as, those who offer the same services online through their own sites.

### **A. The Marketing Environment**

#### **1. Competitive Forces**

Currently, there are no specialty gift stores in the Columbiana County area that offer products and services such as those sold by AmyHissom.com other than department stores such as Wal-Mart. Amy Hissom.com has a competitive edge over these types of stores because of lower pricing. As mentioned before, there are many freelance Website developers in the Columbiana County area, as well as those who offer the same services via the Internet. AmyHissom.com will have a somewhat competitive advantage over these companies because of lower pricing and with having a presence on the World Wide Web itself.

## **2. Economic forces**

Columbiana County is one of Ohio's 29 Appalachian counties and shares many socioeconomic indicators with the other 29 counties. Columbiana County's historical economic dependence on manufacturing resulted in an economy that was not diverse and increasingly vulnerable to globalization. When area steel mills began closing in the late 1970's and early 1980's, the county's economy went into a tail spin from which it has never fully recovered. Even so, manufacturing remained a significant economic engine for the county as the number of manufacturing jobs continued to decline. Factors that make economic development difficult for the county include a workforce that has less educational attainment than Ohio as a whole, and lacks the skills for work in the technology sector. (Bretz, 2004)

## **3. Political Forces**

AmyHissom.com is not aware of any political forces concerning the start-up of AmyHissom.com's storefront, which is located in East Liverpool, Ohio, or the production of its customized specialty gifts.

## **4. Legal and Regulatory Forces**

There are not any legal and regulatory forces concerning the business of AmyHissom.com. Our products are environmental and consumer safe.

## **5. Technological Forces**

AmyHissom.com's presence on the World Wide Web will enable clients and customers to research our products and services. It will also enable them to

order specialty gifts via the Internet. Those interested in our Website and graphics design services can request a quote from our Website via the Internet. Our employees have the technical skills to create high quality photo projects, Website, and graphic design projects through the implementation of state-of-the-art software applications.

## **6. Socio-cultural Forces**

As the need and demand for Website and graphic design services is increasing at exponential levels with the changing consumer trend, the cost of Website and graphic design services is also increasing. This has made many business owners express their concern regarding the increasing Website and graphics design costs. Many businesses that like to take their business online after the credit crunch to increase their sales levels, are hesitating because of the expenses involved. Not everyone will be able to afford expensive Websites. Today what we need is low cost Website design. AmyHissom.com comes as a great solace to many entrepreneurs that are looking for cheap Website and graphics design services. AmyHissom.com offers a number of attractive and affordable Website design packages that will suit every budget. While our company offers cheap business Website and graphics design services, it will never compromise on the quality of the services it offers. AmyHissom.com has designed some of the most brilliant Websites on the Web.

## **B. Target Market(s)**

AmyHissom.com has three distinct customer groups which they will concentrate on:



- Small-size companies: typically five to 15 employees.
- Medium-size companies: 15-40 employees.
- Individuals of both genders, all ages, all races, and all cultural backgrounds.

Small and Medium-size companies started with a great idea that they have parlayed into an established company. They are now ready to step up to the plate and seriously compete in their market place. These companies, whether small or medium-size companies, started with a valuable concept and have leveraged their original grassroots visual communication elements a bit too long to be competitive now. More than likely, they had Aunt Betty design the original logo and branding material. Now that they have matured into a larger company, it is not really appropriate or competitive to be relying on the original grassroots corporate identity. These companies are in need of the same level of quality as their competitors and are in need of a professional Website and graphics design firm to take them to that next level. (PaloAlto, 2010)

Both male and female of all ages will be looking for the perfect gift that is not original. All races and cultural backgrounds like different ways of preserving memories. The specialty gifts that AmyHissom.com has to offer will provide these customers with what they need. (WebCatch, 2010)

### **C. Current Marketing Objectives and Performance**

Based on our past experience; the following segments should be targeted next year concerning our Website design and maintenance fees:

- Pricing based on the cost of the initial design including free updates and maintenance for the first year starting when the design process is completed.
- Pricing based on the cost of the initial design only.

- Monthly pricing for updates and maintenance based on number of updates per month.
- The main three elements of the desired marketing-mix should be as follows; Products & Services, Pricing, and Promotion. (Marketing plan objectives, 2010)

### **III. SWOT Analysis**

The following SWOT analysis captures the key strengths and weaknesses within the company, and describes the opportunities and threats facing AmyHissom.com.

#### **A. Strengths**

- A unique combination of both creative and business sense.
- An elegant office that gives off the perception of creative, cutting-edge design, implying a skilled service provider.
- A targeted focus for attracting customers.
- Website and graphics design services offer the customer a personal connection to the development process.
- Added printing products within AmyHissom.com is unique for the gift shop section of our company. This will enable customers to bring in personal photographs and mementos or email digital images to create greeting cards, 12-month calendars or business cards. These types of items then become personal keep-sakes and one-of-a-kind type merchandise.
- The customized specialty gifts will be designed by owner Amy Hissom as well as employees highly skilled in this area.
- Having a presence on the World Wide Web will enable our company to open up to possible customers nationally.

#### **B. Weaknesses**

- The struggle to develop awareness related to a start-up company.
- Increasingly limited amount of time for marketing activities as more and more time is needed to finish projects.
- The struggle to constantly appear on the "cutting edge."
- Although AmyHissom.com's present product line is unique and high-end merchandise, the range of our products is considered small in relation to more established businesses. Yet our items are engaging and personable.
- Columbiana County area is a depressed area, however, because of location, business traffic is relatively fast.

### **C. Opportunities**

- A growing market that does not seem to be focused on attracting a target customer segment.
- The ability to generate future business by leveraging the technological advances of the Internet.
- An industry that is not significantly affected by slumps in the economy.

### **D. Threats**

- Competition from local competitors who decide to focus on AmyHissom.com's targeted segments.
- Significant increase in ease of use of graphic design and Website design application software that allows individuals to design their own graphical pieces, Websites, and customized photo gifts.
- A shift in local industries that changes the demographics of many of the companies located in Columbiana County, Ohio.

## **IV. Marketing Objectives**

- Increase visibility, evidenced by an increase in unsolicited requests for service.
- After year one, generate at least 30% of new business each quarter from referrals.
- Continually strengthen AmyHissom.com equity, evidenced by informal polling during networking activities.

## **V. Marketing Strategies**

The market segments will be targeted in a number of different ways. It must be noted that a Website and graphics development firm generates visibility and sales not through advertising, but through networking and client referrals. The marketing strategy will therefore consist of the following methods:

### **A. Networking**

The networking will be based on leveraging AmyHissom.com's personal and professional relationships that it has developed after spending years in the industry.

Ways of networking include sending out note cards to all acquaintances announcing

the opening of AmyHissom.com, and periodically meeting with people to catch up.

This also means finding out who this person knows within some of the target companies that AmyHissom.com will likely try to turn into customers.

## **B. Client Referral**

A lot of business is derived through referrals. Some of the referrals will come through the Chamber of Commerce, some of the referrals will come from customers. Recognizing that referrals will be a good source of new customers, AmyHissom.com will be in constant contact with the Chamber of Commerce. AmyHissom.com will investigate the possibility of doing a small project pro bono for the Chamber of Commerce. This will be done to let the Chamber of Commerce view an example of AmyHissom.com's work. It will also provide a reason for the Chamber of Commerce to recommend AmyHissom.com. AmyHissom.com will work very hard to satisfy all of its customers. By making sure that we exceed their expectations, we will increase the likelihood that we will receive referrals from satisfied customers.

## **C. Targeted Customer Acquisition**

This is the research and strategic formulation to attract a chosen company to become a customer. AmyHissom.com will put together a list of 20-30 companies that would be excellent customers. Once these companies have been identified, AmyHissom.com will devise a strategy to target these companies as customers by initially determining what value AmyHissom.com can offer the company. Once this has been established, AmyHissom.com will figure out who of its acquaintances might know someone from the targeted company and try to arrange

some sort of meeting. Eventually, the goal is to be able to meet with the decision maker of the company and present them with a portfolio of AmyHissom.com's past work as well as the proposed value AmyHissom.com can offer this company. (Palo-Alto, 2010)

## **VI. Marketing Mix**

### **A. Products & Services**

To further enhance the customer's shopping experience, we provide customers with the option of customizing almost any item of our product line. Whether it is printing products, specialty gifts, or Website and graphics design, customers can choose to have certain items customized to fit their individual style or personal needs.

(Alto, 2010)

#### **1. Printing Products**

The printing products are just an extension of AmyHissom.com's visually artistic and creative ideas that we offer clients to engage in. These products include:

- Brochures
- Business Cards
- 12-Month Photo Calendars
- Special Occasion Cards: Greeting Cards, Invitations, Graduation Announcements, etc.
- Photo Restoration/Photo Enlargements
- Freelance Photography Packages
- Promotional Materials

## 2. Customized Specialty Gifts

This gift giving merchandise line will allow customers to express their personal sentiments for special occasions and the gift recipient. These products include:

- Photo/Logo T-shirts and Sweat Shirts
- Photo/Logo Clocks
- Photo Quilts
- DVD Photo/Company Presentation Shows
- Crocheted School or Sport Team Spirit Hat Sets
- Customized men's and women's gift sets

## 3. Services

AmyHissom.com provides a number of services which include Website design and development, Website maintenance, and graphics design. Whether you are looking to have a Website built or just needing a graphic for your company logo or just that special personalized greeting card, AmyHissom.com can help! Our main services include:

- Graphics Design
- Website Design/Development/Maintenance

### B. Price

Product pricing structures will be based on cost-plus and competitive pricing. Cost-plus pricing is basing the price on the basis of all costs plus a mark-up to cover overhead costs. Our mark-up cost is 33%. All orders will require a 50% deposit upon receiving final shipment. For bulk orders, a 50% deposit is required and a 15% discount will be given to customers. Design and Photography Service Fee Structures will be determined by the particular requirements of individual projects. Typically, compensation to AmyHissom.com includes a retainer design fee in addition to the cost plus system of

billing for supplies and materials. This structure accounts for research, design time and consulting. (PaloAltoSoftware, 2010)

Price-points in the printing products category range from \$5 - \$250+. Price-points in the customized specialty gifts category range from \$10 - \$500. It is almost impossible to quote a general price to have a Website built or a graphic/logo designed. Different factors affect the costs associated with getting your site up and running. The number of pages needed, the graphics involved, any pictures that would have to be taken, the amount of updating necessary, travel time, etc., all play a factor. One thing AmyHissom.com will assure you of is that our prices are much lower than those you will find elsewhere. We will work with you to design your site or graphic/logo to your specifications, not somebody else's. (Haugh, 2010)

### **C. Distribution**

AmyHissom.com's services will be distributed either from the centrally located storefront or through transfer of the work product via the Internet.

### **D. Promotion**

The most successful activities will be a comprehensive networking campaign, as well as a targeted customer acquisition system, along with word-of-mouth promotion from already established clients, and leveraging relationships to build new relationships within AmyHissom.com's relatively intimate community. The first step of the targeted customer acquisition system is to target who the ideal customer is, determine how AmyHissom.com can offer them value, and then network with the decision maker at that company. Inclusion of the Internet address of AmyHissom.com in all materials that our

company releases, as well as submissions to popular Websites, will also ensure that our products are promoted. Submissions to search engines is an art in itself as different search engines work in different ways, so a customized submission is most effective.

## **VII. Marketing Implementation**

### **A. Marketing Organization**

Amy Hissom, owner of AmyHissom.com is responsible for all marketing activities, which include organizing marketing teams for each business department: Website and Graphics Design, Printing Products, and Customized Specialty Gifts.

### **B. Activities and Responsibilities**

Amy Hissom is also responsible for all of the activities involved in marketing each product or service within all business departments. Each marketing team will be responsible for researching businesses and clients that would be interested in our company's specific areas of concentration.

### **C. Implementation Timetable**

The first month of operation will be used to set up the storefront and establish the online presence. Some of the time will be working with the interior designers to create a modern looking office space. Months two through four will be somewhat slow as AmyHissom.com is developing clients. Amy Hissom is forecasting to take on some smaller projects. By month five AmyHissom.com will have developed larger projects and will continue to grow steadily. AmyHissom.com plans to maintain positive, steady,



growth each month, reach profitability by the end of year one, and continue to decrease the variable costs associated with serving a project.

## **VIII. Evaluation and Control**

### **A. Performance Standards**

Performance standards will be compiled from the averages of all employees who are doing the same task. Then we will review the progress for the last 12 months and determine how it compares to our budget compliance standards. If the performance levels do not meet the basic standards set by the company, or if our performance falls more than 10 percent from last year's numbers then it is time to move into a corrective step of action. (Monitoring Sales for Accountability, 2010)

### **B. Financial Controls**

The purpose of AmyHissom.com's marketing plan is to serve as a guide to the organization. The following areas will be monitored to gauge performance:

- Revenue: monthly and annual.
- Expenses: monthly and annual.
- Repeat business.
- Customer service.

### **C. Monitoring Procedures**

AmyHissom.com's ability to monitor performance will be based on the use of success-based criteria as a model to compare sales goals and Website activity on a monthly basis.

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