



**Now What?
Business Plan**

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1. Business Summary

1.1 Business Overview

Now What? is an internet based portal to link recent school leavers, with community organisations in need of volunteers.

Now What? is aimed at the young adult market of 18-26yrs. It will cater directly to people within this age group who are looking to gain valuable life experience within Australia.

1.2 Product/Service Features

Now What? will act as an information exchange platform. The users of this platform will be young people who, may have embarked or have aspirations of further education, but want to gain some experience to clarify their direction or experience something completely different to their perceived direction. Now What? shall provide access for community groups, to a potential pool of thousands of volunteers. The role of Now What? will be to provide the opportunity for this information exchange to occur.

1.3 Market Analysis

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 32% of the Australian population over 18 had completed some voluntary work in the previous 12 months. This is compared to the last survey in 1995 where the level was at 24%. Out of the 32% who volunteered in 2000, 27% were in the 18-24yr bracket, with 28% in the 25-32yr bracket. From my interview conducted with Lattitude Australia, they recognised a movement of people wanting to do more volunteer work with a greater social impact upon the community. Now What? aims to harness this movement and market.

According to state based COSS sites, there are approx. 2000 community organisations around Australia, that are COSS members.

1.4 Market Strategy

In order to get Now What? into the minds and target market, I'm looking into ways to enter information streams relevant to this demographic. Key areas would be:

- Careers events
- High school careers teaching networks
- University open days
- Media networks such as JJJ (National, especially regional), PBS (Melbourne), RRR (Melbourne), FBI (Sydney)
- Publications such as Jmag, university magazines such as RMIT's Catalyst
- Online media and networks, such as Myspace and Facebook

1.5 Key Financial Objectives

The revenue stream options for Now What? include:

- Annual membership fee for community organisations to list available positions
- Partnership with a service provider
- Sponsorship in return for onsite advertising
- Annual membership for corporate clients allowing access to a tailored database, aimed at fulfilling corporate responsibility duties.

2. Detailed Plan

2.1 Business Structure

Now What? operates as an online information provider for the following reasons:

- Drastically cuts the physical infrastructure needed to access the target market.
- Once an online presence is established, there is the potential to access a massive audience base, to interact with.
- Minimal staffing and resources will be required to maintain the venture, once the initial start up is complete.

2.2 Management & Ownership

Manager

There shall be one manager to oversee Now What? They will co-ordinate the direction of the venture, as well as canvass new community groups and information channels, to grow Now What?'s membership and presence.

Staff

There will be 2 part time staff. The first role will be to establish and maintain the website. The initial set up will be intensive, but once established, the workload will lighten to maintaining and updating the site.

The second role shall be a contact for interested community groups wanting to become members. They shall assist the manager, with this ongoing recruitment. They would also assist with the tailored corporate responsibility database, if this revenue stream was pursued.

Both these roles have the possibility of being voluntary.

2.3 Key Objectives

The objectives for Now What? are to:

- Provide a platform where young people and community groups can interact and form partnerships.
- Establish revenue streams to allow Now What? to become financially independent.
- Encourage young Australians to discover and connect with what is in their own backyard.
- To help advance young people's understanding of Australia, and where they want to head.

2.4 Market Analysis

Now What? has two main markets to address. Young people thinking of completing volunteer work, and community groups in need of keen volunteers.

Young People

From the ABS website the following data has been gathered.

- 32% of the Australian population over 18 had completed some voluntary work in the previous 12 months
- Out of the 32% who volunteered in 2000, 27% were in the 18-24yr bracket, with 28% in the 25-32yr bracket
- The great majority (82%) of volunteers became involved in this type of work through personal contact of some kind
- In 2007, there were 198 216 students enrolled in yr 12, and 269 293 in yr 10

This data shows that there is a large pool of young people, who are potential volunteers. By making an appealing and accessible internet platform, Now What? has the potential to be seen as an attractive recruitment platform for community groups.

Community Groups

After perusing the state based and national council of social services, the following membership figures have been gathered.

VCOS- 600 members

NCOSS- 800 members

QCOSS-700 members

TasCOSS- 102 members

ACTCOSS- 110 members

SACOSS- 133 members

NTCOSS- wasn't available

WACOSS- 250 members

Total: 2065 members

2.5 The Competitor

Now What? has the following competitors:

- Lattitude Australia, offer limited Australian based placements for Australians. They are more involved in the placement selection process than Now What? aims to be, so could be a possible cross referral opportunity. Lattitude is mainly focused on the overseas volunteering market.
- Ampersand is a web based volunteer recruitment site. Ampersand is the main competitor for Now What? but again focuses also on the overseas volunteer market. Shares Australian volunteer database with GoVolunteer and Seek.
- GoVolunteer is another web based volunteer recruitment site. It has some powerful support from SEEK and Boston Consulting Group. It has been established by Volunteering Australia.

Because of the established organisations aiming at a similar market share to Now What?'s market, it would be wise to try and form a collaboration with these organisations, rather than go into direct competition.

2.6 Product/Service

Now What? offers the following services

- Provide an easy to use, go to point for young people looking to experience Australia further before embarking on their next stage of life.

- Provide an appealing platform for community groups to expand their network of potential future volunteers.
- Via this networking, Now What? aims to foster collaborations that will result in improvements in all aspects of communities all around Australia.

2.7 SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>Focused demographic</p> <p>Being new and fresh</p>	<p>New to the market</p> <p>Unknown service, will need to establish a reliable reputation</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>A new face with enthusiasm</p> <p>Spread word through identified information networks</p> <p>Online marketing</p>	<p>Community groups may be slow to take up the service.</p> <p>May be difficult to gain awareness</p>

3. Financial plan

3.1 Key Objectives and Financial Review

Finance:

- To gain a membership via COSS networks, of 200, or 10% of nationwide COSS members. This will raise \$20 000 from annual membership fees set at \$100.

3.2 Establishment Costs

Initial costs	\$
Electricity, gas and phone	
Connections	300
Stationery and office supplies	100
Computer software	
Server Installation	300
Total initial costs	700

Capital costs	\$
Office Equipment leased for 12 months	
2 Chair and Desk Combos	100
1 Printer	100
2 Desktop Computers	848
Prices from Radio Rentals Quote	
Total Capital Costs	1,048

Cash Flow

Month *	Mar-09	Apr 09	May 09	Jun 09	Jul 09	Aug 09	Sep 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10
Cash balance at the start of		-444	-88	268	1,124	3,480	4,836	6,792	8,148	9,504	10,860	12,716
Cash in												
membership income	500	1,000	1,000	1,500	3,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,500	500
sponsorship							600					
Other income												
Total cash in at end of m	500	1,000	1,000	1,500	3,000	2,000	2,600	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,500	500
Cash out												
Phone&Internet	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80
Marketing												
Server costs	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500
office furniture	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
domain costs	300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
computer lease	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
Total cash out at end of m	944	644	644	644								
Net difference †												
(subtracts Cash out from	-444	356	356	856	2,356	1,356	1,956	1,356	1,356	1,356	1,856	-144
Cash balance at the end	-444	-88	268	1,124	3,480	4,836	6,792	8,148	9,504	10,860	12,716	12,572

Break-even analysis

Average month's fixed running costs: \$644

In order to make a profit/keep afloat your company needs to have a break-even revenue of:

\$700/month

4. Action Plan

Key Objectives	Task	By Whom	By When
RECRUITMENT			
Find volunteers to help establish NW?	Approach universities, tafes Business departments		1 March
	Secure volunteers		1 April
Canvas Community Groups	Establish contacts with information networks such as VCOSS, WACOSS etc.		5 April
	Have 10 members		20 April
	30 members		30 April
	100 members		10 May
Website Development			
Contact website designer	Meet and discuss brief		15 Feb
	Have website ready to go live		1 April
	Go live		1 March

5. What I'm Looking For

From this proposal I am looking to pass this onto an interested party. The interested person would have a physical location for Now What? to be based, or willing to organise one.