Educational Support Solutions:
Empowering People Through Information

Jonathan Leff

May 17, 2010

Seminar in Library Management - Topic: Information Entrepreneurship
LIBR 282-01 – Spring 2010
School of Library and Information Science – San Jose State University
# Table of Contents

Executive Summary .................................................................................................................. 3  
Business Description & Vision ............................................................................................... 4  
Definition of the Market ....................................................................................................... 6  
SWOT Analysis ....................................................................................................................... 7  
Description of Products and Services ..................................................................................... 8  
Organization & Management .................................................................................................. 11  
Marketing and Sales Strategy ................................................................................................. 12  
Financial Management .......................................................................................................... 14  
Appendix A - Cash Flow Budget for First Year of Operations ............................................... 15
**Executive Summary**

Educational Support Solutions believe that quality education is essential in helping people meet their goals and dreams. Highly educated people have the potential to achieve great things, not only for themselves, but also for the betterment of society. Furthermore, we believe that it is in the public interest to support those institutions that are dedicated to helping people reach higher, by connecting people to educational opportunities of which they may not be aware.

Such efforts are often undertaken by non-profit institutions and public academic institutions such as community colleges, who struggle for funding in the best of times, and even more so when times turn difficult. Oftentimes, these institutions do not have the resources, staff or time to devote to development, or to identify possible sources of support. We see our role as stepping in to help these institutions in need just as they help others in need. As we help them to identify sources of support, they in turn are able to devote the resources, staff and time they have to fulfilling their mission.

The motto of Educational Support Solutions is “Empowering People Through Information”. We provide information to those organizations who in turn provide opportunities for others to find information that will empower them and enrich their lives.
Business Description & Vision

Our Mission:
Our vision is summed up in the words “Empowering People Through Information”. We are committed to providing services that promote education and public service, with our focus being on the non-profits and education. In our current era of budget cuts, non-profits and educational institutions must be able to quickly identify sources of revenue that will allow them to remain competitive. As these institutions do invaluable work in promoting the best values of our civic culture, we are proud to be able to provide services that can help them develop strategies to continue their invaluable contributions to our society.

Our Goals and Objectives:
Non-profits are forced to operate within budgetary constraints that don’t allow them room to expand their services. Public institutions of higher learning are often faced with budgetary restraints as well. In addition, they must compete with private academic institutions for enrollment, which is often a key factor that state educational boards use for determining allocation of state funds.

Due to these budgetary constraints, non-profits and academic institutions cannot always afford to hire full-time staff to research potential resources that will help them to plan their development goals. Not being able to plan these goals means that they are unable to expand their services and outreach.

At Educational Support Solutions we provide research into grant funding opportunities both for institutions that are looking for such support, as well as foundations and other philanthropic organizations looking for ways of providing grant support. We also help academic institutions find information on enrollment at competing institutions as well as information about public and private land holdings and patents that can help them determine the best ways to find additional revenue and use the revenue and financial resources they currently have in the most efficient way to support their development efforts.

We see this field as one that is ripe for growth due to the constant need of non-profits and public academic institutions to find ways of securing funding for their services, particularly in light of the vagaries of state budgets and continued economic uncertainty.
Background:
Educational Support Solutions was founded by Jonathan Leff in 2010 as a project for LIBR 282-01 – Seminar in Library Management Topic: Information Entrepreneurship at San Jose State University School of Library and Information Science. Mr. Leff is the current sole proprietor of the business.
Definition of the Market

**Target markets:**

- Non-profits that deal with education (examples – Foundation for Critical Thinking, SUCCESS Incorporated of Solano County)
- Public Academic Institutions/Community Colleges (example – Cañada College)

**Profile of Target Markets:**

- **Non-profits:**
  Due to the economic downturn, non-profits have had to make do with less. There are many grant and funding opportunities available, but non-profits have been forced to cut staff due to budget cuts, and therefore do not have the resources to look for these funding opportunities, particularly in the face of increased need of the populations they serve. (Source: Minnesota Council of Nonprofits: 2010 Nonprofit Outlook)

- **Public Academic Institutions:**
  Enrollment in public academic institutions is expected increase over the next decade, meaning that these institutions will be under pressure to keep up with the demand for enrollment. Public academic institutions will need as much information as possible to be able to market themselves to the new generation of students looking to go to college for the first time as well as adults looking to continue their education. With the Obama Administration’s goal of focusing on community colleges as a stepping-stone to four-year colleges and universities, the pressure is on for community colleges to be able to accommodate the anticipated influx of new students. A college does not make all its money from tuition. We can help identify other sources of support so that staff and faculty can focus on the educational work at hand. (Source: Roach, R. (2009). A New Deal for Higher Education? Diverse Issues in Higher Education, 26(23), 12-14.)
# SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Factors</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Strengths:**   | • Knowledge of marketing practices  
|                   | • Research skills  
|                   | • Ability to produce value-added deliverables  
|                   | • Interest in education  
|                   | • Desire to do work that promotes education and non-profits  | • Lack of start-up funds  
|                   | | • Lack of contacts in the areas that I am targeting  
|                   | | • Learning curve required to assess exact nature of the market(s) that I am targeting.  |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Factors</th>
<th>Opportunities:</th>
<th>Threats:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Opportunities:** | • Work in partnership with development offices of educational institutions that currently have such offices.  
|                   | o Can provide extra support for grant-writing projects or grant-writing “busy season”.  
|                   | o Can conduct research into funding opportunities that institutions do not have resources (i.e., staff) to do.  
|                   | • Working with me is more cost-effective in the long run as educational institutions and non-profits do not have to pay my salary or benefits or provide me with office space.  
|                   | • Target non-profits who may need an additional person to handle development but who cannot afford to hire additional staff.  
|                   | • Hiring me on an as-needed basis is more cost-effective than hiring full- or part-time staff, or having to repeatedly train temporary workers for seasonal work.  | • Smaller educational institutions and non-profits often lack financial resources to hire an IIP to conduct research  
|                   | | • Higher educational institutions often have development offices and therefore do not need to hire an IIP to do something they can do in-house.  
|                   | | • Higher educational institutions and non-profits are often not aware of the need to conduct research into potential new sources of funding.  
|                   | | • These institutions are not often aware of the cost-effectiveness of hiring an IIP vs. full-time, part-time or temporary staff.  |
Description of Products and Services

What We Provide:

Grant Funding Opportunities:
- We provide information that can help non-profits, academic and educational institutions identify sources of grant support
- We provide information that can help grantors and foundations identify possible recipients of grant support

Enrollment and Funding/Budget Statistics:
- Both current and historical
- For the client institution
  - Public and private universities
  - Public and private primary and secondary education
- For “competitor” institution(s)
  - We find and provide information from institutions in the same niche as the our client which can assist our clients in developing their own enrollment and funding solutions
- We look for this information in the following locations:
  - Public university records
  - Census records
  - Education statistics from local, regional and national school districts

Services:

Research:
- We conduct both online and in-person searches as needed to find information in the following areas:
  - For Non-Profits we locate information that will not only help with fund raising, but also with long term planning:
    - Business statistics and trends
    - Legal cases
    - Public Records
- Census statistics
  - For public academic institutions we do research that can assist in recruitment searches for faculty and executive administrative positions. Having quality faculty is a good marketing tool that these institutions to attract funding and enrollment.

**Consulting Services:**
- Record keeping, data storage and maintenance solutions
  - This includes providing research, comparison and analysis of the latest in database management tools and software based on our client’s needs for non-profits and public academic institutions. This can help these institutions keep track of funding opportunities on their own, as well as other data that can assist in developing long term planning strategies
- Marketing
  - We research marketing trends and provide information on successful marketing strategies that have worked for businesses that occupy niches similar to our clients.
  - We can also work with clients to create customized marketing strategies based on the results of our research.

**Resources We Use:**
We have access to a variety of information resources including the following:

**Libraries and library catalogs:**
- Regional:
  - Melvyl – The Catalog of the University of California Libraries
    - This includes access to the [Online Computer Library Center (OCLC)](http://www.oclc.org) and [WorldCat](http://www.worldcat.org)
  - The Online Archive of California
  - San Francisco Public Library
- National and Online:
  - LibDex – Worldwide Index of Library Catalogues, Libraries and Books
  - Library of Congress [Online Catalogs](http://www.loc.gov) and [Digital Collections & Programs](http://www.loc.gov)
Databases:

• Medical databases such as PubMed
• Major professional databases such as Factiva and Dialog

We also have physical access to resources in the San Francisco Bay Area including, but not limited to the following:

- Bancroft Library at UC Berkeley
- San Francisco Public Library
  - Includes government documents in Selective Depository Library under Federal Depository Library Program
- The California Historical Society
- The Mechanics’ Institute Library
- The GLBT Historical Society
- UCSF Library

Deliverables:

We work with our clients to present information that is both comprehensive yet easily accessible. In addition to information, we also provide analysis of trends in our clients’ fields to help them in long-range planning and goal setting. We can also work with our clients to create marketing plans.

We are happy to provide our findings as physical copies, or electronically via email or file sharing.
**Organization & Management**

Educational Support Solutions will start as a sole proprietorship with plans to incorporate as the business grows.

Jonathan Leff is the sole proprietor of Educational Support Solutions. He holds a bachelors degree in History and English from the State University of New York at Buffalo and is a candidate for the Master of Library and Information Science degree from San Jose State University.

In the future, additional researchers may be hired as needed, with ownership residing with Mr. Leff.
Marketing and Sales Strategy

Why use Educational Support Solutions?

• Working with me is more cost-effective in the long run as educational institutions and non-profits do not have to pay my salary or benefits or provide me with office space.

• Often, non-profits may need an additional person to handle development but cannot afford to hire additional staff.

• Hiring me on an as-needed basis is more cost-effective than hiring full- or part-time staff, or having to repeatedly train temporary workers for seasonal work that may not vary from year to year.

In addition to joining the Association of Independent Information Professionals (AIIP), I will first identify customers through membership in the following professional organizations:

Nonprofits:

• Association of Fundraising Professionals
• American Association of Grant Professionals
• Society for Nonprofit Organizations

Public Academic Institutions:

• American Association of Community Colleges
• Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations
• Special Libraries Association

Private Academic Institutions:

• Mechanics’ Institute Library
Promotion will be conducted through the following marketing strategies:

- Web presence via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and other appropriate social networking websites.
- Monthly newsletter to be distributed both electronically and in print.
- Semi-weekly blog posting.
- Marketing packet to be sent to those who have been identified as interested parties.
- Attendance at national meetings and conventions.
- Company website which will serve as an online brochure and portal to my business, and which will contain copies of past newsletters.
- Listserv of those who have identified themselves as interested parties.
- Promotional postcards announcing new services, special offers or special events.
Financial Management

Pricing:
Pricing will be billed at a rate of $100.00 per hour using a not-to-exceed budget to allow for flexibility in determining if client needs have been met and if more work is either desired or required. I have estimated a total of 25 billable hours per week x 45 billable weeks per year (Source: Bates, M. E. (2003). Building & running a successful research business: a guide for the independent information professional. Medford, N.J.: CyberAge Books.).

Estimated Start up Costs:
I have estimated that start-up costs will be approximately $5,000.00. However, I plan to save up $10,000.00 before launching my business to cover any unforeseeable expenses. I currently own a desktop computer, laptop, printer, scanner, and all up-to-date office software. However, any of this equipment or software may need to be repaired or replaced before the start of my business.

For a full estimate of start-up costs, anticipated income and anticipated expenses, please refer to Appendix A.
### Notes:

- **Month 1** Beginning Cash Balance is based on estimated savings required to start business
- **$100.00/hr x 25 billable hours/week x 45 billable weeks/year = 12 months**

### Appendix A - Cash Flow Budget for First Year of Operations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Total Cash Inflows</th>
<th>Total Cash Outflows</th>
<th>Subtotal</th>
<th>Available Cash Balance</th>
<th>Ending Cash Balance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$4,609.85</td>
<td>$10,155.3</td>
<td>$19,375.00</td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$4,409.85</td>
<td>$10,355.3</td>
<td>$23,022.55</td>
<td>$12,657.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$12,515.15</td>
<td>$21,778.80</td>
<td>$9,262.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$1,117.60</td>
<td>$13,647.55</td>
<td>$29,956.20</td>
<td>$16,308.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$1,487.50</td>
<td>$13,277.65</td>
<td>$37,843.70</td>
<td>$24,566.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$12,515.15</td>
<td>$44,778.80</td>
<td>$32,263.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$1,197.60</td>
<td>$13,567.55</td>
<td>$53,614.25</td>
<td>$41,046.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$1,197.60</td>
<td>$13,567.55</td>
<td>$62,409.40</td>
<td>$51,242.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$12,515.15</td>
<td>$70,664.55</td>
<td>$60,149.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$12,515.15</td>
<td>$79,419.70</td>
<td>$79,234.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$1,197.60</td>
<td>$13,567.55</td>
<td>$88,217.35</td>
<td>$98,013.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>$14,765.15</td>
<td>$2,250.00</td>
<td>$12,515.15</td>
<td>$97,072.40</td>
<td>$117,857.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subtotal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Cash Outflows (Expenses):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bank Service Charges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office (General Office Supplies not listed below under &quot;Supplies&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing (Website hosting through InMotion.com)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rent or Lease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subscriptions &amp; Dues (Memberships):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Association of Independent Information Professionals (Full Membership)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Association of Fundraising Professionals (Introductory Member)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Association of Grant Professionals (Regular Member)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Society for Nonprofit Organizations (Individual)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American Association of Community Colleges (Individual Associate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Special Libraries Association (Full Member)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanics’ Institute Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stationery (business cards/letterhead)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toner Cartridges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Printer Paper (10 reams)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FileMaker Pro (Software)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>QuickBooks Pro (Software)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>License Co. of San Francisco Business Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Utilities &amp; Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal Income Tax (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CA State Income Tax (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Cash Outflows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Capital Purchases (Emergency Budget for New Equipment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Cash Outflows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ending Cash Balance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cash Inflows (Income):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Sales &amp; Receipts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$9,375.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Calculations:

\[
\text{Ending Cash Balance} = \left( \frac{\text{Billable Hours/Week} \times \text{Hourly Rate} \times \text{Weeks/Year} \times \text{Years}}{12 \text{ Months}} \right) - \left( \sum \text{Cash Outflows} \right) + \left( \sum \text{Cash Inflows} \right)
\]