

Café Bijoux: A Small Business Marketing Challenge

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INTRODUCTION

It was five minutes to ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, April 7, 2004, and Jennifer Coleman was anxiously driving back and forth on B Street in Hayward, looking for a restaurant called Café Bijoux. Jennifer had a ten o'clock appointment with Julie Sanders and Mary Carter, the managers and co-owners of Café Bijoux but there was no visible sign of the restaurant. After circling around several more times, Jennifer finally spotted a small sign in a window that said “Café Bijoux.”

Jennifer Coleman was a university professor of marketing and a marketing consultant in the city of Hayward, California. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) of the university invited Jennifer to help Café Bijoux's management as part of its cooperative effort with the city to provide assistance to small businesses in need of and interested in consulting services in the university's service area. The purpose of the Jennifer's meeting that morning was to go over the café's current business situation and to establish a mutual understanding about Jennifer's deliverables.

At 10:05 am, Jennifer walked into Café Bijoux and introduced herself to Julie and Mary. Jennifer apologized for being late and indicated that she had some difficulty in finding the restaurant. Julie said, “Yes, I know that we really need a store sign but we did not have enough money to get one. It would cost at least \$2000. We had some customers complaining about that but we just couldn't afford it. Our business has been terrible and we were hoping that you would be able to tell us how we can improve.” Jennifer replied, “That's what I am here for. But first, I need to learn as much about the café's business from you as I can.” Jennifer explained that the primary goals of the meeting were for her to learn about the café's current situation and to explore the next course of action. Both Julie and Mary agreed upon the plan.

BACKGROUND

Café Bijoux, located across the Hayward City Hall on B Street, is a restaurant that primarily serves lunch during weekdays, targeting City Hall employees as their predominant customer base. Julie and Mary were very concerned about the restaurant's low sales and negative profit since its opening in October 2001. They explained to Jennifer that they felt the disappointing performance was due not only to the limited financial and personnel resources but also to poor luck in timing. For example, due to the contractual agreement with the building owner, the restaurant had to open in October 2001, one month after the unexpected 9/11 tragedy. While Jennifer did not think there was a direct causal relationship between 9/11 and the low sales of the restaurant, both Julie and Mary believed that the overall depressed atmosphere had a negative impact on the restaurant's opening because it was so difficult to capture the public's attention. At the same time, there had been a lot of construction around the café, limiting its ability to attract customers during critical business hours. As soon as the financial situation improved, Julie and Mary had planned to put up a restaurant sign so that the café could be more easily seen by pedestrians; however, the situation never improved.

The restaurant's sales have been discouraging from October 2001 through December 2003. For the period of the first three months in 2004, the restaurant generated approximately \$175 in sales a day, but far less in the month of April, frequently less than \$100 in sales a day. Julie noted that April had been a particularly slow month and that sales tended to reflect the pay day schedule with peaks and valleys every other Friday. According to Jennifer's quick analysis of the fixed and operating cost, the café would need to reach a gross sales amount of \$208 per day, without including the cost of labor, in order to break even. That meant that Julie and Mary had not been getting paid for their

work and furthermore that they had been losing money since the inception of the business. The management's goal was not only to break even but to increase the daily sales revenue to \$500.

After the initial fact-finding interview, Jennifer felt that she needed to gather more specific pieces of information before making recommendations to the management. She and the restaurant owners agreed to meet in two weeks, during which time Jennifer would analyze the business situation in detail in regards to the market, customers, and competitors.

Café Bijoux's Operation

Due to limited resources, the café had been operated by Julie and Mary with no other employees. The two women were long-time friends with a shared interest in cooking. Julie's specialty was soup and Mary's, sandwiches. Both Julie and Mary did the shopping, cooking, serving, cleaning, and every other task required to run the restaurant. Café Bijoux opened from 10 am to 3 pm, Monday through Friday and sold lunch specializing in homemade soup, fresh sandwiches, and salads. Julie and Mary also sold fresh baked pastries and dessert purchased from a local bakery.

The restaurant was conveniently located next to a vast parking garage for City Hall employees and other public office employees in the surrounding area. People arrived at the garage between 7:30-8:30 am for work and left between 4:30-5:30 pm. The City Hall was within walking distance of the café, about a half block away. Due to the absence of a sign or other clear identification, the restaurant was not plainly visible from the street; however once inside, the café had a clean and relatively sophisticated atmosphere with a touch of French Country style and an attractive and inviting street side patio.

A cup of soup and a sandwich was priced at \$5.95. According to Julie and Mary it was a good value considering the quality of food offered. The café owners tried to offer services that gave a friendly neighborly impression. As a way to keep costs down, condiments, napkins and plastic utensils were not left out for self service but instead handed out as customers picked up their orders.

Café Bijoux had done very little promotion to generate awareness and to advertise its offerings to potential customers. Because each day's menu was decided the day before, depending on the availability of fresh low cost raw materials in the market, the menu was written on a chalkboard daily. While the daily menu was generally predictable and the owners could have easily printed a menu with the daily specials, they felt more comfortable with the flexibility of not being bound to a printed menu.

Customer Perceptions

Both Julie and Mary have always considered their primary customers to be City Hall employees, thus their strategy was to offer a tasty and healthy lunch to these workers. Jennifer decided to conduct a quick phone survey to understand the primary customers' perceptions about Café Bijoux. Specifically, Jennifer sought to gather information on how City Hall employees took care of their lunch needs, their level of awareness of Café Bijoux, and their interest in other products/services.

To Jennifer's surprise, an estimated 50 percent of City Hall employees brought lunch from home, going out for lunch once or twice toward the end of week. Some of the City Hall employees told Jennifer that they would have a more regular need for a bagel and coffee operation in the morning, from 7:30 to 10:00 am. Approximately 70 percent of respondents did not even know about Café Bijoux. 30 percent of people who were aware of the café indicated that they would like to see a printed menu so they could make decisions about ordering food. It seemed that people decided on food before they decided on a restaurant, especially when in a group. They did not want to be surprised or to have to call the restaurant to find out about the day's menu.

In addition to the telephone survey, Jennifer conducted a small scale taste testing of the café's soups and sandwiches among other nearby office workers. The quality of food was rated very highly by people who experienced the food. The taste testers remarked that the food was fresh, lean, and delicious and they could tell they were eating

homemade soups and sandwiches. When the price information was disclosed, they remarked that \$5.95 for a cup of soup and sandwich was reasonable and that they would not mind eating it once or twice a week for lunch. Some of the office workers even expressed an interest in buying soup to take home after work once or twice a week.

The Café Bijoux management told Jennifer that customers often called for soup, indicating that they liked the authentically delicious home cooked quality. In a separate case of Jennifer’s in-store observation, one of the customers rated the café’s soup very highly and gave unsolicited praise to the owners. Customers also appreciated the lean and fat-free sandwiches. The café was committed to delivering a healthy and delicious choice of food, and customers, once they tasted the café’s food, seemed to appreciate the quality and value. About 70 percent of café’s daily customers were regular patrons.

MARKET POTENTIAL

At the time of the decision to open the restaurant, Julie and Mary estimated that the City Hall had a total of 500 employees whom they considered to be potential customers. They projected that with a good quality product and service they could easily attract 100 customers a day and produce a daily gross sales revenue of \$595. In order to verify the market potential of City Hall lunch customers, Jennifer called the City Hall Human Resource department and found that the number was actually far less than Julie and Mary had thought. Table 1 presents the estimated number of populations surrounding the café.

Table 1: Surrounding Businesses and Potential Customer Populations

The City Hall employees	200-250
The City of Hayward Police	100 employees
The City of Hayward Utility	50 employees
The Post Office	20 employees
The Library	10 employees
The Bank of the West	30 employees
Other businesses within walking distance	100 employees
Residential Population	1000 households

As indicated in the table, there was a sizable residential population near and around the City Hall. Though there was additional business potential in a residential market for take-out homemade soup or casseroles, due to limited human resources, the café’s management did not want to extend the restaurant hours to include the dinner hour and weekends. Because the café’s primary customers were thought to be City Hall employees during lunch hour, Café Bijoux’s business hours were accordingly set from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday.

In addition to making a call to the City Hall Human Resource department, Jennifer observed the traffic in and out of the City Hall, other offices and the area surrounding the café during weekday lunch hours. Despite the fact that there was a sizable number of people working during and around the café, Jennifer found that foot traffic was extremely light from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm and that pedestrian traffic around the general area was limited. According to Jennifer’s week-long observation during lunch hours, very few people went in and out of the City Hall—certainly not generating enough foot traffic to satisfy the sales needs of the many restaurants competing for a limited number of potential customers. The following section presents a summary of observations about area restaurants.

THE COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT

Morelia on B Street

Morelia was a full service Mexican and Italian Restaurant, located two doors down from Café Bijoux. Jennifer visited the restaurant on Saturday, April 10th and had lunch between 1pm and 2pm. The restaurant was very clean and had a pleasant atmosphere. The interior was decorated with simple, inexpensive Mexican art and figures in

navy blue and orange. The tables were covered with white tablecloths and set with navy blue cloth napkins. The customer-only restroom was kept clean.

Jennifer ordered a cup of soup and a soft taco (priced at \$1.99). The order came with water, chips, salsa, and pleasant full service. The total amount came to \$5.35 including tax, which Jennifer judged to be a good value for the money. The menu showed a great deal of choices, including vegetarian and Italian foods. Their butternut squash soup was heavy but delicious and gave the impression of being cooked from scratch. The presentation of food was also very pleasant. For the soft taco, the restaurant used transparent white paper as lining and a piece of lime as garnish.

In terms of service, both of the restaurant's waiters seemed to have limited fluency in English but were very courteous. The order and the manner in which they served customers showed that they were new but properly trained. As Jennifer was there on a Saturday, there were only three other groups of customers in the restaurant, all of whom were Hispanic.

Jennifer had a chance to talk briefly about a catering menu with the owner of the restaurant. The owner seemed to be very enthusiastic about the business. They served breakfast, lunch, and dinner 7 days a week. The owner appeared to be managing the restaurant with professionalism. They had a printed menu for customers to take and were in the process of producing a printed catering menu. The owner assured Jennifer that they could be very flexible and accommodating in terms of food. For an office party, the price was roughly \$8-10 per person.

In summary, Jennifer judged Morelia to be a strong competitor of Café Bijoux in terms of customer share. Morelia gave visitors the impression of getting excellent overall value: a clean and cozy atmosphere; courteous service; flexible menu; good food and a good price. Although there were many dishes that were over \$8.00, the flexibility (e.g., a la carte choices) gave customers more control and opportunity to manage within a tight budget. In general, the restaurant seemed likely to attract repeat business with visitors, perhaps even coming back with friends.

La Salsa Fresh Mexican Grill

La Salsa Fresh Mexican Grill was a franchise Mexican fast food restaurant located right in front of the City Hall. The available menu included tacos, salsa platters, burritos, and salads. Prices ranged from \$3.69 to \$7.50. Drinks were sold separately at \$1.29 to \$1.49. La Salsa also had a Kids platter for \$3.39 including a small drink. With respect to décor, the restaurant was relatively new and projected a clean, neat, simple, yet inviting atmosphere. Jennifer felt that she would not mind eating in the restaurant but the interior was a bit hard and cold inside. It appeared to be a typical fast food restaurant chain. The restaurant was a self-service, efficiency-oriented operation.

Jennifer visited the restaurant between 12:30 pm and 1:00 pm, on Saturday, April 10th. As she expected, the customers were families that appeared most likely to be residents of the area (non-Hispanic families with children). Jennifer visited La Salsa again on Monday April 12th, where she found quite a few customers that seemed to be City Hall employees and visitors. Jennifer assessed La Salsa as another strong competitor.

Silver Spoon

Silver Spoon was a full menu buffet restaurant located right across from Café Bijoux. Its hours of operation were Monday through Friday, 7 am to 7 pm and Saturday 7 am to 3 pm. It featured fresh cooked meat. Lunch was priced at \$8.95 and dinner, \$14.95. The interior looked somewhat disorganized and unappealing and there was no discernible theme. There were only a handful of people eating during lunch hours on weekdays but Jennifer considered the restaurant a direct competitor for the reason that it was located so close to the café and that it may appeal to customers who prefer a variety of choice.

Bst Restaurant

Bst Restaurant was a few blocks away from Café Bijoux on B Street. It served a wide variety of Chinese cuisine for a very good price. The lunch special was \$4.95. Bst Restaurant seemed to be very popular with customers

who might have large or special occasion parties. On Saturday afternoon, this was the only restaurant filled with people. Its business hours were Sunday through Thursday from 11 am to 9 pm, and Friday and Saturday from 11 am to 9:30 pm. It was a full service restaurant with a modest interior decorated with Chinese paintings and objects.

Jennifer noted that this was yet another significant source of competition for Café Bijoux. Customers may be attracted by the value of a good Chinese meal fully served for under \$5, all within walking distance of area offices.

Patisserie Francaise Chocolaterie

Patisserie Francaise Chocolaterie specialized in fresh croissants and various gourmet pastries such as homemade French cookies, as well as providing lunch service. It was located one and a half blocks away from Café Bijoux. The restaurant hours were Monday through Friday, 7 am to 4 pm, and Saturday, 7 am to 2 pm.

The Patisserie offered a variety of croissant sandwiches on their les-butter, oven-fresh croissant including crab, chicken, fried egg, ham and cheese, roast beef, vegetarian, avocado and cream cheese at \$4.75 each. They also offered homemade soup at \$2.60, fresh quiche at \$3.50, and salad. In addition, there was a showcase full of baked goods and desserts. According to the owner, they did a lot of catering and would offer a special discount for large occasions.

Surprisingly, the interior did not seem particularly clean and the restaurant appeared to be primarily a take-out place, although there were several tables against the wall. When Jennifer visited the self-service restaurant on Saturday during lunchtime she saw a few people eating inside who seemed to be either pedestrians or visitors of the Farmers' Market that opened occasionally on Saturdays. It was clear, though, that the restaurant could not accommodate a large number of customers who might wish to eat on the premises.

On one hand, Café Bijoux clearly had a more inviting and comfortable atmosphere than the Patisserie. In addition, it was more conveniently located to the City Hall and other office buildings. However, the Patisserie offered similar products at somewhat lower prices and for this reason Jennifer considered it to be a direct competitor.

Sapporo

Sapporo was a full service Japanese restaurant, located a couple of blocks away from Café Bijoux. The restaurant served good quality lunch and dinner 7 days a week, with a lunch special priced at \$9.95. Service was acceptable and the restaurant had a clean atmosphere decorated with artwork typical of most Japanese restaurants. Jennifer assessed the restaurant as a strong secondary competitor.

Buon Appetito

Buon Appetito was a full service restaurant that served Italian food for lunch and dinner with prices ranging from \$8.95 to \$14.95. The restaurant was located somewhat inconveniently, away from the main street, and was rather small with eight tables set in an unappealing interior. Moreover, the exterior appeared in need of new paint. Jennifer had lunch with a guest and both of them ordered a chef salad, which came to a total of about \$24 including tip. The salad was fresh and well portioned, and the service was average. On a weekday lunch hour, Jennifer spotted two other groups of customers eating lunch. Jennifer did not think that this was a strong direct competitor to Café Bijoux due to its location, poor décor, and exterior appearance.

Rue de Main

Rue de Main was a Chinese dim sum restaurant located about two blocks from Café Bijoux. The restaurant was open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 9:30 pm. It served a Chinese lunch special for \$6.95 including an entrée, soup, spring roll, fried rice or steamed rice. The interior was clean and spacious. Around 1 pm on a weekday, Jennifer saw a couple of groups of Asian customers eating inside. The restaurant looked empty and cold and Jennifer

thought the restaurant did not have an inviting atmosphere, therefore she did not consider it a strong competitor to Café Bijoux.

Other Restaurants

In addition to the aforementioned restaurants, there were other restaurants within a few blocks' distance of Café Bijoux. They included Bistro, Japanese Restaurant on C Street, Subway, Panda Express, and Albertson's Sandwich Bar. Most of these establishments offered reasonable quality food at competitive prices. For example, Subway sandwiches started at \$2.69 and Panda Express, a Chinese fast-food eatery sold meals from \$3.29 to \$6.29.

Assessing the competitive environment, Café Bijoux had been contending for a limited number of customers during comparatively limited business hours, with limited product offerings, and in a location surrounded by many competitive restaurants. It appeared that the café had been generating less than acceptable sales result for these reasons.

At the end of Jennifer's report, both Julie and Mary looked dismayed and asked "So what do you recommend that we do? Is it even possible for the café to be profitable?" Julie, one of the owners, asked Jennifer, "Are you by any chance interested in buying or becoming a partner of this restaurant?" Jennifer responded with a smile. Both Julie and Mary were anxious to hear what Jennifer had to say next, so she promised to present the final report, oral and written, including a summary of her analysis, alternative strategies, and recommended actions at their next meeting. They agreed to meet the following Wednesday, April 28th at 4:00 pm.

Teaching Note: Café Bijoux: A Small Business Marketing Challenge

The case opens with Jennifer, a marketing consultant, going to an initial meeting with Julie and Mary, co-owners and managers of a lunch restaurant named Café Bijoux. The gist of the conversation revealed that after 30 months of operation, the restaurant was losing money and the management was losing hope that the business would ever turn a profit. The restaurant had gone under review by the bank and the City of Hayward and Jennifer was brought onto the scene by a cooperative arrangement between the university's Small Business Development Center and the City of Hayward.

Café Bijoux, located across the Hayward City Hall on B Street, was a restaurant that primarily served lunch during weekdays. The restaurant's main target customers were employees of City Hall. Since opening in October 2001, there had been a lot of construction around the café, limiting its ability to attract customers to the restaurant during critical business hours. Along with these distractions, the restaurant's sales have been discouraging up through January 2004, when for a brief period the restaurant generated approximately \$175 a day. However, the month of April saw a dip in sales, falling below \$100 a day. One of the owners noted that April had been a slow month and that sales tended to reflect the payday schedule with peaks and valleys every other Friday. An analysis of the fixed and operating cost indicated that the café would need to achieve a sales level of \$208 per day to break even, without including the cost of labor. The management's goal was not only to meet the break-even point, but to increase the daily sales revenue to \$500.

According to Jennifer's observations during lunch hours on four separate days, very few people went in and out of the City Hall, and there was insufficient pedestrian traffic in the area to satisfy the sales needs of the many restaurants competing for such a limited number of customers. On the other hand, Jennifer's quick survey of the City Hall employees revealed some interesting possibilities; there seemed to be unmet opportunities in terms of product/service extension and potentially broadening the target and restaurant operation. Some students may point out the fact that Jennifer's survey was too simplified and exploratory in nature. In such a case, the instructor may encourage students to base their decisions on the explicit assumptions about the data. It is also possible for students to come up with a formal research design including the types of information to be gathered and how decisions can be reached based on the research findings.

The case presents a set of controllable and uncontrollable challenges that face many small businesses with extremely limited resources and their owners as management. The case is suitable for undergraduate and graduate level courses in marketing management, marketing strategy, and small business marketing. One of the purposes of the case is to show how to generate information needed for the market analysis. Students will find that most of the much-needed information is not readily available and may need to be generated through legwork. It is not the intent of this case to require students to come up with the information but to offer them market information for their analysis and application for marketing strategy formulation. The following study questions are suggested.

STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is the current positioning strategy? Is it working? Why or why not?
- What are the key reasons for the depressing sales and profit?
- What are the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to Café Bijoux?
- What are the key issues that the management can and should address in their marketing strategy?
- Is there a way to improve the restaurant's business performance? If so, how?

- What alternative positioning strategies can the restaurant take?
- What recommendations on 4Ps do you have for the management and why?

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION

In brief, Café Bijoux has been competing for a limited number of customers with limited business hours and product offerings, in a location crowded with many competing restaurants. The café has done very little promotion to generate awareness and to inform potential customers of the café's offerings. Jennifer Coleman's analysis reinforced the low level of awareness of the restaurant by its primary customers in the City Hall. On the other hand, there seemed to be unmet needs among the potential customers that the café may be able to satisfy. For example, the café could extend its operation to include bagels and coffee early in the morning as people arrive at the parking garage between 7:30 to 8:30 am. It is also possible to capitalize on their home cooked soup as a take out dinner for people who return home after work. While the restaurant was ideally located by several offices and a large parking garage, its current hours of operation, from 10 am to 3:00 pm, was not maximizing the locational advantage. The café had been generating less than acceptable sales results due in part to the limited market potential for the current strategy and in part to the lack of promotion.

In order to identify the viable strategies for desired growth, students may revisit the case information and summarize the current situation in terms of Café Bijoux's Strength, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats. This may be followed by identifying key issues that need to be addressed in the future plan for growth. Students' answers on SWOT and on key issues may be similar but their recommendations can vary a great deal, limited only by creativity. If the case is used as a class discussion, the instructor can use the following as a sample SWOT analysis and recommendations to be served as an example.

SAMPLE SWOT ANALYSIS AND KEY ISSUES

Opportunity

- There are untapped business markets such as other surrounding businesses customers
- There are additional available business hours and customer segments (Quick breakfast segment)
- Opportunities with the residential market (Soup to go/Order to go meal)
- Growing health consciousness and preference for healthy diet

Threat

- Limited customer base
- Lack of interest in healthy meals
- Limited income and meal budget
- Saturated competition

Strengths

- Good Food Quality: delicious healthy meal cooked from scratch at value
- Potential to capitalize on uniqueness of homemade soup
- Potential for repeat customer business
- Competitive price for superior quality food
- Friendly and inviting atmosphere

Weaknesses

- Limited business hours
- Limited manpower

- Limited product offerings
- Lack of marketing communication
- Lack of awareness
- Limited budget
- Limited by location

Key Issues

- Capitalize on cooking talents, especially soups
- Take advantage of the location by the parking garage that gives potential access to hundreds of people
- Penetrate into the existing segment
- Expand the business operation to include other segments
- Build and increase the awareness of Café Bijoux among the area's potential customers
- Communicate the café's offerings and value on a regular basis
- Develop and disseminate promotional programs and materials

As to the possible recommendation, the instructor can brainstorm strategies and action items with students in class. Alternatively, the instructor may choose to divide students into groups and allow them 20-30 minutes to come up with recommendations and then have each group share their recommendations. It is desirable to facilitate creativity in identifying possible marketing action items integrated into strategic decisions. The following is provided as an example.

A SAMPLE FRAMEWORK FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Target Customers

- City Hall workers
- Other public offices that use the parking garage adjacent to the café
- Near by businesses

Positioning

- Reposition: Friendly Neighborhood Café for Breakfast and Lunch
- Home cooked healthy food at value and convenience: Breakfast Lunch for here or to go

Name: (May consider changing the name Café Bijoux. After all, a French name for all American type food may be a mismatch. A new name may be chosen to reflect the new positioning strategy.)

Strategy

- Expand hours and capture the pick up and go breakfast segments: Coffee, pastries and bagels 7:30 - 9:30 am
- Capitalize on proven product: homemade soup
- Develop flexibility in size and package (e.g., half a sandwich or soup and baguette under \$4.00)
- Look into capturing 'Soup to Go' or 'Kitchen to Go' customers around 5-7pm.

Promotion

- Sign, Sign, and Sign
- Menus for the store, windows, and for customers to take with them—Daily, Daily+ special, etc.
- Fliers on cars in the parking garage
- Fliers to nearby businesses

- Open House – Food sampling
- Free samples delivered
- Promotion coupons timed with special occasions and with customer types
- Use invitation card with dates and times open
- Business Card

Product: Add uniqueness and flexibility; take out dinner (utilize more hours)

Price: Have a price leader item and flexible pricing, which would give a good value for the money image

Décor: Add softness to indoors and to the outdoor patio with fresh flowers, plants, and music.

Promotion

- Store Sign: Critical and urgent
- Parking instruction
- Printed Menu
- Business card
- Special Event Promotion
 - o Birthday special
 - o Secretaries Day special
 - o Continuity program

In closing, it should be noted that marketing principles, processes, and purposes are the same regardless of size or type of operations. Second, most small businesses face similar challenges that Julie and Mary had to face, namely a lack of resources and marketing commitment. The obvious lack of available channels of solution can easily frustrate untrained managers who start a business with either product focus or sales focus. Rather than following the due diligence of market analysis and marketing strategy planning, the management designs the business based on their assumptions and wishful thinking. In other words, the management ends up developing a business model that suits the management's needs rather than the customers' needs. This leads to the mismatch of the business operation and the market opportunity.

It is desirable to remind students that the goal of marketing is to achieve customer satisfaction at a profit. In order to meet the goal, the management must create a relevant and viable marketing strategy with respect to targeting and positioning. Its marketing mix programs must be developed and implemented consistently around the needs and wants of the targeted customers. Last but not least, the instructor should stress that one of the most critical key success factors of a small business is the management's will to succeed. As hinted in several places in the case, Julie and Mary were showing signs of frustration, lack of commitment, and possibly were ready to give up. It should be noted that the common characteristic of successful entrepreneurs has been found to be the will to serve people and to set a much higher vision than to make money. Making money came as a result of serving their intended customers well.