

Marketing Plan for Take Note Paperie

Proposed by Rachel Starkey and Michelle Hulett

Executive Summary

Take Note Paperie is a new small sized custom printing service located in an upscale neighborhood on the west side of Conway, AR. Take Note's focus will be on creating custom, quality products for its customers. This focus will not only keep the tastes of the customer in mind, but also allow for quick turnaround time as most of the printing will be completed in-house. In addition, Take Note Paperie plans to expand and grow with customer needs in order to provide the latest trends in custom printing.

Services

Take Note Paperie offers a great selection of paper products to purchase for printing. Customers are able to choose from pre-made designs, they can bring in their own, or they can make special requests of our graphic designer for a custom product. A proof is sent to each customer so that they can make any changes and confirm their order. Take Note predicts that the majority of the purchases will come from the pre-made designs that we offer.

Customers

The target market for Take Note Paperie is an upper middle class female in her 20s to 50s who is married and has children. She is trendy, open-minded, social, and enjoys shopping. She likes to, when the occasion arises, purchase upscale merchandise, such as custom printed products.

Finances

Take Note Paperie plans to obtain financing for its marketing costs through business loans, personal savings, and an investor. The business loan will be taken out for start-up costs in the amount of \$20,000. Marketing costs are included in this amount.

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Take Note Paperie is a new small custom printing service in Conway, AR.

MISSION STATEMENT

The company aims to provide the most innovative note solutions which specifically cater to both customer needs and finances.

GOALS

Non-financial

1. To be known for excellent customer service and quick turnaround
2. To expand quality product offerings as customer needs change
3. To stimulate the market through exceptional customer satisfaction

Financial

1. To gain within the first six months of business, profits that exceed start up costs
2. To contribute financially to the community via a Day of Service
3. To pay down loans within the first eighteen months of business

CORE COMPETENCY & SUSTAINABLE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

We at Take Note Paperie consider our core competency as providing custom paper creations at an affordable price. What differentiates us from our competitors are the affordable custom products that we offer, keeping customer convenience and satisfaction in mind.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Our location on the west side of Conway, AR provides service to a growing community.

PRODUCT MIX

What Take Note Paperie offers its customers is quality designed paper products that are ready to purchase or print on. Of these, we carry unprinted materials for custom print orders as well as pre-made stock for a quick pick up. This feature plays into our convenience commitment.

NEW SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Take Note's custom printing service primarily focuses on personalized announcements, invitations, note cards, thank you notes, name cards, and stationary.

MARKET RESEARCH

This section lays out the first year marketing and product objectives for Take Note Paperie as well as the applicable target markets, a consumer analysis, and competitor analysis.

The market research undertaken will tell a lot about how successful the products could be in the market that has been chosen. In an article on Inc.com entitled "Getting the Dirt on Your Market", Rhonda Abrams suggests getting the scoop from an existing market when trying to enter that market. Using statistics already published, instead of creating primarily our own research, can reduce the costs incurred by doing so. Abrams says that there is "an even bigger consulting group doing it for you—for free!". Several key Web sites are given to assist businesses in market research. These include www.fedstats.gov, www.census.gov, quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html, and the list continues. Other ways to compile necessary information is to conduct the research ourselves by giving questionnaires or personal interviews that incorporate the questions above. We have chosen to do a little of both by talking to people we come in contact with around town to see what they think about a store of

this nature. Also, we plan to know as much as we can about our competitor's business in order to stay ahead of the competition.

TARGET MARKETS

Target markets that are standard for the custom printing industry include brides-to-be, expecting mothers, high-school seniors, parents planning a birthday, business professionals, and event planners. These potential groups have been considered when pinpointing the primary target market for Take Note Paperie.

CONSUMER ANALYSIS

The type of consumer that Take Note is interested in is one who appreciates our products. The demographic that primarily fits this is the female gender with at least a moderately high income. From a psychographic point of view, we consider her as a woman who has a trendy lifestyle, is open-minded, sociable, a spender, and takes pride in personalized items. Her buying habits for luxury items are often seen seasonally and when a special occasion arises. Generally speaking, this woman will live in a sophisticated area of town, which is why we plan to locate in the more upscale part of Conway.

COMPETITOR ANALYSIS

The current main competitor in the custom printing business in Conway, AR is Something Blue Paperie. It is located in the heart of downtown Conway and provides a similar service. An article posted on Entrepreneur.com that was taken from Arkansas Business described the store and what it offers in detail. The owner, Karan Kendaol, says that her goal is

to provide “personalized service for every person that walks in the door”¹. The article also gives her market segment. It is characterized by being “mostly composed of women ages 18 to 70 and bride-and-groom couples” *.

Other competitors include party stores, bridal boutiques, and baby stores who already have a printing service to which they recommend their customers. In order to make a name for this business, we will have to personally go and ask them to try our services. We will show them that having a local provider of these products would be of benefit to them and paint their venue in a good light.

Another thing to consider as competition would be stores like Wal-Mart who provide “do-it-yourself” kits. Although the quality may not be as impressive as what we could offer a customer, we believe that if our prices were not set with consideration of this type of product offering in mind, then those products would have an increased chance of capturing the market we am trying to penetrate.

SEGMENTATION

The segmentation criteria which will impact the target market selection include both demographic and psychographic elements. The demographic elements are comprised of age, gender, income, marital status, and family life cycle. The psychographic elements consist of lifestyle, social class, opinion, interests, and attitudes. we have also considered the purchasing habits of the potential consumer.

¹ Walden, J. (2007). *Something Blue Inc.* Retrieved April 7, 2008, from <http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article/172978743.html>

POSITIONING & DIFFERENTIATION

One of the primary keys to effective marketing is positioning and differentiation. The location of Take Note Paperie will be a store on the west side of Conway, Arkansas. It will be open for business Monday through Saturday. Placing Take Note Paperie ads in various suitable local businesses will allow us to be where the customers are and raise awareness about our service. Attending bridal fairs and festivals will also be a part of the positioning for Take Note Paperie. This will help to create a “buzz” about the service and the benefits we offer our customers. When looking at the differentiation aspect, Take Note will be different from competitors in both the turnaround time as well as its unique product offerings.

PRODUCT LIFE CYCLE

When developing a new product, the product life cycle should be taken into account. The introductory phase of this cycle includes those who are entering a new product into the market for the first time. During the growth phase, others see the value in the new product and also try to enter the market as competitors. In the maturity phase, the product is one among many competitors and if the place, price, and promotion are not carefully taken into consideration, someone could slide to the top and leave you behind. The decline phase is when the producer should ask whether the product or service has lost appeal and if so what could be done to revamp the demand². Could the product be tweaked to make it new and exciting again?

² BusinessBureau-uk. (2002). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.businessbureau-uk.co.uk/sales-marketing/marketing_mix.htm

MARKETING MIX

The elements of the marketing mix (product, place, price, and promotion) are all a vital part of the marketing plan. Without these analyzed elements in place, this new service would not be able to launch and stay afloat. Taking a more in-depth look at each element will prepare Take Note Paperie for success.

PRODUCT

The first of the elements is product. Once a product or service idea has been proposed, a question should come to mind. Who will want to purchase the product or service? In our case, we have chosen a custom printing service. The products involved within the service could include the custom printing of wedding announcements, thank you notes, birth announcements, graduation announcements, anniversary party invitations, miscellaneous party invitations, stationary, and note cards.

Making the products and services offered accessible is another attribute for Take Note. In the store, not only will there be pre-printed products out and available for immediate purchase, but there will also be a viewing area for customers to sit down and look through several designs until they are able to find the one they like. Another aspect of making the service offered accessible is to place pamphlets in local businesses that most closely relate to selling the service. These suitable businesses may include bridal boutiques, baby shops, party stores, photography studios, and schools or daycares.

PRICE

When taking into consideration the pricing of a new product, it is important to ensure that any overhead incurred will be recaptured through the selling of the new product.

Otherwise, there will be no profits or cash flow to keep the business afloat. Another consideration is the competition's price on their product or service. If Take Note Paperie were to price its products too high and it had no added benefit compared to the competitors product, the consumer would be more willing to purchase the other product instead of mine and vice versa. Charging what the consumer is willing to pay is a reasonable way to gauge where the prices should be.

As with every other aspect of the marketing mix, there are options in setting the price for a product. Some of them are loss leader pricing, penetration pricing, price skimming, and differential pricing³. An appropriate price strategy for Take Note Paperie will be to keep the prices as low as they can be while still showing that the products have high quality. Also, it is always important to price the products offered through this service in order to make a profit in the end. Making the prices upscale in appearance, while still remaining competitive is also a key to the pricing strategy. The chart in Appendix A shows an example of the price list for some of Take Note's products.

PLACE

Place is the next step of the marketing mix and its main question is "How will we sell this product?" What channels of distribution should be considered for our product or service?

There are several ways to decide which channel to use. Should the method be direct or indirect and include single channel or multiple channel⁴? Take Note Paperie has the choice to sell directly to the customer via a brick and mortar or ecommerce store, through a retail shop, or

³ BusinessBureau-uk. (2002). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.businessbureau-uk.co.uk/sales-marketing/marketing_mix.htm

⁴ Marketing Teacher Ltd. (2000). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_place.htm

through a wholesaler channel⁵. The first choice of directly selling to the customer would keep the customer close and we would be able to sense an adjustment in the demand. The retail option could cut down the cost of having to have a physical store to provide the service, but takes our business further away from knowing the customers' needs. Using a wholesaler, typically cuts out the customer interaction all together and often times they want to use their brand name on the product which, in this case, would take away from Take Note's identity⁶. Another consideration would be a mixture between of any of the three choices. Take Note Paperie will start out in a brick and mortar store and has a goal to expand to an ecommerce store once the business makes a name for itself.

PROMOTION

Getting Take Note Paperie's service into the minds and daily lives of the customer will be done through promotion. This informing of the new service can be done through media advertising, personal selling, non-personal communication, and free publicity or public relations⁷. Creating a promotional plan is often done yearly, but for a small business like Take Note Paperie, making and evaluating the promotional plan each quarter or every six months would be beneficial to business.

Vouchers

Because we are a new business entering the custom printing market, limited-time vouchers will be sent out prior to the grand opening event via the Sunday newspaper as well as

⁵ Marketing Teacher Ltd. (2000). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.marketingteacher.com/Lessons/lesson_place.htm

⁶ BusinessBureau-uk. (2002). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.businessbureau-uk.co.uk/sales-marketing/marketing_mix.htm

⁷ BusinessBureau-uk. (2002). Retrieved March 31, 2008, from http://www.businessbureau-uk.co.uk/sales-marketing/marketing_mix.htm

given out the day of the event. This will be to entice consumers to not only attend the grand opening, but also to purchase custom printed creations from our store.

Sweepstakes

At the grand opening event, a sweepstakes will be held. To sign up for the sweepstakes, a customer that attends the grand opening event and fills out an entry form will be eligible to win. The winner of the sweepstakes will receive a custom printed invitation package. They will be able to choose from a wedding, birthday, graduation, or anniversary party package. The value of the package will be \$150.00.

The vouchers and sweepstakes will be a part of the initial sales promotion schedule. The vouchers will be valid opening day through the first six weeks of business and the sweepstakes winner will be chosen for the package of their choice on opening day. Another aspect of the initial sales promotion schedule will include point-of-purchase displays and product placement. Both of these will be evaluated after the first six weeks of business and reevaluated after another nine weeks of business.

BUDGET

The advertising plan has been projected to require \$7,875.00. This is based on the time schedules for each media as well as the quantity of use of the media. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the various advertising costs.

IMPLEMENTATION

Obtaining resources for the marketing plan will include applying for a business loan from First Security Bank of Conway for \$20,000, utilizing personal savings in the amount of \$5,000, and from an outside investor who contributes \$5,000. The startup costs will include printers,

initial stock for the store, fixtures, a register, computer and software, advertising, and leasing a space. The resources obtained through financing, personal savings, and investors should cover these costs until Take Note Paperie can generate its own revenues.

The marketing organization for Take Note Paperie consists of five people. Figure 2 shows the President, who makes both marketing and sales decisions. Working for the President are the marketing manager and the sales manager. They also work closely together. Each manager is in charge of an associate that assists them in their respective managerial positions. Each employee works on the floor in the store, which includes the register, stocking, selling, and cleaning.

EVALUATION

Quantifiable elements that can be used to measure effectiveness of the marketing plan are evaluating the advertising plan after the initial period by comparing projected sales to actual sales. If the actual sales are higher than projected sales, the conclusion would be that the four types of marketing were helping. To find out which ones were the most effective, taking each area and comparing the sales that stemmed from the influence of that area will tell which one is performing the best. To do this, surveys will need to be taken as well as face to face customer reactions to the advertisements.

Appendix A. Detailed Tables and Charts

RADIO

	30 Second	# times daily	weeks	TOTAL
KSSN	\$ 40.00	3	9	\$ 1,080.00
KLAL	\$ 40.00	3	9	\$ 1,080.00
KKPT	\$ 40.00	3	9	\$ 1,080.00

Total Cost				\$ 3,240.00
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NEWSPAPER

	Ad Cost	# times/week	weeks	TOTAL
Log Cabin	\$ 100.00	4	8	\$ 3,200.00
Arkansas Dem-Gaz	\$ 225.00	1	3	\$ 675.00

Total Cost				\$ 3,875.00
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YELLOW PAGES

	Ad Cost	# times / year	years	TOTAL
Platinum Listing	\$ 120.00	1	1	\$ 120.00

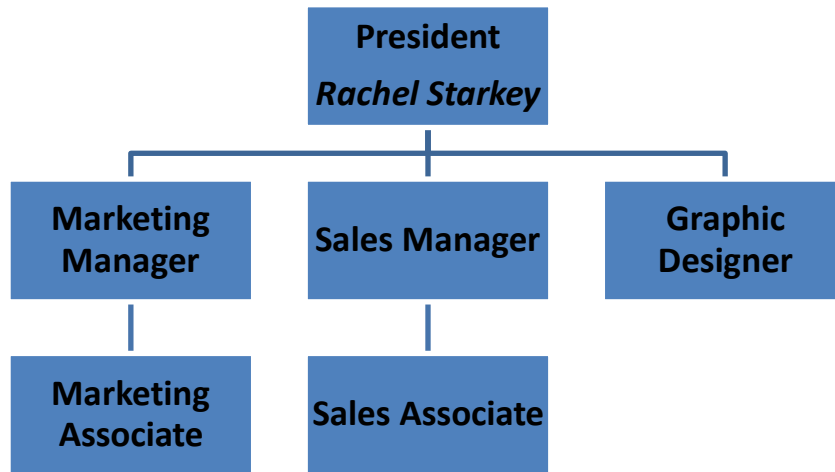
Total Cost				\$ 120.00
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OUTDOOR

	Cost	# of units	# colors	TOTAL
Banners	\$ 75.00	4	1	\$ 300.00
Coroplast Signs	\$ 17.00	20	2	\$ 340.00

Total Cost				\$ 640.00
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TOTAL ADVERTISING PLAN BUDGET	\$ 7,875.00
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Type	Qty.	Qty.
Party Invitations	25	50
Package #1	\$ 70.00	\$ 100.00
Invitation & Envelope (No Response Card)		
Package #2	\$ 125.00	\$ 175.00
Invitation & Envelope (With Response Card & Envelope)		

Birth Announcements	50	100
Package #1	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00
Announcement & Envelope (No Thank You Note)		
Package #2	\$ 175.00	\$ 200.00
Announcement & Envelope (With Thank You Note & Envelope)		

Note Cards	50	100
Package #1	\$ 85.00	\$ 125.00
Custom Card & Plain Envelope		
Package #2	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00
Custom Card & Custom Envelope		

Stationary	25	50
Package #1	\$ 30.00	\$ 50.00
8.5" x 11" sheets (No Envelopes)		
Package #2	\$ 40.00	\$ 65.00
8.5" x 11" sheets (With Envelopes)		