Business Plan for

Accessible Gaming

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(suggestions are:)

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1. Executive Summary

2.
We will manufacture a successful, profitable and functional product, fulfilling the needs of our customers.

3.
We will complete our applications for SASC and the National Lottery, raising a Kickstarter also, to ensure solid ground for our company to begin on. We will then accomplish the objectives of finding suppliers and producing a working prototype to market.

4.
We will have a low number of staff, who will be well trained and suited in working with people with various disabilities

5.
Our Product will be a functional, easily adaptable and modifiable product, to meet customer demand and successfully achieve the criteria of an adaptable controller and viable product.

6. (Missing Section)

7. (Missing Section)

8.
We will be a CIC company that focuses on inclusion and tries to be as environmentally friendly as possible

9.
Our SWOT analysis will ensure our success as a business, keeping us clear of the risks posed by our venture by showing our weaknesses, whilst giving us the advantage of clearly displaying our strengths for us to capitalise upon.

10.
Our financial year will be an accurate reflection of our ambitions, as well as the realities of our venture, ensuring cautious optimism is held to, with desire to improve our profitability and the product for our customer.

	Year 1
Total employees (inc. Directors)	**4**
Total Expenditure	**£59,104**
Profit (Loss)	**-£43,020**

2. Mission Statement

Our aim is to create video game controllers accessible to those with impaired motor skills. These people have a harder time accessing the video game industry, and we want to bridge the gap so that gaming is for everyone.

3. Objectives

	Objective	Timescale	Status
Pre Start			
1.	Apply for funding through SASC the social and sustainable capital, a 3rd sector investment fund for charities and social enterprises based in the UK. Apply for start up costs for the first year to be covered.	Apply September 2nd 2019	
2.	Apply for funding through National Lottery. Apply for start up costs for the first year to be covered. This is a back up plan if the first funding body refuses.	Apply September 23rd 2019	
3.	Set up a community funded page on Kickstarter. This is if all other funding options fail, this would require us to work for free until the business stands on its own two feet.	Apply October 7th 2019	
Year 1			
1.	Tax register as a business in its first year, with buying start up equipment we could claim back some costs through tax.	October 28th 2019	
2.	Once the funding is in place, rent a property and start buying the equipment and materials needed.	November 4th 2019	
3.	Begin Prototyping as soon as the equipment is set up ready and safe for use.	November 18th 2019	
4.	After the first few prototypes are completed, set up a way of having people that would buy the product to test it.	February 3rd 2020	
5.	Tweak the product after player testing has been completed, this would make the product more user friendly and ready for production.	February 10th 2020	
Long-term			

1.	Set up a company website and/or social media platform so that customers can get in touch and buy the product	October 2019	
2.	Sell the initial prototype in a made to order format.	April 2020	
3.	Set up meetings with a supplier that could mass produce the product for better sales and a better-quality product	August 2020	

4. The Management Team

4.1 Owners/Manager/Directors:

Garth Titley, Product Development
Skills and Experience:

- Creative writing
- Creative solutions
- Creative thinking
- IT experience
- Graphic Artist
- Team Worker

Role and Responsibilities:
Will be in charge or researching and developing the joy con ensuring it is comfortable and easy to use by people with various disabilities

Joe Blanchard, Company Branding
Skills and Experience:

- Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint
- Has worked with customers and tendering money.
- Can work as part of a team and independently
- Minor skills in AutoDesk Maya, Unreal Engine 4 and Zbrush

Role and Responsibilities:
Will be responsible for the aesthetic image of our company e.g. logo

Drew Cowan, Marketing
Skills and Experience:

- Team Worker
- Creative Thinker
- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication Skills

Role and Responsibilities:
Will be in charge of researching competition and advertising our product

4.2 Employees (Opportunities to employ others)

In future we would need to employ researchers to research disabilities in order to improve our product and appeal to as wide a range of disabilities as possible. It is also likely that we will need to hire someone to manage our finances and do the tax work for the company.

4.3 Training & Development Activities:

All staff should have a base understanding of the disabilities of the people we are working with as well have possible sensitivity training on how to interact with them.

4.4 Strategic Alliances:

It would be useful to have partnerships with various charities and research institutions that deal with motor-based disabilities as it would help us in almost all areas of our company especially during our early stages. We would also probably outsource the manufacturing process of the Mod-con to another company.

5. The Product or Service

The product our company aims to push to market is the Mod-Con gaming controller, a controller specifically designed to be modular and easily modified, with removable and adjustable components being primary in its construction with the intent of catering to a range of disabilities that potential customers would suffer from, by allowing the individual to adjust and modify the layout of the controller to adapt the controllers inputs on the gamepad, such as the action buttons, shoulder buttons or 'Bumpers' and the thumb pad, to the individuals specifications, to grant them a more comfortable and enjoyable experience, bridging the gap between the user's ability to manipulate the interface, that being the controller, and the users enjoyment of the game.

The controllers modular design will allow for a much more adaptable, accessible and beneficial medium through which the customer can play their favourite video games without affecting the experience, due to any disabilities which would affect their ability manipulate a standard controller, presenting the customer with a viable alternative which they can easily alter to accommodate for their comfort, allowing for easier manipulation without any difficulty or pain that they may otherwise experience, per their individual disabilities.

With a modular design, this would allow each individual to adjust both the configuration and layout of the various inputs on the controller, such as adjusting the positioning of each separate button, be that the Jump or Attack button on the surface of the controller, with a removable plastic overlay that would encapsulate the button being easily clipped off and swapped out for an alternative overlay, with a different lay out to the controller to make it easily interchangeable.

The grip of the controller, be it a flat and solid surface or a grooved and ridged grip can also be modified by removing the grips and changing the grip on either side with a specific grip, extended for comfort or ease of manipulation. Alternatively, if the user is unable to hold and effectively grip the controller with any degree of comfort or lacks the physical strength due to muscle damage or muscle wasting conditions, the controller itself can be easily mantled to a surface with a small clamp that would function to secure the controller itself to a easily accessed surface, such as a table or wheelchair, allowing the user easier access to the inputs on the controller, without needing to account for the controller, which may otherwise be uncomfortable or painful for them to hold.

Traditional components, such as the thumb pad or action buttons, can also be easily removed, altered or replaced, according to the requirements of the user. A sheet listing some of the possible layouts and configurations of the controller would be provided in the kit supplied to the customer, as well as a list of problem solvers when re-configuring the controller to individual specifications. The components themselves, along with any instructions or guides, would be incorporated in to a single starter kit.

Simple tools would be provided, such as a small screwdriver, but most of the components would be click on or slip on, in an effort to cut down on repetitive use of tools that would be difficult to manipulate for some of our intended customers.

Existing adaptable controllers, from large entities such as Microsoft, aren't as heavily advertised in the wider marketplace due to the desire of Microsoft to push the Xbox console series over the more niche and less marketable adaptive controller. This can be seen in the relatively lacking consumer awareness surrounding the Xbox adaptive controller. This is most likely down to fierce competition between Sony and Microsoft over their consoles and exclusive games, with their own desires to prioritise their consoles in the ongoing competition, as well as the resurgence of Nintendo in the console market after a hiatus in the early 2000's.

This gives the Mod-Con the advantage of being both marketable without the risk of being overshadowed by the larger competitors own entrances in the market, such as Microsoft's adaptive controller or other competitors. Larger competitors of Microsoft, such as Sony and Nintendo, have largely ignored the adaptive controller market due to the desire to compete primarily in the console market and to develop console exclusive IP's for their own consoles to get a competitive edge in the market, allowing us to operate with little real competition, particularly as the Mod-Con is more adaptable and far more diverse in its design than the existing Microsoft adaptive controller.

Other competitors in the market, such as smaller custom controller manufacturers like Evil controllers, tend not to prioritise the manufacturing solely of adaptive controllers, but instead offer it as a custom request service or as a smaller side product in addition to their main services, usually around the £80.00 range for modified base controllers. Another advantage of the Mod-Con is its name and the potential for branding the name has, with a short and easy to remember name, as opposed to the Xbox adaptive controller, which lacks a short and catchy name for the product. Whilst this isn't expected to make a large impact on how our Product is received, it shows that our product has more than enough small advantages to be competitive with, if not out compete, the existing alternatives to the Mod-Con.

We intend to market the controller at the price of £50.00 in the United Kingdom with the option for additional packs to be purchased separately for further tailoring to the consumers requirements, whilst still providing the core components of the adaptable component in the primary kit. This is opposed to the larger competitor's controller, Microsoft's Adaptable controller, being priced at as well as a pricing point of £75.00, with limited adaption or mod ability for the consumer. The Mod-con product may be extended in to further products, such as additions or colour and material customisations of the product, tailoring not just the experience and comfort of the controller for the user, but also the appearance of the controller.

6. The Market (Missing Section)

6.1 Market Description

6.2 Market Environment Considerations

6.3 Competition

6.4 Competitor Profiles

Competitor 1:

Competitor 2:

Competitor 3:

7. The Marketing Strategy (Missing Section)

7.1 Overview of Customers

7.1.1 Key Customer Profiles

Customer 1:

Customer 2:

Customer 3:

7.2 The Marketing Plan

The Five P's

7.2.1 Price

7.2.2 Promotion

7.2.3 Product

7.2.4 Place

7.2.5 People

8. Operations

Trading Status
This company will be a community interest company (CIC)

Employment
Our number of staff will be low mainly preferring partnerships with charity and research institutions to actually employment

Insurance
We will have to insure all our company's equipment in case of damages

VAT Registration
We register for VAT as soon as our company is required

Equipment and Vehicles
Our company will require laptops and desktop computers as well as a 3D printer for prototyping.
We will require a vehicle for traveling to various marketing events as well as meetings with research institutions and charities.

Banking arrangements
Our company will require loans to get started

Health and Safety
Health and safety is a major concern for any company however we may have to pay more attention as we will be working with people with physical disabilities

Equal Opportunities
Our company will make no distinction between race or gender. We will only make distinctions between people who can or cannot fulfil certain roles

Environmental Policy
Our company will try to be as environmentally friendly as possible.

Other
We will need a facility to house or business as well as to store our product

9. Risk Factors and SWOT analysis

9.1 SWOT Analysis Findings

Strengths

One of our main strengths is that the market is relatively untapped with the only competition making subpar products. With the niche market it gives us a unique idea to monetise and successfully fulfil needs which have been neglected previously. As the product we supply has not been developed before our target audience is more likely to come to us for sales as our product has them in mind as well as being more affordable than our competition.

Weaknesses

As we are not an established company, our first year will be difficult to set up and sustain as most new businesses perish within their first three years of operation. During this trying time compromises with time and money will be essential and SWOT analysis, along with our business plan, will be kept up to date and modified at every possible opportunity.

As we are entering into a niche market, it will be difficult to distinguish ourselves from pre-existing businesses and brands. To combat this, we will be more approachable to the prospective user base, engaging them as friends rather than customers.

Opportunities

Although opportunities are out of our control, ones to look out for include the chance to make connections through networking with suppliers of peripherals. Making contacts within the industry would be a great opportunity as it would allow for a more connected project from start to finish.

Another possible opportunity is going viral via social media, this is not a goal as you cannot predict if something is going to go viral or not. However, if our business begins to gain traction online, we have more of a chance to go vial in general.

Threats

Potential competition from already established brands could be a huge threat as they have an already established business with a loyal customer base. The main way to combat this threat is to make our business stand out against big brands by being more approachable and tailored more towards the target audience.

9.1 SWOT Analysis Conclusion

In conclusion, despite being a smaller company than our potential competitors we have the opportunity to be more user friendly for our consumers, by both being approachable and open with the public, and by manufacturing the units at a lower cost to ourselves.

This is not without its drawbacks however, as we will be entering into a very niche market, and as such it would be very difficult for us to make a statement if other, better established companies decide to pursue this avenue as well.

Looking over and considering all of the data and possibilities available, our start-up company has a high chance of making a positive impact with our product, one that, if established well through social media, would provide a valuable service to its users and the video game industry as a whole.

10. Financial Summary

Our financial year starts with September as it is the best time for our team to begin working for the business. There are two types of income within our first financial year; sales and income for initial start-up (i.e. loans and grants). Sales will not start until the product has been tested and would be made on a “made to order” basis. Therefore, prototype sales would not start until at least February on the assumption that design and testing stay on schedule. Mass production sales are for when the company is financially secure, being optimistic by the last month of our financial year we would be able to contact a supplier and work out a deal to produce the product via them to which we could reach a wider audience.

As we would be making the initial prototypes in house, we would need raw materials such as PLA plastic for 3d printers and electronics so that each prototype could be made and tested before the “made to order” is placed on our website/social media. As we would be renting a small office for the work and production of the product, it would cost around £10-£20 per square foot per month; I have included a £15 per square foot per month model as we have the time to wait for a suitable and reasonably priced office.

As we would be using social media as the platform for our advertising and promotion, I feel that it would not need money invested in it during the initial year. Social media is an ever-changing platform, we would have to invest time rather than money, but the rewards reap themselves.

One of the only problems we have as a business is that none of us are adept at accounting, therefore on start-up and every few months we would hire an accountant to sort through and correct or update our records. In March we have budgeted for extra time with the freelance accountant as the records need to be in full working order ready for the April Tax Year start.

The last thing to note is the money spent on training and development November would see 2 members go through minor training with small electricals, so that the controller could completely be made in house.