

POSTER PROJECT LAUNCH FOR DEAF FRIENDLY BIZ, LLC

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II. MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to help businesses incorporate sign language into their services.

III. BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Deaf Friendly Biz, LLC has been in business for two years. We are a SMIF loan client. There are two departments within this business:

A.) Consulting

B.) Products

Both sectors of this business are experiencing steady growth.

A.) Consulting: This past month, DFB was invited to contract services working directly with the State of Minnesota offering Job Placement services as an Occupational Communications Specialist (working with people who are deaf and deafblind.) For the past seven years, we have been subcontracting these services with other companies. Working directly with the state will allow for increasing hourly rates by forty percent.

The State of Minnesota is required to spend a percentage of it's budget on services for transition

age youth with disabilities through legislation passed called WIOA (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.) There is a strong need for finding contractors who can provide this service and are fluent signers. Referrals have already increased in the past month. This part of DFB will continue to grow as there is ample work. It is expected this will generate an additional \$15,000.00 of income this year.

B.) Products: On the Products side of the business, DFB creates customized sign language posters. Our posters are geared towards serving businesses versus recreational or novelty use. We are not aware of another business that offers this service/product. The models and graphic designer we work with are all deaf. The posters come in a variety of formats from vinyl banners to laminated guides. Samples are included in this proposal.

We currently sell the majority of our posters to businesses that we meet through networking opportunities or word-of-mouth. The posters originally were offered as part of a consulting package. We received consistent feedback that this product was especially useful and allowed for employees to learn the signs over time versus a training session. We have recently listed our 2x3ft "Breakroom Poster" on Amazon and plan to add several more products at a variety of price points within the next month.

Price points:

- 2x3ft vinyl "Breakroom Poster" sells for \$149.99
- 8 1/2x11 Laminated Guides sell for \$14.99
- Pack of 5- 8 1/2x11 Laminated Guides sells for \$49.99

There are many industries within the public/private sector that could potentially utilize these posters, and in a variety of ways.

Examples of how a poster may be used within a business:

- Improve communication with deaf customers
- Employees communicating with deaf coworkers
- Universal language within a warehouse where many languages are spoken
- Storytime in a library or community education classroom
- Group homes or programs that serve people who are non-verbal
- Daycares/school curriculum

IV. BUSINESS GOALS

- Launch sales of posters
- Increase sales by 35%
- Sell sign language poster products to three major corporations in 2017

V. OBJECTIVES OF PROJECT

- Add 200 more signs to our database of ASL images for posters
- Update website and setup online advertising campaigns
- Hire Administrative Assistant
- Purchase new laptop, printer and business phone system
- Become a vendor for government purchasing

VI. MARKETING PLAN

There are currently no other businesses that we are aware of, creating customized sign language posters that suit the needs of businesses. There continues to be an ever-increasing awareness around the importance of being an inclusive and diverse business.

We will focus our efforts of 2017 on corporate sales as this will likely generate the most amount of revenue. There are many industries that could benefit from having a sign language poster. We have narrowed down our target market by focusing on corporations, specifically: coffeeshops, restaurants, grocery stores, banks, daycares and warehouses.

One of our goals for 2017 is to sell to three major corporations.

1. Hy-Vee- they are in the process of opening up several new stores across Minnesota and have a reputation right now for hiring a lot of deaf people. A few Hy-Vee stores already have purchased our posters and love having them in their breakrooms.
2. Target- we have a connection to someone who works at headquarters, part of the work he does involves Diversity
3. Starbucks- they have been heavily focused on becoming an inclusive business that values diversity.

There is also a market within the public sector. We have sold posters to Libraries and Community Education departments who have used them with visiting patrons, as well as in an educational setting. Our plan for moving into the public sector is to work with Pat Dotter of MNPTAC to write our Capability Statement and work through the process of gaining government contracts.

A customized sign language poster is not a product that is currently on the market. Therefore, our customers will not be searching for this product. Focused marketing will be critical as well as including educating our potential customers about the product itself and benefits.

Launch 5 Media of Northfield will manage the email and social media marketing campaign.

They will also update our website and create 10 new landing pages. Part of this will include automating the ordering process. Launch 5 Media will create reports for DFB to include information about how visitors are interacting with the various advertising outlets. This information will help us gauge where we want to spend our advertising budget. We will purchase social media buy-in on LinkedIn, Facebook, Google AdWords and Amazon targeting HR Departments. Our aim will be to research and find key HR personnel that focus on bringing Diversity to their organization.

After the launch (first six months) of this project, DFB will take over some of the Social Media marketing. We will join Tami Enfield (of Brand Yourself Consulting) and Sarah Carlsen's business coaching group in Northfield.

Our posters and promotional materials are printed at By All Means Graphics in Northfield.

One of our goals is to hire an administrative assistant that can manage follow-up calls to the customers we are targeting through email marketing. Susan Christie, a former staff person at NEC will come on board in June to do this work. She is charging \$15.00 per hour and will start off working 20 hours per month and increase her hours as sales increase. She will also manage the packing and shipping of orders.

VII. PROJECT BREAKDOWN

(Project is considered to be the first six months of additional expenses to launch this product)

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| Website Updates and | |
| Social Media buy-in and Marketing costs | \$2,500.00 |
| Laptop | \$999.00 |
| Wifi Printer | \$350.00 |
| Ooma office phone | \$220.00 |
| Graphic Designer | \$1,700.00 |
| Models | \$400.00 |
| Supply of posters | \$300.00 |
| Admin Assistant | \$2850.00 |

\$9,319.00

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

Financial Statements
Printouts of equipment needed
Samples of posters