EMGT 835 FIELD PROJECT:
Marketing Plan for
BJI Architectural Design Firm

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The partners of the architectural design firm BJI will use the information put together in this marketing plan to help focus their efforts on building a client base and obtaining more work. In the past, BJI relied on their networking skills to obtain projects. While this is an effective means of communicating, the marketing plan will help focus their marketing efforts and direct their efforts to identify growing markets, potential customers within the market segments, and a means to monitor and control the plan.

The marketing plan begins with an overview of BJI, including a SWOT analysis to identify what BJI is doing well and what they can improve on. The marketing review and customer review will assist BJI in identifying what markets are growing and what customers to pursue within those markets. Currently, revenue for architectural design services in the non-residential markets is increasing, which means there are opportunities in the industrial, commercial, and institutional markets. BJI fill focus on the market segments in which they have the most recent design experience, which is education and commercial (office / retail).

The plan will also assist the young company to identify the competitive advantage they have over their competitors, and the value they can give to their clients, which BJI believes is the team they will build with their customers.

Finally, the plan includes a means to monitor and adjust the marketing plan if the market should change or the amount of projects and customers does not meet the goals of the firm.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

BJI is an architectural design firm based in Kansas City, Missouri. The two partners of BJI formed the company in January 2001, and they performed work under the company name on a part-time basis while they held full-time jobs in other firms. In October 2005, they had enough backlog and financial stability to both work for BJI full-time. A third employee joined BJI in September 2006 in a multi-functional role including marketing, administration, and architectural drafting.

BJI knows that in order to have a direction to lead their company forward, they need a business plan. The marketing plan will serve as a road map for the firm to focus their marketing efforts. They will use the information in this plan to identify sectors in which to pursue clients, to identify strategies and tactics, and most importantly to evaluate their progress and revise their plan if necessary.

CHAPTER 2

STRATEGIC REVIEW

<u>Section 1 – Statement of General Business Purpose</u>

BJI is an architectural design firm, and both partners of BJI are licensed architects with project management experience. The services they provide are multi-faceted. BJI's primary service is architectural design of both new facilities and remodeling of existing structures. They have design experience in single-family houses, multi-family structures, schools, medical facilities, commercial buildings, detention facilities, and judicial facilities. Other services they provide include master planning, pre-construction assistance, construction management, and construction administration. Their customers are typically home owners, developers and investors for single- and multi-family or mixed-use buildings. School districts, business owners, and city officials comprise the commercial clientele.

BJI was created because the partners felt too many clients were getting a product that the architectural firm wanted to design, which they found typically was not a product that met the client's budget, schedule, or needs. The mission statement for BJI is to form a collaboration with the client to provide a timely, budget- and schedule-conscious design that meets the clients needs.

The long-range goals of the company are to grow to approximately six to ten employees, to maintain close relationships with their clients, and to do the majority of their work in the Midwest; primarily in Kansas and Missouri. BJI wants to be known as the top firm in the

Kansas City Metropolitan Area to work with when it comes to teamwork between the owner/client and architect. Their vision is to build a relationship with their clients in which the teamwork between the owner/client and the architects results in a fun and profitable project for all parties.

Another long-range goal the partners have for BJI is to form a subsidiary company and provide design-build services. While not all projects designed by BJI would profit from the design-build delivery method, certain projects would be more profitable for the client utilizing this method. Forming a collaboration with a contractor on design-build projects would also allow the project managers to form a partnership with the contractor to eliminate the “us versus them” attitude that can develop between architects and contractors.

BJI is in the architectural design services industry. According to a February 21, 2007 press release on the American Institute of Architects (AIA) website, demand for architectural design services has risen over the previous three months (AIA February 21, 2007). The Architectural Billing Index (ABI), which is compiled of survey data taken from AIA-member owned firms regarding their billings, showed that nonresidential construction is on the rise for 2007. In addition, a January 10, 2007 AIA press release indicated that the institution market holds the most opportunity for architectural design services firms (AIA January 10, 2007).

A SWOT analysis for BJI will help identify the competitive advantage BJI has over competitors, spot opportunities they should pursue, and target areas of improvement or areas they should avoid spending time or energy pursuing.

The partners of BJI describe their main strength as their teamwork; both internally between the partners, and the collaboration they form with their client. That is the main factor that sets them apart from other architectural design firms. Teamwork to BJI includes excellent communication skills, listening skills, and the ability to incorporate ideas.

Other strengths that the partners of BJI bring to the company are listed below.

- Variety of design experience, including single-family and multi-family residential design, medical facilities, judicial facilities, educational facilities, detention facilities, and commercial buildings. Within each of these types of design, they have served as project managers for either remodeling or additions to existing buildings as well as new facilities.
- Willingness and desire to work on small projects that other firms do not want to pursue.
- Provide a cost-advantage over their competitors because they have low overhead, and they pass along that cost-savings to their client.
- Build a personal relationship with their clients to better understand their client's needs and goals, which are incorporated into the design.
- Large resource base. Although BJI is a small firm, they have a vast resource base including architectural designers, interior designers, landscaping, graphics, structural

and civil engineering, electrical and mechanical engineers that they can bring to their client.

The weaknesses that BJI currently experience are primarily due to the fact that they are a start-up company and do not have the financial resources, in-house workforce, and business knowledge that a client would typically find with a larger and more established company.

Another weakness is that BJI currently does not have an office. The three employees of BJI work in the basement of one partner's house. The business cards for each partner list the address of the house, and the phone number included is the respective employee's mobile-phone number. The lack of office space becomes an issue when BJI is to host a meeting; they either have to go to the client's office or meet at a public place. Office space is one of the top priorities of the partners, and the final location will be dependent on a future project.

Other weaknesses the partners identified as listed as:

- BJI does not have a workforce. Even though there are a multitude of prior coworkers they can utilize on a part-time basis when additional workforce is needed, they do not currently have any additional staff in-house.
- Doing design work up-front without a fee. BJI has done preliminary design work for free, assuming some of the costs would be captured when the project goes to the construction document design stage, only to have the project fall through before contracts were written.

- They are currently working with a few clients that are new to the development and investment process. As such, BJI must educate their client on design fee structures.
- BJI does not have a solid client base.
- BJI does not have a brand image.
- Some projects are pursued without a go/no-go analysis. Projects are pursued because "they need work".

One of the biggest opportunities for BJI is with a group of friends that is getting involved in investing and developing property. At the present time, this group owns one resort complex, and they are pursuing a project which will require the design and construction of a new commercial building. The partners of BJI have a personal relationship with the investment group, and there is very little threat of the investment group pursuing a different architectural design firm.

Another opportunity is in the education market segment. There are a lot of schools in the Kansas City metro area that will require remodeling work or additional facilities. Each of the partners has been working in the Kansas City area for over 10-years, and during that time they have formed relationships with various school district officials in the area. In addition, some of those contacts are moving into executive positions within their school district. BJI can provide design services for smaller projects that many school districts typically need (additional class rooms, sports facilities, etc.) that they can complete in a much faster timeframe than a larger company.

While BJI has many opportunities to get their new company off of the ground, there are many threats for a small, start-up company as well. BJI has identified the following as their most important threats at this time.

- Clients not paying their invoices in a timely manner, or at all.
- Unforeseen construction problems that cost time, money, or other resources.
- Not meeting the client's expectations and thus not fulfilling the company mission.
- Bonds not passing for school districts, thus projects are not available.
- Mortgage rates increasing, this might delay home owners and developers from doing projects, or as large of projects, as they might have a few years ago.
- Clients not understanding a contract or the scope of work that BJI provides.
- Clients not being educated in the investment and developing businesses, and thus taking risks and purchasing properties that are not wise investment decisions.

The strategic intent of BJI is to build their business around the team they form with their client. BJI wants to be recognized as the architectural design firm to go to for design collaboration from conception to completion, throughout the design process and construction process. With this approach, they want to grow from providing architectural services to becoming a complete design-build firm.

The driving force behind their strategic intent is the customer. Too often, the partners of BJI felt restricted by their employer and could not give their client the level of service the client deserved. They also felt their previous employers were not utilizing the client's funds in the most efficient manner. With this idea in mind, BJI wants to be known for understanding and meeting the customer's needs and expectations. Their position statement is "We believe we have the responsibility to give the owner the best project in terms of constructability, originality, and economic resourcefulness."

BJI is a start-up company with three full time employees. They also have the support of family, friends, and past coworkers who provide services free of charge or at a reduced rate. The goal of BJI is to grow to a design force of approximately six to ten employees of architects and designers. In addition, they want to form a strong relationship with sub-consultants such as surveyors, civil, structural, electrical, and mechanical engineers, in order to work most efficiently.

Section 2 – Brand Equity

BJI is still developing their brand. Right now the company's brand personality is young, fresh, and new; which is the design experience they want to give to their clients. BJI wants to provide architectural design services that involve the ideas from the client as much as the designer. The company does not have a brand statement, but they want their client's first thought of BJI to be "teamwork." As a project manager in an architectural firm to which BJI was a sub-consultant architect, "…I never thanked you for taking the time to write this email on a project that you were originally [retained for] just drafting on. I think [the project] will be successful because you took ownership in a project that wasn't necessarily yours" (Greischar 2007).

Currently the only means of conveying BJI’s brand message is through word of mouth. As BJI completes design projects, they want their client to come away with a team-attitude, excited to work on another project with BJI, and act as a champion for BJI by telling others in their field about the experience they had working with BJI.

There is a distinct competitive advantage of having a positive brand image of teamwork for BJI. Because BJI is a small, start-up firm, the best and least expensive advertising and solicitation they can get is from repeat clients and referrals from clients.

CHAPTER THREE

MARKET REVIEW

The third section of the marketing plan will analyze the architectural design services industry, what markets and market segments are found within the industry, trends within the markets, sales and growth estimates for the markets and market segments, and how the firm BJI currently performs within the market.

Section 1 – Market Analysis

The market analysis begins with a breakdown of the market hierarchy for the architectural design services market. The markets and market segments listed in this plan mimic those listed in annual reports produced by the AIA for analysis purposes.

The hierarchy has been set up in an outline format, with the Market as the first level and the Market Segment as the second level. The typical customers have been negated from the hierarchy outline, as additional information will be discussed in later chapters.

Industry – Architectural Design Services

I. Commercial Market

   A. Hotels Market Segment

   B. Office Buildings Market Segment

   C. Retail Market Segment

II. Industrial Market

III. Institutional Market

A. Hospital and Health Care Market Segment

B. Public Safety Market Segment

C. Education Market Segment

D. Religious Market Segment

E. Amusement / Recreation Market Segment

IV. Residential Market

A. Single Family Housing Market Segment

B. Multiple Family Housing Segment

The design services industry continues to grow in numbers of architects. There were approximately 91,000 licensed architects in 2002 (American Institute of Architects 2003) Information in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* reports that 129,000 jobs were held by architects in 2004, and the number should increase as fast as the average for all occupations through 2014 (United States Department of Labor August 4, 2006). There are approximately 7,250 registered architects in the states of Missouri and Kansas and 985 registered architectural firms between those states (Missouri Division of Professional Registration and Kansas State Board of Technical Professions 2006).

As stated in the *Encyclopedia of American Industries* for “Architectural Services”, one in five architects is self-employed. The 2006 AIA *Business of Architecture* Firm Survey states that 23% of architectural firms are sole practitioners, and 38% of firms have two to four employees. However, industry billings by those two groups make up only 8% of total billings in 2005 (The American Institute of Architects 2006).

The architectural design industry billings for 2005 were $28.7 billion dollars, up over 11% from the 2002 billings of 25.5%. Over the last decade, billings for the industry have nearly doubled (The American Institute of Architects 2006).

A closer look shows that nearly 50% of firm billings in 2005 were in the institutional market (The American Institute of Architects 2006). Within that market, the education market segment comprised 18.8% and healthcare was 14.3%. Office projects were 11.7% of firm billings in 2005, and multi-family residential was up to 10.7%. Total billings for the residential market were 17.7% in 2005, up from 12.1% in 2002, which is the largest increase in firm billing activity for the survey period.

The AIA Consensus Forecast Panel reports that the coming year will be a strong one for non-residential projects (Baker PhD 2007). The projections are published twice a year, in January and June, and the purpose is to forecast the construction business for the upcoming year. In the January 29, 2007 press release by the AIA, the non-residential construction market is anticipated to grow by 7%. Among the top in anticipated growth are hotels (13.1%), amusement/recreation (9.9%), and office buildings (9%). One thing to keep in mind with the construction forecast is that the design work for these projects might already have taken place, therefore the amount of billings in an architectural firm won't necessarily parallel the construction forecast.

The summary of conditions from the “Architectural Services” industry information in the *Encyclopedia of American Industries* uses 2002 data. In the current conditions summary, the educational market segment brought in the greatest amount of revenue at 24%, office market segment brought in 14% of revenue, and the health-care market segment was 12% of revenue. Residential revenue for both single-family and multi-family projects was approximately 12%, according to the report.

Investment research information from Value Line is another tool used to forecast market segments within the architectural design services industry. Value Line uses a term called Industry Timeliness, which is a ranking of how Value Line predicts the stocks within 96 different industries will perform relative to each other. The lower the value, the greater the timeliness.

Value Line also uses a statistic called Industry Rank. That rank takes in to consideration the timeliness of each stock within each industry, and then each industry is ranked. Typically, if a lot of stocks in an industry are expected to perform well, the industry will be ranked high on the list. Conversely, if many stocks are expected to be low-performers, the industry will rank low. The industries (market segments) in which BJI has an interest in tracking are shown in the table below, along with their industry ranking and timeliness.

Industry	Industry Rank	Industry Timeliness (of 96)	Date of Report
Retail Store	3	5	February 9, 2007
Educational Services	9	19	February 2, 2007
Hotel / Gaming	12	14	February 16, 2007
Medical Services	27	60	December 22, 2006
Healthcare Information Services	37	36 (of 97)	December 22, 2006
Cement & Aggregates	46	64 (of 97)	January 5, 2007
Building Materials	59	65 (of 97)	January 5, 2007
Homebuilding	95	95 (of 97)	January 5, 2007

Figure 3.1 – Value Line Data

Within these market segments, there are a few trends and growth rates to focus on. First is in the educational services market. As written in the Value Line industry summary on educational services (Value Line February 2, 2007), the shift away from traditional campus-based education and more on-line educational services continues. This trend could see less facilities being required, as students will not necessarily be on the school campus to receive their education. Stocks in the education services industry do not include K-12 schools, and thus the Value Line industry information should be monitored, but it might not pertain to the primary and secondary education market segment of architectural design services.

Another noteworthy item from the statistics section of the educational services industry from Value Line is that the net profit margin seemingly peeked in 2005 at 11.6%. The predicted net profit margin is estimated at 11.2% for 2006 and 2007, and down to 10.8% for the 2009 – 2011 projections. The relative strength measure (ratio of Industry to Value Line Comp) shows a general decline in this market segment as well.

Only 5 states of the 50 states do no permit design-build on public projects (Quatman 2007). In 2006, the Kansas legislature passed a law in the state of Kansas for the approval of design-build projects for state agencies and “state educational institutions”. This creates an area of opportunity for architects to work with school districts and find new ways to save money and speed up schedules for projects over the traditional design-bid-build process.

Another market segment of interest is the hotel segment. The timeliness indicator rating went from 66 of 98 in February of 2006 to 14 of 96 one year later. The relative strength of the Hotel/Gaming Industry has been on the rise from the year 2000 – 2006, and the net profit margins are predicted to continue rising. The data in the Value Line composite statistics gives actual values of sales holding steady between the years 2001 – 2003, but they increased in 2004 and 2005. They are predicted to continue rising in 2006 and 2007, through the future outlook of 2009 – 2011. In addition, the net profit margin for the year 2004 was 8.0%, and it is predicted to remain the same through 2007. However, the profit margin is predicted to increase to 11.1% in the years 2009 – 2011, which is the highest net profit margin as shown on the table of values.

A January 1, 2006 article in Building Design and Construction noted the combined zoning of hotel and residential space to be a new trend in financing the once slow hotel market (Schneider 2006). In order to obtain financing, some developers are moving away from building just a hotel and instead incorporating residential living space (hotel condos) along with the traditional hotel. This idea appeals to financers because the developer is not putting down as much of their own finances, as property owners are paying for some of the costs. In addition, this type of project focuses on the soon to retire baby boomers that might want the convenience of a managed property.

The health-care market segment is projected to be the strongest category of construction activity in 2007 according to the AIA Consensus Forecast Panel. Other items which support the increase in construction opportunities within the health care market segment include the aging population in the United States, the wealth of the retired population, and the changes in Medicare (Baker 2007).

The office market segment within the commercial market is one to watch in the Kansas City area as well. According to the fourth quarter 2006 Office Vacancy Index by CB Richard Ellis, Kansas City was one of the top areas with a decrease in office space. While the vacancy rate is still high at 17.6% for the metropolitan area, there is 2.2% less space available from the last quarter (CB Richard Ellis 2007).

Overall, the cost of construction materials, specifically petroleum based products, greatly affects the cost of projects and the amount of new design work available to architects. Interest rates remain low to moderate, making the financing of projects possible. These factors should be monitored along with the markets and market segments, as they seem to parallel each other.

Section 2 – Company Analysis

BJI is a start-up company in their second year of operation. The partners are still trying to determine their place in the architectural design services industry, and the market analysis will be used to help determine which market they should focus their efforts.

In just 18-months, BJI has completed design projects in the education, recreation, and multi-family market segments. See Figure 3-2 for a descriptive breakdown of the proposals and projects completed during this short tenure. The partners design experiences while working with other firms also includes retail, office buildings, health care, public safety, religious, and the single-family market segment. With all of this experience, BJI is capable to design in any of the markets or market segments identified earlier in this chapter.

As stated by numerous sources in the market analysis section, the nonresidential markets will remain steady, if not increase, in design opportunities and revenue potential in 2007. BJI has experience in 3 of the 4 markets in the architectural design services industry, and theoretically could pick any one of the markets in which to pursue clients. From this section of the marketing plan, BJI has determined they should focus on the non-residential markets, but they need additional means to evaluate their opportunities in the industry and determine which market or market segment is best for their firm. The next step in the marketing plan is to analyze the customers in the markets to better determine where BJI should focus their efforts.

Project Name	Market	Market Segment	Construction Value	Design Fee	Notes	Completion Date
Commercial Project 1	Commercial	Restaurant	$20,000	$1,200		Spring 2006
Commercial Project 2	Commercial	Retail	$2,820,000	$139,000	outstanding invoice >400 days old	Open
Commercial Project 3	Commercial	Office & Retail	$2,000,000	$150,000	not yet under contract	n/a
Industrial Project 1	Industrial	Metal Building	Unknown	$1,200	not yet under contract	n/a
Institutional Project 1	Institutional	Education	$45,000,000	$165,000	sub-consultant to architect	Open
Institutional Project 2	Institutional	Education	$18,000,000	$40,000	sub-consultant to architect	Open
Institutional Project 3	Institutional	Education	$250,000	$6,000	civil design, not yet under contract	n/a
Institutional Project 4	Institutional	Education	$200,000	$15,000	not yet under contract	n/a
Institutional Project 5	Institutional	Education	$350,000	$28,000		Summer 2006
Institutional Project 6	Institutional	Education	$52,000	$10,800		Open
Institutional Project 7	Institutional	Health Care	Unknown	n/a	not yet under contract	n/a
Institutional Project 8	Institutional	Recreation	$600,000	$40,000		Fall 2006
Institutional Project 9	Institutional	Recreation	$135,000	n/a	did not pass community vote	n/a
Institutional Project 10	Institutional	Religious	$100,000	$5,000		Fall 2006
Institutional Project 11	Institutional	Religious	n/a	n/a	contract not won	n/a
Residential Project 1	Residential	Multi-family			construction management	Spring 2006
Residential Project 2	Residential	Multi-family	$3,000,000	$110,000		n/a
Residential Project 3	Residential	Multi-family	$2,500,000	$200,000		Open
Residential Project 4	Residential & Commercial	Multi-family & Retail	$4,000,000	$15,000	property sold before design complete	n/a

Figure 3.2 – BJI Projects and Proposals

CHAPTER FOUR

CUSTOMER REVIEW

The fourth section of the marketing plan is a customer review for the markets within the Architectural Design Services Industry. Each of the four markets is discussed in this chapter. Due to the varying degrees of design experience the partners have within the markets, some are examined more thoroughly than others. BJI will use the information put together in the customer review chapter as well as the market analysis information to help sharpen their marketing focus in the industry.

Section 1 – Customer Characteristics

Four markets have been identified in the architectural design services industry. Commercial, institutional, industrial, and residential markets all have clients with a need BJI can fulfill. Figure 4-1 on the following page is a breakdown of the ultimate, intermediate, and feasible customer within each of the markets. Due to the technical design specialization required in some markets and market segments, such as hospital design and industrial design, customers in those markets are only briefly analyzed. BJI realizes that in order to compete with other design firms in those specialized markets, they must have a deeper knowledge base of design and would rather concentrate on markets in which they have a better understanding. There are also occurrences of customers that fit into more than one market, such as developers wanting both multi-family residential design and commercial design in the same building.

Market	Market Segment	Ultimate	Intermediate	Feasible
Commercial	Hotels	Developers & Investors	Those located in Kansas, Missouri, Florida, or New Mexico. Those located near an existing project site or have exposure to an existing project.	Developers & Investors BJI has worked with or contacted in the past 18 months.
	Office	Developers & Investors	Those located in Kansas, Missouri, Florida, or New Mexico. Those located near an existing project site or have exposure to an existing project.	Developers & Investors BJI has worked with or contacted in the past 18 months, as well as real estate brokers.
	Retail	Developers & Investors	Those located in Kansas, Missouri, Florida, or New Mexico. Those located near an existing project site or have exposure to an existing project.	Developers & Investors BJI has worked with or contacted in the past 18 months, as well as real estate brokers.
Industrial		N/A	N/A	N/A
Institutional	Hospitals	State agencies, Private Doctors	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	Medical clinics for specialists, dentists, etc., not located w/i a hospital.
	Public Safety	State, County, and City agencies	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	
	Education	Public School Districts, Private Schools	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	School districts located w/i 50 miles of KCMO; 106 school districts in Missouri and 44 school districts in Kansas
	Religious	Religions of all denominations	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	Small Catholic parishes in the KC-St. Joe, Wichita, and KC diocese w/ or in need of a school. Also, there is one Lutheran and one Seventh Day Adventist church-related schools in Kansas.
	Recreation	State, County, and City agencies; Developers & Investors	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	
Residential	Single-family	Home owners, current and future; Developers & Investors	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	Home owners wanting a new home valued between $150,000 - $300,000 or a substantial addition to existing home.
	Multi-family	Home owners, current and future; Developers & Investors	Those located in the Kansas City Metro area.	Developers & Investors wanting to combine commercial space and multi-family space in one building

Figure 4.1 – Customer Breakdown

BJI identified and defined customers within the commercial and residential markets wanting architectural design services as developers and investors. Developers are people or groups of people interested in developing a piece of land for profit, whereas investors might only be interested in the financial profit of the development, and not necessarily involved in the process of developing the land.

The ultimate customer is any person or group of people that wants to develop property or invest in a development project. Intermediate customers for BJI include developers in the Kansas City metro area, and those located in the states of Kansas, Missouri, Florida, and New Mexico. These dynamics are considered intermediate because BJI is based in the Kansas City Metro area, the partner’s are registered in those four states, where potential future customers may have come in contact with some of BJI’s current project work.

Feasible customers include developers and investors with which BJI has already made contact. These customers include investment group members from Springfield, Missouri, Manhattan, Kansas, and the Kansas City Metro area, a property owner in Manhattan, Kansas, a development group in Orlando, Florida, and the owner of a resort in Taos, New Mexico. Each of these customers either currently has a project with BJI or has contacted BJI about a possible project.

The educational market segment ultimate customer includes primary, secondary, and post-secondary school districts. Private schools could be grouped with either this market segment or with the religious market segment, which is what BJI will do for this analysis. Intermediate customers are primary and secondary school districts in Kansas and Missouri. These groups are identified because the partners of BJI have very recent design experience in that geographical location. Feasible customers that BJI will target include smaller school districts within 50-miles of Kansas City.

All religious groups that have a church, synagogue, or structure for place of worship, education, or offices would be included as an ultimate customer in the religious market segment. Private schools associated with a religious affiliation will be grouped in this market segment. Intermediate customers include those in Kansas and Missouri with a need for new construction or an addition or modification to their existing infrastructure. Feasible customers in this market segment are those in the Kansas City – St. Joseph Diocese needing improvements to their campus or wanting to add a school to their parish. These customers have been identified because the partners of BJI have done a project for the dioceses in the past, and they have continued to build their relationship with the business managers of the dioceses. Through this relationship, BJI is aware of which parishes are looking to improve or expand to their existing campus and can focus marketing efforts with these parishes.

The most recent design work the partners of BJI completed while working with other firms is primary and secondary education facilities. In the education market segment, BJI can screen out customers in the post-secondary (university and technical college) and specialty school areas. BJI will research the needs of the smaller school districts in the Kansas City metro area with elementary schools, middle schools, and high school buildings.

BJI does not have any experience in the design of religious buildings, but they have done design work for private schools associated with a church. To screen out feasible customers in this market segment, BJI will continue strengthening their relationship with the Catholic Diocese and look for growing parishes in Kansas City and St. Joseph that are looking to building, expand, or improve their parish and school buildings.

BJI will screen their potential customers to identify those which have a need for BJI's services. In the residential market, BJI is not interested in public housing multi-family projects. At this time, they do not have any customer contacts in that market segment, but would screen those potential customers out. The customer BJI will continue to look for is one which is looking for commercial and multi-family residential units in the same building.

The opportunities for BJI's feasible customers in the multi-family housing market are that many baby boomers are nearing retirement age and may be in the market for a low-maintenance setting for a primary residence, a second home, or a vacation home. A home that is part of a multi-family housing unit can be low or no-maintenance as well as a time-share type ownership. In the Kansas City Metro area, the late 1990s had the highest number of multi-family building permits issued. In 2001 alone, over 5,500 permits were pulled. The number of permits leveled off since 2002, but the numbers remain steady at over 3,000 permits acquired each year (The County Economic Research Institute 2006). One drawback for the feasible customers in this industry is that building costs and interest rates are on the rise.

The evaluative criteria for the feasible customers in this industry are the speed in which the services can be delivered and the fee, in that order. Developers and investors in the residential market segment want a fast return on their investment and a low fee for design services.

Section 2 – Customer Demand

It is difficult to accurately identify all of customers at the ultimate, intermediate, and feasible levels in the commercial and residential market segments. Home owners interested in building a new home or expanding an existing residence can be included. Any person that is an investor, developer, or has the desire to invest or develop and parcel of land (or redevelop or remodel an existing unit) is included the ultimate customer base for commercial and multi-family residential markets. Intermediate customers include those customers located near an existing BJI project.

Feasible customers in the commercial and residential markets include investors and developers that have already had contact with BJI. Currently, BJI has seven investors in their database with which they have proposed or designed projects. BJI wants to strengthen their relationship with each investor to keep these clients at the current or prospective level.

Another current customer for BJI is an investor from Kansas that owns a resort in Taos, New Mexico, that is currently undergoing remodeling. This investor sought the design services of a local architect and is not happy with the product so far. Upon learning the partners of BJI were working for themselves, this investor turned to them for design advice. BJI once served as a liaison between the resort owner and the local architectural firm, but is now the lead design team for the new multi-family units on the resort property.

The education market segment brings the potential of many feasible clients. In Missouri, there are 524 total school districts. Out of those school districts, 16 counties are located within 50-miles of Kansas City, and over 100 school districts are in those 16 counties. The Kansas School Directory is another resource for BJI to research school districts in the Kansas side of the metro area, but at this time a breakdown of feasible customers has not been done. BJI continues to maintain relationships with two past clients from previous work experience. Those clients have been great champions for BJI and provide contacts within the Kansas City Metro Area that will begin design projects in the near future.

In the religious market segment, BJI maintains contact with a business manager with the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City and St. Joseph, and another manager from a local parish. These two contacts have provided references for BJI, and they have suggested parishes to contact regarding design opportunities. Refer to Figure 4.1 for an estimate of the numbers of feasible clients in the markets or market segments.

Section 3 – Customer Database

Since hiring a third person in the firm to help with project work and business management, a database containing the names of past, current, and prospective clients has been implemented. The young firm currently has an active project list in their records in which they can follow the billings and hours spend on projects.

A more extensive database still needs to be created so not only customer information is collected, but to manage customer relationships. To start, a simple database with multiple means of tracking can be made. The customer's name and contact information, along with the location of the project, type of project, and contract amount is a starting point for the database. Post mortem notes or lessons learned information can be added to track the relationship built with the customer. Prospective projects and follow-up phone calls should also be tracked to keep communication on-going with customers and make sure BJI is aware of future projects long before an RFP is made. For the types, locations, and number of projects that BJI would like to do in the near future (5-year outlook), this method is assumed suitable. BJI should evaluate the number of projects obtained to ensure they are reaching their goals in number of projects done each year.

Currently, the means of obtaining customer information is made through networking and research. School district information, including superintendent contact data, number of schools and students in the district is available on the internet for both the Kansas and Missouri Department of Education. Face-to-face networking with Missouri school officials will be made at BJI's first trip to the Missouri Association of School Business Officials (MoASBO) Annual Spring Conference in April. According to the MoASBO Director, approximately 600 – 650 school officials from the 400 school districts that are members of MoASBO are expected to attend (Solomon 2007).

The Catholic Diocese parish information is also available on-line. A thorough breakdown of parishes and schools has not been completed by BJI at this time. However, through BJI's relationship with members of the dioceses, BJI is aware of growing parishes and those communities with school improvement projects.

Section 4 – Customer Summary

After compiling information on the market and the customers served in those markets, BJI will concentrate their marketing efforts on the education market segment and the commercial market segment. Those two markets were chosen because they are growing markets and the partners of BJI have design experience in those markets.

In the education market segment, BJI will direct their marketing efforts on school districts within 50-miles of the Kansas City metropolitan area. In Missouri alone there are 16 counties and 106 school districts within this geographical boundary. Narrowing the parameters even farther, BJI will target smaller school districts with a growing population, with older facilities needing expansion or repair, and with a need to build additional schools.

The commercial market segment is the second area in which BJI will focus. The partners of BJI are excited to get involved in the development of commercial property, and they want to learn and grow in this market segment. Unlike the educational sector, BJI does not have a list of developers and investors to pursue in the commercial arena. To begin compiling the commercial database, BJI will network with the Kansas City Commercial Real Estate Women (KC CREW) and commercial real estate agents who work closely with developers and commercial building owners.

Although BJI will focus marketing efforts in the education and commercial market segments, all markets identified in Chapter 3 Market Review will continue to be included in the remainder of the plan. The information compiled will be used for monitoring and tracking purposes.

CHAPTER FIVE

ASSUMPTIONS/RISKS, COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE, AND FORECAST

The fifth segment of the marketing plan for BJI is to evaluate the assumptions and risks of the markets and customers within the architectural design services industry.

Section 1 – Assumptions and Risks

BJI has made various assumptions about the markets and the customers they serve. BJI believes that the markets will continue to be steady enough for them to obtain one to two large commercial projects a year and five to ten small education projects a year.

BJI also assumes that the feasible customers will indeed become not only customers, but repeat clients with which they will grow and maintain a relationship. The goal is to do very little advertising with brochures or advertisements. Instead, the partners of BJI want to form a long-lasting relationship with the school districts, diocese, and investors and developers.

While construction costs and interest rates rise, BJI assumes that new construction and remodeling of existing facilities will continue to take place. Market analysis data in chapter two supports this assumption. BJI believes they can obtain a client base made up of a few school districts and parishes that have school facilities. With this group, they would like to design five to ten capital improvement projects and additions a year. In addition, BJI will continue to strengthen the relationships they have with their current clients and believes they can establish a commercial (with mixed-use residential) customer base of ten clients. If each of those clients takes on a project once every five years, that would meet the goals of BJI to design up to two projects a year. Currently the feasible customer list is only seven customers strong, and BJI must continue to network and build relationships with clients to form their customer base.

Section 2 – Competitive Advantage

The competitive advantages that BJI has in the industry is having the partners work on projects from beginning to end, and their commitment to building a relationship with their clients to work as a design team. The first point is significant because many larger firms have partners present in interviews and in the initial design phase, but the majority of the design work is done by lesser experienced architects. The second advantage means listening to what product the customer really wants, and giving them a design that reflects their vision. BJI feels that too often, architectural design firms produce a design that they feel the client wants, but doesn't necessarily meet the client's needs.

BJI teamwork design process meets the customer's evaluative criteria in the speed they can produce a design that the client is after. This is done by listening to the objectives of the client, working closely with them throughout the design process, and giving them the product they want the first time, instead of multiple design revisions. This in turn not only meets the evaluative criteria of speed, but also in cost, in that the hours BJI charges for design time can be reduced due to less rework.

The next step in giving the client a unique and cost-effective solution is to move into the design-build process. One problem that has been identified for customers in the design services industry is the increase in building material costs. BJI would like to form a partnership with a contractor and provide design-build services. Using a design-build delivery method instead of a traditional design-bid-build can potentially save clients money by lowering construction costs through a package deal on design and construction, by eliminating costly change orders, and by providing a sole-source of accountability. Schools in Missouri can use a design-build delivery method on projects, though a potential client BJI is working with has never used that method. The Kansas legislature passed a law in February 2006 allowing public work to use a design-build delivery method as well. The partners of BJI can work with the school districts and use their previous experience in design-build to provide a cheaper delivery method.

There are over 7,250 registered architects in the state of Missouri and Kansas, and approximately 935 licensed architectural design firms in the two states. BJI is aware of the large architectural firms in the Kansas City metro, and more specifically the firms that lead most of the education projects. BJI does not want to compete with the large firms for the large school projects at this time. Instead, BJI wants the smaller capital improvement projects and room additions to build a reputation and relationship. BJI is not aware of other small architectural firms with the same approach.

One important step BJI must take to gain a competitive advantage is to identify their competition. In order for BJI to improve their company's performance over that of their competition, they need to know the strengths and weaknesses of other design firms. BJI does not know what percent of the market share is held by their competitors. It is difficult to specifically identify all of the firms in the industry, however, because of the number of single-person and less than four-employee firms.

Section 3 – Forecast and Objective

BJI has forecasted their current feasible customers and expects to have at least one major design project in the commercial & residential market segment ("mixed-use") in the year 2007. This is based on their current customer base and proposals that have been written in the first quarter of the year. If one project contract can be signed, the design fee would be approximately $15,000 to $20,000 per month for four to six months for the design portion of the project, depending on project scope. If BJI can sell one project in this market each year over the next 5 years, they would maintain a design fee ranging from $60,000 to $120,000 a year for this market.

In the education and religious market segments, BJI wants to build up their client base and forecasts four projects with their feasible customers in 2007. The projects are small projects such as capital improvements, with a design fee of $6000 to $10,000. The estimated sales are $25,000 for 2007. The five-year goal in these two market segments is to maintain an even workload throughout year, with six to ten projects averaging $10,000 each project, which results in sales of approximately $60,000 to $100,000 a year.

In addition to projects contracted directly with the school, BJI is currently acting as a sub-consultant to a larger design firm that cannot support their design-load internally. This is cost-effective for BJI, as they do not have marketing fees or out-of-pockets expenses to obtain the work and also cost-effective for the larger firm as they do not have to hire and train new employees for the short-term work. While BJI does not want to rely on sub-consultation for the long-term, it does satisfy a short-term need of performing design work.

BJI has tentatively created a sales benchmark of $20,000 a month between all of the markets they are currently pursuing, which is a goal of $240,000 in design fee a year. Meeting their goal of one mixed-use design project a year will meet one quarter of their sales objectives.

BJI has a greater chance of obtaining more than one project in the commercial and residential market segments each year by increasing their customer base. BJI can obtain more customers by researching their competition and taking some of the market share from the competition and by teaming up with realtors, contractors, or engineers that have contacts with feasible customers. Building a larger customer base in the education market will be done by networking current and past clients for prospects, by attending the Missouri and Kansas Association of School Business Officials conferences, and cold-calling local school districts not reached by these means. It would be reasonable to forecast BJI can sell at least one design project a year in the commercial or residential markets and eight education or religious market segments if they can make the necessary changes.

The goal of BJI is to obtain two new design projects in the commercial and residential markets and twelve capital improvement projects in the education or religious market segments a year by the end of 2008. This project load would result in approximately $216,000 a year, which is close to the sales goal of BJI.

CHAPTER SIX

VALUE EQUITY

BJI has created three goals to add value to the customer. The goals are short-term, in that they are to be achieved by the end of 2007. At this time, the partners feel the value they can give to their customers should focus on the company becoming a more established professional organization. This section will list the goals, the strategies the partners of BJI will implement to meet the goals, and the value proposition they statement for their customers.

BJI composed three goals they believe to be most important for the company to add value to the customer in the start-up stage. The goals will help the BJI meet their forecast of obtaining one in the multi-family residential market segment and eight projects in the education or religious market segment. The goals focus on results in the short-term and obtaining projects and clients in order to sustain their business. Strategies for the objectives will follow in the next section.

<u>Objective 1 – Design-Build Project</u>

BJI would like to obtain one design-build project by the end of 2007. The value added to the customer with this goal is the faster delivery of the final product, the cost savings of working out details with the contractor during the design phase, and the clarification during construction by having the architects that designed the structure stay on the project on a full-time basis throughout construction. BJI has heard from prospective clients that construction projects often feel like an “us versus them” between the client, the architect, and the contractor. BJI believes the teamwork formed on a design-build project will be a positive experience for all parties, will enhance knowledge transfer between them and the client, and will strengthen the relationship between them and the client. The ultimate goal of such teamwork is that one project will lead directly into another project.

The partners of BJI have not done a design-build project in their careers, but they have over 30 combined years of construction management and administration experience. BJI led the construction management efforts in the spring of 2006, and saw many opportunities that design-build could have been used to expedite the building process. Later that fall, BJI worked with a contractor that has over 20-years of construction experience. Design and information-exchange was a key contributor to the success of that project, and both parties want to continue that relationship in a design-build project. BJI feels the emphasis on teamwork, which is one of their strengths identified in the SWOT analysis, will be enhanced through a design-build delivery method. The teamwork between BJI, the client, and the contractor will be one of the centers of the value added to the customer in a design-build project.

Other ways BJI will add value to the customer through this goal is that they have faster response time then their competition. BJI will be moving in to an office in the near future, but they are also set up to have a “mobile office” in which they can travel to the project site at any time and be connected to the internet, the server, and all project AutoCAD drawings.

BJI is also a licensed architectural business and licensed architects in the states of Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, and Florida.

<u>Objective 2 – Database Creation</u>

BJI implemented a database to track current, potential, and past clients, contractors, and projects. The database is at the beginning stages and will need to be monitored, updated, and evaluated periodically to ensure its worth. The value BJI will add to customers by creating and utilizing a database includes more regular contact with the client, tracking specific requests of the client, sharing of ideas and design solutions used for other clients, and help BJI focus on what they can do to makes the client's life more profitable.

BJI created a database in October of 2006 with the names and contact information of past and current clients and contractors. At the present time they are adding names and contact information of feasible clients. The data stored in the tracking system includes contact names and addresses, phone numbers and emails, the date of the last conversation, how the initial contact was made, and any additional information deemed noteworthy. A third table in the database includes project information including project size, contract amount, contractor, and the market and/or market segment. This information can be useful to track similar projects and utilize past design concepts.

The database has been set-up in Microsoft Access, which is a program none of the employees at BJI knows beyond the basics. Tutorials are available on-line to provide additional information to get the most out of the database, but at this time the organized and single source of data is sufficient.

As it has been mentioned in previous sections, it is difficult to determine potential customers for the commercial and multi-family residential markets as developers and investors can be any person or group of people wanting to do that business. BJI will begin the process of identifying potential customers by visiting jobsites to determine the developer, and by talking to builders.

Potential customers in the religious market segment have been identified as those in the Kansas City – St. Joseph Catholic Diocese, as one of the partners has previous experience in that diocese. The contact information for each parish, including whether or not they have education facilities, is available on-line.

Feasible customers in the education market segment have been identified as those within a 50-mile radius of Kansas City. The school district information for both Kansas and Missouri school districts is available through the state offices as well as on-line.

<u>Objective 3 – Establish a Fee Structure</u>

The partners of BJI both worked in larger, more established architectural firms before founding their own company. Fee structures used at those firms were already established, and a fee established for a project was reviewed by senior staff before relating to the customer. BJI is creating their own fee structure, and at this time they do not have a process established in a way that can best serve their customers. By creating a fee structure, BJI will feel more confident in validating their costs to their clients. The value added to the clients is that they are paying an average price for the services they will receive, but get a high-end design they can be proud of.

Currently every project is discussed between the partners and a fee is determined based on past project experience and what client will receive the proposal for work. BJI wants to have a more established fee structure so they can ensure they are providing a price that is fair to both BJI and the customer.

One very important step in the achieving this goal is to determine the evaluative criteria of the customer. BJI believes the customer is more concerned about the quality of design and not the price, as a potential customer has expressed that "better" is his main concern. By determining where the fee of architectural design services ranks within the client's evaluative criteria, BJI can determine if low-price is what their clients seek, or if an average or even high price is acceptable for design services in these markets.

Another step to establish a fee structure is to find out what the competition is charging for their work, and to determine the perceived quality of that work. That will help BJI determine if they are meeting their price/value relationship.

The value added to the client by establishing a fee structure is to help BJI communicate the services they offer to the client and justify their price/value relationship. BJI does not exude the confidence they feel they portray in the rest of their work when discussing fee with their clients. Building a fee structure based on geographical location, design services and construction management services offered, BJI will feel more confident in producing and discussing their fee.

Section 3 – Value Proposition

BJI wants to become an architectural design firm that is average in relative price compared to their competition, but high perceived value. The high perceived value will come in the design work, the teamwork, and the design-build or construction management services. BJI believes the price/value relationship will be dynamic and must be reevaluated for each project, mostly because they are a young firm. They are in the process of determining what clients they want to build a relationship with and what clients they want a transactional relationship. The price and the perceived quality of work will fluctuate for the different types of customers.

The value proposition of BJI is that they are the architectural design firm that will build a team with their client, listen to their customers needs, and take on the goals of the customer as their own in order to design a facility that will maximize the owner's investment.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RELATIONSHIP EQUITY

In the seventh section of the marketing plan, the current and future state of BJI's relationship equity is reviewed. The young company is in the building stages of their relationships and hopes to quickly turn these customers into clients.

Section 1 – Current and Future State

BJI is at the building stages of their building their client base in the commercial, institutional, and residential markets. At the present time, the relationships with clients are either non-existent and BJI is providing black-box services, or the customers are satisfied with the design but are not yet loyal.

Most of the relationships BJI has with clients are in the first stage of the bonding process. These customers are at the initiation or prospect stage. Feasible commercial and mixed-use customers in Manhattan, Kansas could be at the awareness stage if they have seen the new high-rise condominium near the southeast corner of the Kansas State University campus. Feasible clients in the education or religious market segments in the awareness stage include former clients that BJI maintains contact with. A small number of developers/investors have reached the stage in which they emotionally relate to BJI, but this relationship is still early in the forming stage and has not yet developed to a stage of retention or partnership that BJI desires.

As BJI develops their brand, clients will become more aware of the company and the types of projects they design. The partners of BJI are still identifying the brand for the company.

The current behaviors of BJI are to obtain new customers and retain the current and past clients of BJI, including some client contacts that were made during previous employment. Eventually they would like to reach all levels of client contact, from gaining new customers to developing advocates and establishing partnerships. The partnerships they hope to develop will go beyond the design stage to design-build projects.

Section 2 – Relationship Model

The partners of BJI are still forming their relationships with clients. At the present time, each partner has a client-base that they regularly interact with. Communication with feasible customers includes cold-calls to interact BJI to feasible customers, follow-up phone calls to stay in touch with former clients and to inquire on upcoming projects, and meetings to share ideas of possible projects. Due to the size of the company and the personal relationship the partners have formed with their clients, they fit most closely to the guru model, as described in “Developing Knowledge-Based Client Relationships” by Ross Davidson.

This interaction works well for the goals of BJI, which are to create a team with their clients and work with the client instead of for the client. The partners of BJI must communicate to each other the information they receive from customers in order to stay up-to-date. Until BJI grows as a firm and has more design professionals, the guru model is an appropriate relationship sales model.

Section 3 – Marketing Proposals

The current method that BJI evaluates requests for proposals is first to determine if it is a design project they want to include in their portfolio of services, second to determine if they can meet the project schedule, and third if the project is with a client with which they want to build a relationship. As BJI develops the brand image and value proposition, they will work that into the RFP. They will continue to emphasize teamwork, relationship building, and cost-effective design solutions.

BJI implemented a simple database for monitoring the success rate of RFP's that turn into project work, as well as storing information on current and completed BJI projects. Information recorded includes contact information, project scope, size, budget, and unique features or design constraints, communication with the client, RFP's submitted, and the result of the RFP. Because BJI wants to create a personal relationship with clients, they will follow-up on submittals in which they were not selected by means of a phone call to inquire what the successful team did to get the contract. A debriefing form has been created to assist in obtaining constructive criticism from the interviewer.

Section 4 – Marketing Communications

BJI is at the beginning stages of their marketing communication, but they already have a few different means of marketing the firm. The partners are working with a past client on designing and hanging a banner in the gymnasium facility. They are also in the process of designing an office building in a Kansas City suburb. If the project moves forward, BJI will lease temporary office space near the project site. There they will have a window display with multiple renderings of the project along with the firm name. BJI also has company t-shirts and polo's with the company logo. The partners wear the t-shirts to construction sites and wear the polo's to all meetings with clients and city officials. They also share t-shirts with current and past clients.

The written form of marketing communication is the statement of qualifications, or SOQ. The SOQ contains information on the company history, mission statement and goals, resumes for the partners, and past project experience. The document is contained in a laminated folder that is printed with the company logo and photographs of past projects. SOQ's are mailed to prospective clients, are brought to interviews and meetings, and sent to past clients if they are willing to network for BJI. One marketing goal is to have current SOQ's in the partners' vehicles at all times in case of impromptu meetings or networking opportunities.

The company website is also in the development stage. The partners are working with a web designer to create a site that essentially contains the SOQ information. Additional features found on the website include additional project photographs and a "fly-by" view of a proposed project.

New methods of communication that the partners have considered include news releases and open houses on completed projects. If the suburban office building project is a go, BJI will hire a Public Relations firm to help with ground breaking, press releases, and an open house upon completion of the project. Holiday cards were sent to contractors and clients for the first time in 2006. Additional methods not yet implemented include speaking engagements at seminars or workshops, or obtaining testimonials from clients to incorporate into the SOQ. Video testimonials are planned to be taped and installed on the web-site in the summer of 2007.

Section 5 – Relationship Budget

Financial information on the percentage of budget to total sales forecast is still being determined, but at this time the partners of BJI feel they cannot spend a lot of liquid assets on relationship building. The folders, embroidered shirts, and project signs have already been paid for at a total cost of $2000. Services BJI has obtained for free include the web designing by a professional web designer that is a personal friend of the partners, and they are writing their own SOQ literature.

Other low-cost relationship building means include speaking engagements and an open house when a project has reached completion.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SALES PLAN AND CONTROLS AND MONITORS

In the final section of the marketing plan, sales planning and monitoring will be discussed.

Section 1 – Sales Planning Chart

The wants to provide architectural design services for primary and secondary school districts and commercial / mixed-used buildings. Currently they have two customers in the education market and one in the commercial market. There are three additional projects with two different clients that are in the planning and contract negotiation stages as well. The message that BJI wants to promote to current and potential clients is the desire to build a relationship in order to provide a unique design and design experience for each client, and to do more than one project with the client. The primary method BJI will use to communicate to clients is by networking.

Both partners of BJI are responsible for monitoring their time and money spent on marketing the multi-family residential market. The goal for the first year of work is to obtain at least one commercial project for $120,000 in design fee, which most likely would be a new design project. In addition, they want to obtain six to ten smaller projects, school improvements or small commercial buildings, to generate another $120,000 in fee a year.

In addition to the number of projects they would like to design each year, BJI wants to monitor the types of projects they design, including the delivery method. By the end of 2007 they would like at least one design-build project. Both the state of Missouri and Kansas allow private buildings such as school be designed and built under a design-build contract. This presents a unique opportunity for both BJI and school districts to incorporate a different delivery method to design and construct projects. The five-year outlook for BJI in the is to form a partnership with a contractor that shares the same values as BJI and form a design-build business.

Section 2 – Controls and Monitors

The number of projects brought in over the next two years will be the means to monitor the marketing plan. The partners of BJI want to establish a steady stream of work with smaller projects in the education market segment and a few large commercial design projects each year.

The amount and type of communication with current, past, and future clients will be a secondary means of monitoring the plan. The partners will review the clients they want to continue working with and will evaluate the projects to determine the revenue brought in.

If this plan is not successful, BJI will evaluate other markets in which they have experience, in particular design services in the education, retail, and religious markets. These areas will be pursued because the partners have successful design projects in these markets.

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