

BEANS N' CREAM COFFEEHOUSE...AND MORE?

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SYNOPSIS

This case involves an entrepreneurial company's decision on whether to expand or not expand due to over-crowding issues at their current location. Caroline McCourt and Beth Mielcarek started their Sun Prairie coffeehouse initially as more of a hobby, "a comfortable 3rd spot" for their regular customers. The offerings included not only coffee and specialty drinks but also a breakfast and lunch menu in a comfortable relaxing atmosphere. Operating in a mid-sized (20,000 population) Midwestern town experiencing significant growth, sales have steadily increased over the past 6 years. As the popularity of the shop increased, long lines and a crowded atmosphere have detracted from the favorable ambience of the shop. This case places students in the position of owner of an entrepreneurial company contemplating expansion alternatives with the goal of satisfying customer needs.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this case are to:

1. Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of additional factors that should be considered and applied to solving the challenges of Beans 'n Cream.
2. Complete an analysis with the identification of several viable alternatives.
3. Evaluate and recommend a solution to the over-crowding issue at Beans 'n Cream.

APPLICATION

This case could be used in both undergraduate and graduate level entrepreneurial and small business courses with discussion of alternative expansion methods and the implementation and management of growth strategies. Marketing courses that discuss marketing strategy planning with respect to the marketing and promotional mix in alignment with overall business objectives would find application within this case. Additionally, this could be used in finance courses when discussing both short-term and long-term financial growth options on overall decision making within a firm.

KEY WORDS entrepreneurship, expansion, target market, customer service, marketing strategy, marketing tactics

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