DesiYou Marketing Plan

Sonia Patel

BUS 295-- Fall 2019

Agnes Scott College

**Part 1 Product Description and Feature Benefit Analysis**

**Mission Statement**

DesiYou strives to provide a convenient service of purchasing and selling traditional Indian clothing/ jewelry. Through this user-friendly application you can now easily sell and purchase at the tip of your fingers.

# Part One - Product Description

The name of my phone application and business service is called DesiYou. The term Desi refers to anyone that identifies their ethnicity as being of South East Asian descent. Similar to the phone application Poshmark, DesiYou is a iPhone/Android application that will exclusively allow users to buy and sell gently worn Desi Clothing and Jewelry. I chose to create such an application based on one of my unmet needs. My family attends many Indian weddings, anniversary parties, religious and cultural festival...etc that require me to dress in ethnic wear. I find that after wearing a dress a few times, I usually donate it to charity. However I wondered what all the other Desi Americans were doing with their gently worn clothes. Hence, I came up with the idea of having an application specifically for selling and buying Desi clothing and jewelry. Using the application is quite simple. First you create an account, and this can be through signing in via google. Then you can take a clear photo of your dress from different angles, and upload relevant information such as color, size, condition, and price. Customers will reach out to you if they are interested in purchasing the dress and the transaction will go on from there. DesiYou would receive a commission from the buying/selling transaction. Additionally there would be different categories of styles of Desi clothing for example: party wear, wedding wear, traditional wear/ price ranges..etc that will help the customer find what they are looking for. There would also be a search bar where you can search for what you are looking for. This app will look sleek, and have very simple functions to make it accessible to everyone. A few of the key design elements include but are not limited to: usability, convenient, sleek and simple, and cheaper clothing/ jewelry. What makes this app unique is that it would be exclusive to selling and buying Desi wear for users in the US and Canada.

# Part Two: Features and Benefits Analysis

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Feature**  | **Customer Benefits**  |
| User-Friendly (simple navigation, easy to catch on) | Allows customers to have a better experience using the app more efficiently and easily |
| Multiple Payment Options (Paypal, Credit/Debit, Installments, Prepaid Cards) | Allows customers flexibility in how they want to pay for their purchase |
| Push Notifications | Reassures customers when their product is shipped, and lets customers know when a product they have been looking for comes onto the app. This eases customer’s stress about finding a specific product.  |
| Easy Sign-Up Process via Google | Allows customers to save time, by being able to sign-in through google. Customers can also search without signing in, and then if they want to sell or purchase a product they must sign in.  |

**Part 3 : SWOT ANALYSIS**

Table 1: Internal Strengths and Weaknesses

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **INTERNAL**  |  |
| **Strengths**  | **Weaknesses**  |
| App is exclusive to Desi wear/ jewelry | App is a start-up, it is new and may not thrive |
| App is exclusive to America/ Canada which reduces shipping charges | App will need a financial investment to launch |
| Targeting a specific market will provide a competitive advantage | All users may not be comfortable purchasing/selling online |
| The app will be simple and easy to navigate | App may have malfunctions, and require constant app maintenance |
| Tapping into an unmet need for a niche market | System may take a while to update shipping/tracking information |
| Shipping is done by sellers |  |

Some of the internal strengths include exclusiveness, specific market, simple to use, and addressing an unmet need. I believe that creating an application for this community is much needed. From first hand experience I know the struggle of not knowing what to do with my gently worn Indian clothing. The biggest strength of this app is that it is exclusive to Desi wear, and Desi Americans, which is unlike stores or shopping online. Providing an app that is only for US and Canada based customers is something unique in this industry, and I think that it will be appreciated and well received amongst the community. Being exclusive to customers in the US and Canada will allow for cheaper and quicker shipping as compared to if the product was coming from a country in South Asia. Additionally, because the seller is responsible for shipping their product to the customer, my business would not need to worry about the shipping/ handling aspect of supply. All of these strengths differentiate our app as compared to other similar clothing services.

Some of the internal weaknesses include being a start-up app, financial investments, all users may not like online buying, app maintenance/ malfunctions, systems efficiency. Many time start-up businesses may have trouble getting their name out there, or need more financial investments. Being a small start-up app, another weakness that I will have to consider is looking for financial investors. Personally I know many individuals in the Desi community who would be willing to invest and contribute to a company like this. Leveraging those relationships is a method for how I can turn this weakness into a strength for my company. Another weakness is that my company would experience is that not having a physical store may deter customers. Sometimes customers prefer going into consignment stores and trying on the clothes to see how they fit, and my app not having this can deter customers. One way that I can address this weakness is by having the sellers include very clear details and descriptions of their dresses/ jewelry. Typically apps may have some malfunctions and in order to address these I would need to hire a software engineer by contract to ensure that the app is properly functionally, and any issues can be resolved quickly. Another weakness that I would need to address is hiring someone to create a system for tracking the shipment of products the customers purchase.

Table 2: External Opportunities and Threats

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **EXTERNAL**  |  |
| **Opportunities**  | **Threats**  |
| Start-up business Grants | Other online websites that sell Desi Clothing/ Jewlery |
| Collaborate with local ethnic clothing shops | Loyalty to other sources of buying ethnic wear EX: (Local Indian Shops, Shopping Overseas) |
| Updating the business model based on the feedback received from customers | Competitors offering more categories to choose/search from |
| Use more keywords that are common in the Desi community | Stores that offer similar wear/ jewelry for cheap prices |

 Some of the external opportunities for my business include: start-up grants, collaborations, feedback based system updates, and using specific search terms. Start-up business grants that we can receive would greatly resource us with the abilities to develop our business. Collaborations with local ethnic clothing shops would opportune them to give their customers the option of selling their gently worn dresses on our app, and it would give us advertising. As a company that will focus on the users needs, we will use a feedback based model system update, which means we will find ways to update our concept using the users feedback. Additionally, having a group of founders that are apart of the Desi community gives us the advantage of knowing the unmet needs of the Desi community, as well as understanding key terms that they use in their search engines. We could find out this data by using market research surveys and interviews with potential users.

 Some of the external threats include: online shopping websites, loyalty to specific stores, platforms with more categories, and stores that offer similar new wear for cheaper prices. Online websites could be a threat because customers may believe them to have more reliability on shipping and handling. One way that we will address this threat is having guidelines for the sellers on shipping and handling their items to other users. Another threat would be customers loyalty to local stores, or shopping overseas. For this group of customers, our target is to advertise how our app allows for saving time traveling to these Brick and Mortar store, and saving money by shopping through an app rather than traveling to a South Asian country to shop. Our competitors on websites could offer more categories to choose from, and that could be detrimental to our app. However, one way that we can face this challenge is by offering comparable and more popular categories and search words as compared to our customers. One of the last external threats we would face is local brick and mortar stores that offer brand new similar clothing but at a relatively decent prices. This could steer customers who want new clothes away from our app. One suggestion to combat this, is to have sellers have their new and unworn clothes also for sale. All in all, there are many external threats to a business like mine, however I believe that there are interesting strategies we could use to address them.

# Part IV Marketing Plan Project Part: Segmentation and Targeting

**Part One (Define Segmentation and Targeting)**

As discussed in the Principles of Marketing textbook, segmenting target markets effectively is essential to the process of marketing a product. Target markets are important to marketers because it allows them to get an idea on what types of people they should be thinking about targeting their efforts towards. However in order to find out who the target markets are, they have to use a process called segmentation. Broadly, segmentation can be defined as dividing the market into groups based on their similar characteristics (Lamb et al., 2018, p. 145). There are several reasons why market segmentation is important and can be beneficial to firms and companies. The market is full of individuals with different product/ service wants and needs, and in order to cater to all of those needs firms must know who these different groups of people are. By identifying groups of people with similar preferences or needs, a firm can cater their products to that specific group in various ways. Additionally marketers benefit from marketing segments because this process allows them to create marketing mixes, which overlap with one or more characteristics from various individual segments. Markets are segmented in 4 different ways based on Geography, Demographics, Psychographic, and Benefits segmentation. Geographic segmentation splits groups based on where they are located in the world, the climate, or market density. Climate can be an important factor because it gives a marketer insight on what types of clothing/ equipment someone living in a cold region would need, and then they could choose to address that need. Market density is the amount of people that live in a land. Demographic segmentation is widely used by marketers and it is based on age, income, gender, ethnicity, background, and family life cycle. For example, marketers could target a specific new electronic device to Gen Z, because they may be more likely to purchase this type of product. The third way to segment is based on Psychographic factors such as personality, motives, lifestyles, and geodemographics. For example, a common trend that food industries are noticing is the shift to plant based diets; which is based on an individual's lifestyles. This base can be used to create new products and cater to these target markets. Benefits sought segmentation simply refers to grouping together individuals based on the perceived benefits they see in using a particular product or service. Additionally these groups are made based on the individuals preferences or needs (Lamb et al., 2018, p. 144-151). When thinking about market segmentation, it can be thought of in terms of being homogenous or heterogenous. Homogenous means that the target market has similar needs, interests, wants, habits..etc. Heterogeneous means that the target market does not have the same needs, interests, wants, habits, but instead has a variety of these. (With Dr. McCoy permission, I wrote this same Part 1 (Segmenting+Targeting) for my team’s Tonia Mitchell client marketing project)

**Part Two (DesiYou specific Audience and Segmentation Strategy)**

DesiYou will have a primary and secondary target market based on two on demographic and psychographic segments. Our primary market will consist of targeting based on demographics (geography and ethnicity), and the name of this group will be named*“The Desi Westerners”* Geography will be targeted because our app is specific to America and Canada, therefore we will only be targeting individuals living in these countries. We decided to create our app exclusive to American and Canadian users because there is not anything similar to this in this market. Commonly, websites cater to Desi’s all across the world. Additionally we will also be targeting based on Southeast Asian ethnicity. These includes individuals that identify as having origins of India, Pakistan, or Bangladesh. Our audience is Desi Americans, people of Desi origin but who have lived in America or Canada most or all of their lives. The reason that we will be targeting Desi’s is because of the high demand of Desi wear amongst these populations. We will also be targeting people that have close ties with the Desi community, for example: someone who is not Desi but has married a person of Desi origin.

 Our secondary market will target based on psychographics (interests), and this group will be named *“The Fashion Enthusiast”*. A secondary market is a market that isn’t the main audience, but still has some importance. We will focus on attracting individuals who are interested in culture and fashion. Desi wear is unique because it has a lot of intricacies, different fabrics, and has sequences and jewels. Many individuals in fashion may be interested in purchasing these dress to wear at a decent price. Additionally there are people that like to try new things, and express themselves in different ways, and therefore these products could be appealing to them. This is why I have chosen this market as my secondary market.

# Part V: Marketing Plan Project Pricing

In our Marketing course this semester, we have learned about various pricing strategies that companies use to enhance their business. My application will be considered a non-profit business. Any additional profits that we receive will be donated to organizations that provide for women in need of clothing. For the case of my business, I will be using the cost plus pricing and the comparative pricing strategies. Cost plus pricing is simply adding the costs of the business and then adding a markup price to gain profit. I would use this method because service apps have fixed costs such as app maintenance, software engineer, salaries, advertising..etc. In my case, the “standard mark-up” would be the extra money that a seller has to pay the business for using their services. The markup will aid in covering the costs of the app. The second pricing strategy that my company would use is the break-even analysis. Most non-profit businesses use this model. Break-Even analysis is when a firm tries to establish a price at which they will break even after a few years. Because my app will take a lot of initial investment to launch, it will require us to set a price at which we would want to break even, after around 2-4 years. I selected this method because we are a non-profit business, and we must have an objective for how much we want to make.

**Part VI: Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)**

In order to communicate the launch and availability of my new application, we will be using 4 different mediums in an integrated marketing communications plan. One of the biggest advertising for our brand will be through a magazine ad. Khabar magazine is a free magazine subscription to Desi American customers living in GA, AL, TN, and SC. Examples of ads that Khabar has are Desi physicians offices, restaurants, event halls, and ethic wear stores. From my experience, the khabar magazine has a big influence on families, and their choices, therefore advertising my app in the magazine will bring in more customers and awareness to my company. In addition to Khabar, my ads would be located in similar magazines for areas across the US and Canada such as:

|  |
| --- |
| **DesiYou** |
| **Magazine Ads** |
| Action Item: | Having an advertisement for DesiYou in the local Khabar magazine catered towards Desi Americans.  |
| Description  | A short ad with the company name, mission statement, and how the app works would be in local Desi community magazines, along with pictures of the steps. Because there are typically parents or elder individuals reading these magazines, it will be easier to describe how the app works and include photos with captions for each step in order to purchase/or sell your item. The magazine ad could take up the whole page or half a page depending on what our budget is. The magazine ad would also include a n10% discount on the first purchase, as an incentive for users to sign up via our app.  |
| Objective  | Using these ads in Khabar and other Desi magazines, we hope for parents and teens to gain awareness of our app, and hope that they can try it out.  |
| Target Market  | My target audience are families and frequent viewers of magazines. These are the individuals that will most likely see my ad, and be willing to try the application.  |
| Budget  | After doing some research, it seems that an ad in a Khabar type of magazine would be $1,140 for full page, which I think is worth because of the amount of customers it will reach.  |
| Metric  | We will measure success by how many new users we get after the ad goes out in the magazines. We will also be assessing increase in sales. We will additionally have a survey at the end of the user’s experience, to ask them how they found out about our app. This would give us a better understanding about which of our tactics for promotion works.  |

In order to sustain our business, we must also network with local businesses to build our brand. In Atlanta, there are many local Desi businesses such as restaurants, law offices, doctors offices, food stores...etc. Examples of the names of these places include: The Patel Plaza in Decatur, Madras Mantra, Rhea’s Clothing. Here we can build partnerships to advertise each others businesses to help us bring in our Asian customers.

|  |
| --- |
| **DesiYou** |
| **Local Business Networking** |
| Action Item  | Our team will network with small desi owned business to advertise our application. Ex: Patel Plaza (Big Desi Hub), Local Shopping stores..etc   |
| Description  | We will personally contact the owners of these places, and introduced ourselves and the app’s mission and then ask them to partner with us to advertise our app, in exchange for our business advertising their businesses.   |
| Objective  | Bring awareness to these business's customers about our application.  |
| Target Market  | Specifically we want to target Desi Americans, who often shop in Desi markets and stores, eat at Desi restaurants, and visit Desi professionals (ex: lawyers and doctors)  |
| Budget  | The idea here is essentially having an exchange of advertisements, however if local businesses propose a price for them to advertise our business, we will be willing to pay.   |
| Metric  | We will track success by monitoring how many new sign-ups that we have on the app. We will additionally have a survey at the end of the user’s experience, to ask them how they found out about our app. This would give us a better understanding about which of our tactics for promotion works.   |

Social media advertisements have been more seen for many start-up businesses. In order to target our younger Desi Americans audience, we will use social media to have them understand how the app works, and the benefits and values that they can get from using the app. Many times teens may not have buying power, however they have the power to influence their parents to buy dresses for their daughters. Facebook tends to attract older generations, therefore on Facebook our ads would be catered to Desi American parents.

|  |
| --- |
| **DesiYou** |
| **Social Media** |
| Action Item  | Social media advertisements would be created for Facebook and Instagram.  |
| Description  | Social media advertisements would include step by step tutorials on how to use the app, as well as photos of examples of the dresses and the prices. Seeing photos will help both the teens and their parents understand how the app works.   |
| Objective  |  The goal here is to target younger Desis through Instagram, and their parents through Facebook.  |
| Target Market  | Specifically here, we want to target our primary and secondary audience: Desi Americans, and individuals with ties to these communities. The target market here is teens and their parents, and individuals interested in Desi fashion.  |
| Budget  |  The budget for a Facebook ad is around.50- $2.00 per click, so it would depend on the amount of people that we are trying to reach. For an instagram ad, it is between .20- $2.00 per click.  |
| Metric  |  We will measure success by getting analytics from Instagram and Facebook to see how many people clicked on our ads, and how long they spent viewing the ad. We will additionally have a survey at the end of the user’s experience, to ask them how they found out about our app. This would give us a better understanding about which of our tactics for promotion works.  |

Desi American influencers on Instagram have been on the rise. Many young women are showing what it is like to be a part of Desi and American cultures. Many of these influencers do makeup and fashion tutorials. This is different than the social media promotion tactic, because it specifically uses influencers in our “desi social network” to promote the app.

|  |
| --- |
| **DesiYou** |
| Social Networking |
| Action Item | We will use Desi American networking circles to help us promote our new business.  |
| Description  | As mentioned above, Desi American influencers convince their viewers to purchase/ try new things. Many of these can promote our app, and bring in more users. We would pay certain influencers to either post on Instagram/ Facebook about our app, or make a video review of our app on Facebook. This is different than social media, because it uses “social influencers” to contribute to spreading awareness of our business. |
| Objective  | We aim to attract users that follow these social influencers in different networks.   |
| Target Market  |  Specifically targeting the primary audience, desi Americans who interact with these influencers on a daily/ weekly basis or subscribe to their channels. We will also target the secondary audience (the people interested in Desi fashion), because these are typically influencers who review clothing as well.   |
| Budget  | Depending on how famous the social influencer is, it can cost anywhere between $75- $3,000 per Instagram promotion post. On youtube it depends on how many subscribers the influencer has. If they have 50,000-100,000 subscribers it can be up to $500-$1,000 per video.  |
| Metric  |  We will measure by viewing analytics on how many people viewed the youtube/instagram promotional posts, and interacted with it. We will additionally have a survey at the end of the user’s experience, to ask them how they found out about our app. This would give us a better understanding about which of our tactics for promotion works.  |

# Customer Relationship Management

Now that I have talked about all of the marketing strategies used to attract customers, we must address strategies needed to keep the customers satisfied, and develop a relationship with them. We want to create relationships with our customers in order to earn their respect and loyalty. We have three main strategies for customer relationship management: email, comments/reviews, satisfaction surveys, and referral system. Customers will receive email updates about items that they have been looking for. For example if they have been looking for a teal colored dress for a while and it finally comes onto the app, they will receive a notification that they can now purchase that item, given that it fits their other requirements. This is in order to constantly stay in contact with the customer, and remind them that we haven;t forgotten about them. On the app store, there is always a place to leave comments and reviews for the app. Customers can leave suggestions, comments for the app, that our team will be consistently replying to and trying to improve upon. Another tactic is customers will take a satisfaction survey after they buy/sell so the team can improve the experience. Additionally we will have a referral program which will include giving out discounts to those users who refer their friends and families to use our app, similar to what Uber does for first time users. All of these strategies will be structured with the objective of developing and nurturing our relationships with our users.