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1. Overview of the Case Study and Problem Identification

Basil's Bakery, an independent artisan establishment operating in Coventry since 2015, specializes in premium organic baked goods. Following the severe disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic market underwent a permanent structural shift towards digitalization and online consumer engagement. While restrictions eventually lifted, footfall at the retail park never recovered, causing bakery sales to stagnate at 25% below pre-2019 levels. Concurrently, hybrid working reduced daily office commuting, leaving Basil without a digital sales mechanism or strategic advertising to reach remote consumers. This double burden of footfall loss and rising overheads threatens long-term commercial viability.

2. Proposed Solutions to Address Business Challenges

To overcome footfall stagnation and capture modern consumer demand, Basil's Bakery must innovate across its operational and marketing practices:

- **Solution 1: Digitalization via Online Ordering and Local Delivery Service.**
Establishing an e-commerce platform and partnering with local logistics providers will create a fast, convenient ordering line. Customers can pre-order baked goods or schedule direct-to-door deliveries. This effectively eliminates counter wait times and directly recaptures former regular customers who now work remotely from home, thereby saving them valuable time.
- **Solution 2: Targeted Social Media Advertising and Brand Promotion.** Launching dedicated business profiles across TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat, and Facebook will showcase daily fresh artisan baking, ingredients sourcing, and promotional offers. Visual content marketing enables the business to reach a significantly broader regional demographic, generating essential brand awareness and driving both digital orders and footfall traffic.

3a. Evaluation of Proposed Solutions (PMI Technique)

Using the Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI) decision-making framework developed by Edward de Bono, both options were evaluated.

Solution Option	Plus (+)	Minus (-)	Interesting (?)
Solution 1: Digitalization & Delivery Service	• Reaches remote workers (+5) • Eliminates waiting time (+4) • Creates new online revenue (+3) Total = +12	• Initial platform setup costs (-3) • Third-party delivery fees (-3) • Driver management (-2) Total = -8	• Potential subscription model (+2) • Direct customer data collection (+1) Total = +3 Net Score = +7
Solution 2: Social Media Advertising	• High brand visibility (+4) • Low upfront cost (+2) • Engages younger demographic (+2) Total = +8	• Does not solve delivery gap (-3) • Requires ongoing content creation (-2) • Ad conversion uncertain (-1) Total = -6	• Influencer partnership opportunities (+1) • User-generated content potential (+1) Total = +2 Net Score = +4

3b. Selection of Preferred Solution

Solution 1 (Digitalization & Delivery) achieved a positive net score of +7 (+12 Plus, -8 Minus, +3 Interesting). It directly resolves operational bottlenecks and unlocks remote revenue streams. Solution 2 (Social Media Advertising) scored +4 (+8 Plus, -6 Minus, +2 Interesting), offering strong visual reach but lacking the direct operational infrastructure needed to fulfill remote demand. Based on the PMI results, Solution 1 (Digitalization and Delivery) is selected as the preferred strategic choice. While social media expands visibility, implementing digital ordering and delivery fundamentally restructures business operations to overcome reduced physical park footfall and capture remote workers.

4a. Risk Analysis

A thorough Risk Analysis of the selected digitalization solution identified three main operational threats: delivery driver delays or product damage, website technical downtime during peak order hours, and initial staff errors in processing orders.

Risk Description	Likelihood (1-5)	Impact (1-5)	Risk Factor (L x I)	Preventative Action	Contingency Plan
Delivery delays or damaged bakery goods during transit	3	4	12	Use eco-friendly insulated packaging and partner with reliable local couriers.	Provide instant refund or priority free replacement for damaged items.
Website or online ordering platform technical downtime	2	4	8	Select proven SaaS platform with 99.9% uptime SLA and automated monitoring.	Switch to manual telephone pre-ordering line immediately.
Initial staff error in processing or packing online orders	2	3	6	Conduct comprehensive staff training on order management software before launch.	Implement double-check packing checklist at dispatch counter.

4b. Feasibility Assessment

Strategic mitigation measures include establishing strict temperature-controlled packaging, partnering with reputable courier services, and conducting thorough pre-launch website testing. Consequently, the solution demonstrates high overall feasibility. The required initial capital expenditure is modest, technology integration is streamlined via established software-as-a-service (SaaS) platforms, and operational risks are easily manageable through clear partner service-level agreements.

5a. Implementation Plan Timeline

Phase & Timeframe	Key Activity	Responsible Person	Deliverable
Phase 1: Weeks 1-2	Select e-commerce platform & build website ordering menu	Consultant & Basil	Functional e-commerce store
Phase 2: Weeks 3-4	Finalize agreement with local delivery partner & integrate API	Basil	Logistics integration contract
Phase 3: Weeks 5-6	Staff training on kitchen order hardware & system testing	Bakery Supervisor	Fully trained workforce
Phase 4: Weeks 7-8	Launch social media campaign & initiate live ordering	Marketing Lead & Basil	Official public launch

5b. Justification of Action Plan

The implementation plan spans eight weeks across four distinct phases. Key activities include selecting a user-friendly e-commerce platform, integrating secure online payment processing, configuring order notification hardware in the kitchen, and training staff on packaging standards. This phased sequence ensures logical operational progression. Establishing digital infrastructure prior to courier integration prevents technical conflicts. Mandatory staff training and system testing in Weeks 5-6 safeguard product quality and order accuracy before public promotion begins in Week 7, guaranteeing flawless service execution upon official launch.

6a. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Performance Objectives

To evaluate operational and financial effectiveness, the primary Key Performance Indicator (KPI) established is Online Sales Revenue Contribution, supported by a secondary KPI of Order Fulfillment Time. Specific performance targets include: achieving £3,000 in monthly online sales revenue within 3 months of launch,

maintaining a customer order fulfillment rating above 95%, and acquiring 150 active recurring digital customers within 6 months.

6b. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

These metrics will be monitored weekly using automated website analytics dashboards and delivery partner reports. Weekly sales reviews will allow management to identify popular menu items, optimize delivery routes, and quickly correct operational bottlenecks, ensuring continuous revenue recovery.

7. Summary of Key Findings

- Post-pandemic shifts permanently reduced physical retail footfall and increased remote working, driving sales 25% below 2019 levels.
- Digitalization and local delivery serve as the core solution to recapture remote office workers and remove customer waiting times.
- PMI decision analysis confirmed that digital ordering provides higher operational value (+7 net score) compared to stand-alone social media promotion (+4 net score).
- Feasibility is high, with identified operational risks (delivery delays, technical downtime) effectively mitigated through robust courier partnerships and platform testing.
- Phased 8-week implementation ensures smooth operational rollout, monitored via weekly online sales revenue and fulfillment efficiency KPIs.

References

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