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Entrepreneurial Project Paper

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Entrepreneurial Project “And Still I Rise” Paper Overview

Introduction/Branding

And Still I Rise, Website and Blog, is a personal blog surrounding the everyday challenges of a person with mental illness. Written in a hybrid style of feature and educational writing, blog content will offer an honest, fresh, and personal perspective on mental health. (Gershon, 197) Other media offered on the site include, videos, a photo gallery, social media posts, and a podcast. (Briggs, 222) All content will be factual, cited, (Gershon, 214) and created with the users’ emotionality in mind due to the generation of inspiration, warmth, and amusement being positively correlated with specific ads and content displays. (Tellis, 12) Other special features include helpful links and a resource page. This practice will also tend to the sensitive nature of the topics being discussed. (Neck, 460) The site is meant to show support to those who struggle with mental illness. It will be an online safe place to be a free spirit. (Gershon, 93) A forum will be provided for users to engage in community discussion. (Briggs, 229)

The site will be accessible via mobile phone and computer and will allow direct connection to social media apps (Briggs, 217) the company is represented on. With mobile app creation decreasing, mobile sites are more cost effective and are preferred by consumers. (Briggs, 241) The site’s content and design will communicate the company’s values: safety, acceptance, and personal growth. (Gershon, 214) Content will be shared in different forms of media created and headlined by myself, future business partners, mental health specialists, and special guests. And Still I Rise will be the online community that provides and defines the online

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search for wellness through journalistic measures and individual understanding. (Neck, 19) The best practices of traditional journalism, fairness, accuracy, storytelling, and deep investigations will be found within online content along with the best tools in the digital world, speed, transparency, and engagement offered from the platform (Gershon, 214) to create a trustworthy look for the brand. (Chapter 4, 98)

Market Research/Target Audience

According to The National Institute of Mental Health, 1 in 5 adults in the United States experience a mental health issue each year. The same report stated that 21.4% of children ages 13 to 18 in the United States live with a severe mental illness. (Mental Illness) Mental Health America's 2021 The State of Mental Health in America report stated that 23.6% of adults with a mental illness in the U.S. reported that they were not able to receive treatment due to costs, lack of insurance, and lack of available services. From January 2020 to September 2020, 850,004 people passed online anxiety and depression screen tests offered by Mental Health America showing a 93% increase in anxiety symptoms and a 62% increase in depression symptoms from 2019. 38% of the testers who received a positive score for any type of mental illness were ages 11 to 17. 70.4% of all positive screeners claimed to be suffering from loneliness and/or isolation leading them to online support. This report claims the number of people looking for mental health resources and support online is at a historical high. (Reinert)

Research shows that all internet users spend an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes online per day with young adults ages 16 through 24 leading the charge averaging at 3 hours per day. (Matev) A typical social media user is present on 9 online platforms. (G.) This research confirms

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that there is an opportunity and a need for a mental health based journalistic platform and a willing audience looking for online resources and support. Millennials have started “paving the way” for those who want to find mental health help online. (Greenstein) Some internet users are responding to social media trends such as using hashtags on Twitter to embrace their mental health journey online. (Lofton) And Still I Rise’s functions, content, and overall message caters to all users mentioned based on online behavior. And Still I Rise will have the most success targeting the mental health community, those interested in mental health support, Generation Z, Millennials, and internet and social media users ages 13 to 35. Opinion leaders (Gershon, 109) who will help the company go viral are often younger and more socially and digitally aware than other internet users (Wadbring, 145) so targeting a younger audience from the start will build the brand’s online community. (Gershon, 162)

Funding/Development

And Still I Rise will be built on the platform WordPress, a blogging website that allows users to build their blog by offering special features, easy formatting, customization, and ownership of a domain name for a monthly subscription fee. (Briggs, 217-218) And Still I Rise will be funded out of my own pocket. I plan to ask for donations on the site in exchange for a free downloadable introductory gift. (Neck, 270) I plan to start crowdfunding campaigns with Kickstarter, (Tercek, 186) GoFundMe Charity, (Moss) and Chuffed, a crowdfunding platform built specifically for socially conscious projects. (Chuffed) I will also be pitching my idea to investors. This would include engaging in friends-and-family funding (Chapter 6,185) and pitching to mental health professionals with whom I plan to offer a business collaboration in

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exchange for their investment. (Gershon, 237) I also plan to develop partnerships with other online mental health platforms to gain recognition and practice boundary spanning. (Gershon, 26) All investors, donors, and partners will be named and thanked on the site.

Social Media/Marketing/Advertising

And Still I Rise will utilize social media as a platform to market and advertise the company while forming connections within virtual communities. (Gershon, 148) The social media platforms Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Pinterest will be linked to the main site. (G.) Instagram will be utilized for microblogging and educational purposes. (Gershon, 164) Twitter will be used to build a community and Facebook will be used for community engagement. (Briggs, 231) YouTube will be used for video blogging, building a community, and community engagement. (Briggs, 229) Pinterest's software will serve as an online hub that will house content related to And Still I Rise allowing users to find the company online and see it in a more personalized light. (Briggs, 239) All social media posts will be organized beforehand using a media plan to acquire online feedback and content interactions. The site's traffic and social media interactions will be tracked through Google Analytics to gain audience information and psychographic data. (Chapter 4, 98) The information collected will ultimately be used to create advertisements and content that will draw in our audience based on their interests and online behaviors. (Briggs, 236). Click-through ads will be placed on social media and other sites that share the goal of personal wellness to attract readers. (Chapter 4, 101) Viral marketing (Gershon, 109) will be used through direct marketing ads and native advertisements within blog and social

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media content. (Chapter 4, 102) Users will have the option to sign up for emailed company updates and a company newsletter. (Briggs, 224)

Business Model/Revenue

And Still I Rise will operate as a multiparty business. (Neck, 260) All blog content and social media content will be free to view which will attract users and advertisers. (Chapter 13, 416) In order to produce revenue, And Still I Rise will monetize their social media accounts and will have a partnership with Patreon, a platform that allows users who pay a monthly fee for access to exclusive content, community, and an inside look into the creative process. (Patreon) And Still I Rise will also have an online store on the site which will sell And Still I Rise merchandise including clothing, journals, and mugs which will be sold directly to customers with a onetime fee. (Neck, 253) There will a subscription available in the online store offering a monthly Self-Help Box Item. A free box will be shipped to the consumer at sign up. All items in the online store will be priced based on cost-led and competition-led pricing. (Neck, 269, 272)

The site will offer space for paid media and will offer advertising services like native advertisements. In these cases, And Still I Rise would seek out a possible sponsorship opportunity and/or become an advertising service. (Chapter 4, 95) And Still I Rise will abide by a Position Based Attribution Model which will allow the company to make a profit when the site sends users to other online platforms like social media outlets, mental health professional's websites, other online resources, and advertiser's sites. Credit is assigned to all platforms involved in a transaction or the viewing of online content. (Su)

Innovation Strategy

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And Still I Rise will offer a variety of free and paid entertainment media, an online community, transparent media, and mental health advice and resources. The company will remain aware of effectuation (Neck, 9) and will make business plans flexible as the company grows. The site will function as a social system (Gershon, 94) and communication channel and will keep the interest of its members at heart as time goes on. (Gershon, 93) Media plans will be reviewed monthly as market research (Chapter 4, 95) and traffic tracking continues. (Briggs, 236) All resistances from users and within the company will be reviewed and dealt with innovatively and professionally. (Chapter 4, 102) Failing portions of the company will either be discontinued to give more focus to the rest of the company or will be revitalized and reintroduced to the public.

Conclusion

As digitalization has set into our society, we have transferred our lives from in person to online. (Tercek, 37) Services that were once sought out in a doctor's office can now be found with the touch of a button. (Tercek, 220) The privacy that used to be affiliated with mental health in our society has gone public as more people suffer from mental illness each year. (Mental Illness) And Still I Rise recognizes this social issue and can offer a high-tech, high-touch (Gershon,155) approach by taking advantage of our reality. The online experience of searching for mental health support will be forever changed when And Still I Rise reaches its height and starts saving lives. And Still I Rise will help users who are struggling with their mental health grow through what they go through.

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