Business Plan
Merry Go Round App
Mount Gravatt East Team 1
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MERRY-GO-ROUND

The theme for this year's 2016 tech challenge was: Solve a Problem in Your Local Community: Technology for social good!

The social problem we addressed was that of unaffordable living expenses, in particular the high cost of raising children. This problem needs to be solved because families and children suffer when they go without. The social and emotional wellbeing of parents and their children is at risk when they are unable to finance the educational expenses for today's learning environment. As well as the health benefits that they miss out on by not being able to participate in sporting activities. Our app Merry-Go-Round is based on the idea that some families have items they no longer want sitting around at home, which could be put to good use and offered to other families who don't have the money to buy all the items their children need to get a good education and fit in at school.

Our idea was inspired from an event that occurred at our school earlier this year. *A soccer student's mother arrived at the last school soccer game of the season with some shoes her son no longer wore and told the teacher she could pass them on to someone who needed them. A student who had played the whole season in their school shoes was a perfect size match and really enjoyed playing his last game in soccer boots with grip.* It made us think how great it would have been if the student who had played all season in his school shoes had received the donated shoes at the start of the soccer season rather than at the end.

We have heard of the saying it takes a village to raise a child, being from a small school we have a real sense of community and embrace this idea. It made us think of all the school books, second hand uniforms and sports equipment that are lying around unused and cluttering up houses. If only there was an easy way for local families to connect and put these unused items to good use.

The value in our app idea is that it targets a growing need in many local communities. In conducting our competitive analysis we investigated many other donation apps and websites. Generally they were based on large-scale cash donations or required large volunteer organisations to collect and sort donations. Two that we investigated in detail were the Smith Family app and the Givit website. Givit was the most similar to our idea it has the motto of " We match generosity with genuine need". The difference between this website and our app is the focus on small local communities connecting and helping each other. We believe people will want to use our app because it makes use of unwanted stuff and is an easy way to pay it forward.

For branding we chose a Merry-Go-Round logo as we felt it was representative of our app concept, while being unique and catchy as well. It represents the idea of the items being passed around the community, offered by those who no longer needed and accepted by those in need at the time. It is a sustainable idea benefitting not only families but the environment as well.

Our target audience was families with children. We conducted a survey of our local community members collecting over one hundred responses. Surveys were collected through two methods, online results via survey monkey and hard copies with volunteers approaching community members for their responses. Our survey confirmed for us that there was a market for our app in our local community 83% of the people who were surveyed said they had spare items to donate at home and 70% of families said they would accept donations. 75% of people said that they would find an app like ours useful for donating items and accepting donations. There may be criticism of our market size, due to the target audience being local, but we feel that other local school communities nationally and internationally would find this app as appealing as our community has, therefore the market size would expand greatly.

Potential revenue would be based on people paying to access our app advertisement free. This way those in the community who are accepting donations and cannot afford to pay for an app have free access and those in a position to donate to the community could afford to pay and have advertisement free access. We would ask local business to pay for adverts and encourage them to perhaps donate to the local community as well. Ten percent of this revenue stream would be donated by us the app developers back into local community projects, thereby encouraging more people to pay for the app.

Distribution of our app would be done through local schools and community centres. We would approach Parent and Citizen Associations and ask them to advertise in school newsletters and on face-book accounts. For future development of our app we would like to develop a volunteer component, this way volunteers would be able

to collect and deliver donations to help those families who do not have the capacity to collect their accepted items. We included a Google Map button so that customers could go directly to maps to find the address of the donated items but one area we would need to find out more about if we were to further develop our prototype would be how to allow users to sign in and have only the donations for their local community show up on the app.

We love the idea of the Merry-Go-Round because it is such a happy memory from many people's childhood and we love to see the smiles people have from offering donations and of course the smiles on the faces of the people accepting these donations and being able to put them to good use.