IPRO 354 Midterm Report

Helper Monkey Technologies Inc.

Background

Career management is something that is becoming increasingly difficult to keep track of. With people either quitting their jobs, or being laid off from them, at seemingly higher rates than most people fall in love (people from age 18-38 change their career an average of 10 times), career management has become essential to receiving that new, highly sought out job ideal for each person. Helper Monkey Technologies Inc. (HMT) is working to assist all employees during this transition time from last job to next. Currently in its developmental stage, HMT will be aiding its users in locating that next job through postings. However, this is not your father's job board. Complete with new ideas from a resume assistant to interview suggestions, HMT will be taking the user step by step through the whole career transition (which has been found to take 17 weeks on average) and hopefully cut down the transition time. Our program will be able to help most every user find the job of their dreams and make sure the process goes smoothly in acquiring that job.

What We Wish to Achieve

This semester's goal for HMT to is provide three "deliverables." The first deliverable is a business plan. The business plan will include information based on in-depth research done by each of the three sub-teams. This information includes, but is not limited to, product pricing, cost of program design, market outlook, competition comparison, company hierarchy structure and future structural outlooks, profit projections, and exit strategy.

The second deliverable is our product specifications. Our sub-teams will be working in extreme closeness as they design our revolutionary job search tool from the ground up. Each team is required to give and take information so the other teams can function along side with it. Product features are decided by the product group, but not before our marketing group has decided the public wants the feature and the operations group has decided it is cost efficient.

Our third deliverable is an investor pitch. We will be creating a presentation that can be given to potential investors to help fund this Internet start-up company and get us off the ground. It will require extensive knowledge of both the previous two documents in order to show why our company needs other people to invest in it.

Where We Are Now

Our team has been making remarkable strides in achieving our three large goals. Research has already been done to answer many of the hard questions that most of the team was afraid of at the beginning of the semester. Also, our class has been learning the basics of how businesses start up and what makes them successful. Because of these teachings, we have learned that communication has been found to have a large role in group strides of effectiveness and accomplishment. With all of our learning and research, we have become a highly effective group that works with each other and keeps us all knowledgeable of what each group is doing.

Originally in the semester, one of our first big decisions as a group was whether or not HMT should make the program a desktop based product, meaning store bought, or a web-based product, meaning online subscription based. It was an easy decision. After a group debate, we decided that the program had to be delivered through the web. The outcome of this debate was good, but we quickly realized that an entire debate by the group would slow team progress by too much to still finish by the end of the semester. With this in mind, our next group of big decisions came as we divided up the team into sub-groups and came up with the team hierarchy. We broke our team into three groups with the following leadership roles…

Secretary – Mohit
Communications Officer – Hameed
Project Manager – Lloyd
Project Leader – Joe C

Products Group – Ravi (Group Leader), Dave, Hameed
This group will concentrate on the product specifications and design. They will create a list of features and packages the program can be subscribed with.

Operations Group – Shailvi (Group Leader), Lloyd, Zhe, Joe C
This group will concentrate on the budget of the company. This will include employee staffing and company locale as well as things like programs to be used to code the program.

Marketing Group – Matt (Group Leader), Joe M, Mohit
This group will perform market analysis and determine whom it is that we would like to sell our product to. Furthermore, they will be creating different models to test things from public like of features to how much people are willing to pay for the program.

With our teams divided up and now with new, clear goals, they all set forth to begin determining their respective parts.

However, our teams quickly realized we did not have a clear-cut direction because we were not all familiar with how businesses work. Our IPRO advisors then held several classes explaining in great detail how each team was important and why. They also showed examples of good and bad business plans, product specs, and resumes to assist in our understanding of HMT. With these classes recently over, our team has made great progress toward achieving our semester end goals.

Our group leaders assigned various tasks to themselves and their group members and researched in accordance with what we learned we would need to know from class. Then, one of the first of several weekly meetings occurred between group leaders. They discussed such topics as which market we wanted to advertise to, what features to include in however many packages we had, and how many staff we would require. By the end of the second meeting, as a team, we had a three-package program with specific features for

each package, a nearly complete staff hierarchy for the company, and market analysis of nearly every unemployment table giving us a target audience.

Presentations are given in class every Tuesday via PowerPoint slideshow to make sure every group is constantly updating each other. This allows for each group to ask questions such as how many coders are required (to product team for operations team) or how much should this cost (to marketing team for all teams). The semi-formal presentations are also aimed at learning to present for our third deliverable, the investor pitch.

Currently, each group meets at least once a week, with the group leaders meeting an additional once a week to answer questions and debate hard topics.

With the barrier of knowledge behind us, our team is now growing with each other in developing not only the company, but also our ability to work together. The unique aspect of this ENPRO is that teamwork and communication is absolutely necessary in order to ensure success.

Photos in Action