



BUSINESS PLAN

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NICOLE BUSINESS PLAN
COMPETITION*

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II EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Shiftbase is an online platform created to ease the process of HR scheduling. Essentially, this allows the gateway between employees uploading their availabilities and employers to scheduling shifts accordingly. The mission of the company is to utilize social media and social networking in an effort to increase efficiency in shift scheduling, trading and the added feature of shift bidding.

Shiftbase aims to help businesses reduce costs and improve efficiency in scheduling. Upon registration, employers are provided with a secure account which is connected to each individual profile of their employees. Employees upload their availabilities in their calendar and employers are able to see an amalgamated calendar with all availabilities for each department or workgroup. By having the employees input their own availabilities directly to their online calendar; this reduces the chances of error and increases efficiency for employers.

Shiftbase differentiates itself from competitors by offering individual users/employees to sign up for free accounts that are limited to trading shifts with co-workers. These users will be able to create workgroups and invite their co-workers to join Shiftbase. This feature acts as part of the company's marketing strategy to generate brand awareness by integrating social media. As the user base of Shiftbase grows, this online network building strategy will gradually create a need for employers to incorporate the Shiftbase platform in their organization.

Employer accounts will follow a simple pricing model of a monthly fee of CAD \$100.00 in addition to bandwidth overage fees scalable to usage. The free shift trading accounts offered to individual users will generate basic web advertising revenue as well as revenue from key sponsors looking for exposure to the network of shift workers.

Both the full employer accounts as well as the simplified free user accounts will generate income for the company and eliminate the one-to-many marketing dilemma. Shiftbase aims to run both types of accounts in synergy ultimately introducing a shift in the employee scheduling environment.

III BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

3.1 The Opportunity

Shiftbase provides organizations with an efficient and cost effective online platform for scheduling employees. The market for employers who are constantly faced with scheduling needs is enormous. This aspect of running retail, restaurant or other outlets remains a strenuous and costly one and so the benefit for employers is dramatic. In addition to employers, the number of part-time or shift workers is incalculable and these individuals are faced with shift change needs on an ongoing basis. The integration of shift trading among individual users creates tremendous value to users themselves as well as to the growth potential in brand awareness. There is a clear need for the online integration that Shiftbase provides.

3.2 The Clients

Both employers and employees alike can benefit greatly from the Shiftbase platform in easing their scheduling needs and conflicts. The primary target for this service will be employers of organizations that vary from very small start-ups to large enterprises. Shiftbase has been created as a flexible solution that is relevant to organizations of all sizes. A secondary target for promotion will be individual users who may sign up for a free account and invite co-workers to use the platform for shift trading. This strategy provides a service for these users but will also aid in building a solid network that will help in brand awareness and increase client leads. In other words, once Shiftbase becomes a staple to employees, the word can travel to the employers who may feel that signing up to Shiftbase is simply a necessary and logical next step.

3.3 The Product

Full Accounts

Full accounts on Shiftbase are paid accounts for employers. Each account gives access to an amalgamated calendar which shows all availabilities submitted by employees. When an employer opens an account they can add their employees as separate profiles. Employees can only see their own individual calendars while employers have access to everyone's inputted availabilities. Once an employee has submitted their availability, the employer can then begin solidifying shifts and sending confirmations to all its employees via Shiftbase. Additional features include shift cancellation or modification requests from employees as well as shift trading among employees. Additionally, employers have the option of setting wage bids for certain unwanted shifts.

Trade Accounts

Trade accounts are offered to any user who stumbles upon Shiftbase. Their employer does not need to be registered to Shiftbase in order to benefit from the platform. These users can create workgroups by inviting their coworkers onto the website. The sole feature of these account are for shift trading. These new users have the chance to familiarize themselves with the platform, ease the task of trading shifts all the while growing the online network of Shiftbase users and building brand awareness.

3.4 The Pricing Strategy

For full accounts, employers will be charged a base monthly fee of CAD \$100.00 in addition to overage charges based on bandwidth usage. The trade accounts of Shiftbase are offered to anyone free of charge. These accounts will generate revenue from advertisements and sponsors with the goal of growing the Shiftbase network and building brand awareness.

3.5 Value Proposition

Employers

- Increase efficiency
- Lower costs
- Ease of scheduling and trading shifts
- Immediate updates for both employees and employers

Overall, Shiftbase will provide employers with the integrative tool for better shift scheduling. This platform would essentially allow employers to pass on the schedule making responsibility

directly to the employees, thus increasing the employers time efficiency, which leads to lowers costs.

Employees

- Empowered
- Increased motivation
- Higher job satisfaction
- Elevated employee retention rates

The Shiftbase strategy encourages independent users to create a movement towards this more effective method of scheduling within their own workplace. Allowing employees to create their own schedule creates a great sense of empowerment and will translate to overall higher motivation and job satisfaction. This in turn will allow the organizations to keep the employees who take their jobs seriously, thus increasing the retention rates and keeping the best employees.

IV MARKET ANALYSIS

4.1 Description of the Market

The market for online scheduling is quite broad as it includes employees with part-time jobs and any employer that is part of a small to large sized organization.

V MARKETING STRATEGY

5.1 Target Market

The market that Shiftbase will target is threefold. Firstly, Shiftbase will aim to sell monthly subscriptions to organizations that range from small to large. The target in this case will be the employers. Secondly, Shiftbase will be targeting independent users simultaneously. What is meant by independent users are the employees of businesses who have not yet registered for Shiftbase but whose line of work requires a certain amount of shift trading among co-workers. The purpose of this second target will be primarily to grow the Shiftbase network while building brand awareness. This integration may also create leads for the full accounts registered by employers. In addition, Shiftbase will be making efforts to market to credible and well known payroll companies such as Ceridian, PayWeb, and many others. This is a great opportunity to offer these companies the complete service of not only processing the payroll, but also helping their clients manage their employees' shifts. This helps Shiftbase because they already have a well established client base that we could tap into. They benefit from our services by providing a valuable add-on service that practically none of their clients already have.

5.2 Promotion

- Website / Platform
 - User friendly interface
 - Seamless execution of features
 - Constant improvements / new features
- Free Trade Accounts
 - Use of social media (e.g. Facebook, twitter, etc)
 - Propensity towards network growth

- Personal Selling
 - Professional and personal contacts
 - Cold calling strategy

Once the main website and platform has been created, Shiftbase will differentiate itself by offering the free accounts for shift trading among independent employees. This form of promotion is meant to generate a solid user base that will gradually build the Shiftbase network. As this network grows, so does the value and integrity of the Shiftbase platform. This large network may by derivative generate leads for the full accounts offered to employers. This strategy reduces the ratio in the one-to-many dilemma in selling.

5.3 Implementation

The first step will be to solidify the website in order to have a working platform that is user friendly with minimal glitches. Once the working model is complete we will begin offering the free shift trading account. This will begin with our close support network which will eventually grow by word of mouth. The trade account will start with simple web ads that are generated by a third party. Advertisements may grow with key sponsors as the network evolves and enlarges. As this process is underway, marketing efforts will continue and target employers directly beginning with the connections built from past work experience of the founding members. Eventually the Shiftbase network is predicted to grow sufficiently enough to begin generating leads from employers whose employees have experienced the ease of use and overall benefit of the free shift trade accounts.

5.4 Sponsorships

Shiftbase will work towards building solid sponsors for the free shift trading account. The initial target of such sponsors will primarily be resume databases as these websites have a large potential client base of employers who may benefit from the Shiftbase platform. Furthermore, the users of Shiftbase are prime targets for using such websites as they may eventually find the need to scope out new opportunities.

Shiftbase has been in contact with Chris Klotz and Josh Flower, respectively the former and newly appointed President of *jobserve.ca*, an online resume database. This first lead as sponsor will be the starting point for future sponsor collaborations.

VI OPERATIONS

6.1 Main Operations

- Web support for clients
- Constant Web Development / Improvements
- Building Client base and promotions

6.2 Ongoing Costs

- Web Hosting
- Web Development
- Marketing and Promotions
- Office space

- Employee salaries

6.3 Initial Setup

The key aspect of the initial setup will be the website. The Shiftbase platform must be able to perform well in order to offer a valuable service to clients. The shift trade account is easier to develop and will be completed before the full account has been fully perfected. Networking through the trade account will thus be the first step in introducing Shiftbase to the market.

VII COMPETITION

7.1 Direct Competition

The online scheduling service is not an entirely new concept. Shiftbase faces direct competitors in the market that provide employers with a choice based on usability or brand confidence. This is why it will be very important for Shiftbase to secure a solid brand identity and client confidence which is largely influenced by the user base of the website.

A prominent Canadian based online scheduling service that competes directly with Shiftbase is Ameego. This platform has a similar idea as Shiftbase by integrating scheduling online; however, Ameego dwells strictly within the ‘employers as customers’ market.

7.2 Competitive Advantage

Shiftbase’s major differentiating factor will be its shift trading account available to any and all independent users at no cost. No other online scheduling platform offers such a feature which strives on social media to create value and brand recognition as well as derivative revenue. This

will grow the user base of Shiftbase and will generate leads for the full accounts paid by employers. Furthermore, Shiftbase will strive to stay ahead of the competition by constantly keeping up to date with new features on the platform to improve the user's overall experience. The philosophy of the Shiftbase platform is that it will be in constant growth, continually learning from the market while adding and improving on the service that is offered.

VIII MANAGEMENT TEAM

In the first of operations for Shiftbase, the employee count will be low and will only consist of the two Managing Directors and the Web Developer. There is an expectation for growth in the number of employees at Shiftbase which will increase in conjunction with the growth of our platform. Until then, the management team will begin as a small group. Both Managing Directors will be sharing the main crucial tasks such as the finances and the marketing aspect. They will be focusing on their areas of expertise based on personal experience.

Sabrina Lesage: Co-Founder

Sabrina Lesage is a fourth year student in the Telfer School of Management. Sabrina has had three years experience in assisting in management of small start-up companies in the realm of real-estate, residential construction and finance. She has worked closely alongside the developer throughout our beginning development stages and will continue to do so to ensure the quality and standard of our product. Furthermore, Sabrina will take her experience in the finance department to process all of Shiftbases' financial and accounting needs.

Alina Shimshoon: Co-Founder

Alina Shimshoon is also a fourth year student at the Telfer School of Management with an option in Human Resources. Alina has 3 years experience in running a student run franchise as well as acting as a coach for other young entrepreneurs. She has also been responsible for generating sales of over \$100,000 in those three years. Alina will be mostly responsible for the sales as well as research and trend analysis.

Jean-Benoit Lesage: Web Developer

Jean-Benoit Lesage is a recent graduate from the University of Ottawa, and the founder of Alphalist and Zipgrid. Jean-Benoit has had nearly 10 years experience designing and developing professional websites for various Ottawa-area businesses. As well, Jean-Benoit has had two years experience working at a small hedge fund, where he led strategy development and was involved in currency trading for much of that period. Jean-Benoit will be responsible for the management, maintenance and development of the website.

IX FUTURE

9.1 Progress to Date

So far we have begun the development stages of our platform. Shiftbase is on its way of having a fully functional prototype of the website. We have spoken with two out of the projected three sponsors that we are targeting to date. All of the individuals involved have sincere interest in the company and are highly committed to ensuring the standard and quality of our product.

9.2 Strength for Success

There is a lot of growth opportunities in Shiftbase. Not only do these include helping already well established payroll companies better their service by allowing them to add-on our platform, but we also have the opportunity to separate the shift management platform from the trade accounts and form its own separate entity. Before jumping to these conclusions, we are going to take a conservative approach and see how well the trading platform takes off. Having Shiftbase, in any organization, will only result in a win-win situation for ourselves and the company due to our strong value proposition.

X FINANCIALS

10.1 Cash Balance Statement

Please see Appendix 1.

XI POTENTIAL RISKS

One of the potential risks that Shiftbase faces is the level of competition. There is also a financial risk in the debut of the developing stage. This is because we cannot pre-sell an intangible product without having a prototype, and that prototype will not come cheap. This may raise a few questions on the initial capital that Shiftbase has amongst its founders and partners.

XII CLOSING THOUGHTS

Shiftbase is only the beginning of a long and prosperous venture. We have left many doors open with other opportunities that we can further explore in the future once we have a reasonable customer and user base. Shiftbase is the new take on ways to fix old problems that employers

have been faced with. The best part is the room for growth and the ability to partner with other well established firms which would allow us to vastly grow our client base and also help the other firms have a complete one-stop-shop for these kinds of HR/Employer services.

Appendix 1

Cash Balance Statement

Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Employers	\$ 3,600	\$ 36,000	\$ 72,000
Payroll Companies	\$ -	\$ 68,000	\$ 112,000
Advertisements	\$ 5,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 19,000
Sponsors	\$ 7,000	\$ 16,000	\$ 24,000
Total Revenues	\$ 15,600	\$ 133,000	\$ 227,000
Operating Expenses			
Web Hosting	\$ 250	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,500
Advertising	\$ 1,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 7,000
Server Maintenance	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000	\$ 6,000
Web Site Development	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 30,000
General Administrative expenses (Accounting...)	\$ 2,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 11,000
Employee Wages	\$ 10,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 30,000
Miscellaneous	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 6,000
Total Expenses	\$ 36,250	\$ 59,500	\$ 91,500
Inc/Dec. In Cash Flow	-\$ 20,650	\$ 73,500	\$ 135,500
Cash at Beginning of Period	\$ 15,000	-\$ 5,650	\$ 67,850
Cash at End of Period	-\$ 5,650	\$ 67,850	\$ 67,650