

grow DeSoto

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

Nikki Lasalle, Lilo Ramos, Rachel Tse and Chris Yang

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Grow Desoto Marketplace is the first incubator in Texas located 20 minutes away from downtown Dallas and the property has been up and running for over a year. To improve their customer's experience and increase their return customers, Grow DeSoto is looking to solidify their target audience while they continue to cultivate the community in the process.

CHALLENGE

Grow Desoto Marketplace wants to modify their marketing efforts to align with their current visitors and the possible visitors in the surrounding area in order to have an increase in both, in-store traffic and return visitors. In order to do this, Grow DeSoto first needs to figure out who currently visits the incubator, why they come, and what will make them come again. In addition to this, Grow DeSoto needs to market to surrounding areas that fit their targeted demographics in order to reach new markets.

SOLUTION

Grow Desoto is positioned to be a community center that promotes healthy living that appeals to young adults and adults. The overall goal is to drive more of these customers into Grow Desoto with three objectives. First is increasing awareness of the marketplace digitally and communally. Second is to communicate the community value to potential customers. Third is to increase sales with new and existing customers. These will be achieved through a unique mix of existing and new advertising, public relations, sales promotions and direct marketing tactics.

FINANCE

To fulfill the overall goal, the marketing programs must be implemented over a 12-month period. Costs are based on the needs of a small to medium-sized organization's marketing needs which Grow Desoto fits into. These costs are allocated to fit the needs of different marketing campaigns for peak months that will drive the most traffic to Grow Desoto. The marketing programs selected provide the most exposure with the least cost. The total cost of the 12-month period is a little over \$30,000.

IMPLEMENTATION

To track the progress of this plan, the metrics will be monitored are the loyalty card counts, sales and digital marketing metrics (impressions, engagements, click-through-rate and more). To ensure these efforts are worth the time and investment, the Return on Marketing Investment has been calculated for each quarter.

Current Marketing Situation

INTERNAL SEARCH - SWOT

Grow Desoto's mission statement is to aid small businesses in establishing and growing successful businesses, while providing the community a fun and unique retail experience. The main value to market to their consumers is the community aspect of the marketplace.



STRENGTH

- **Close to I-35 & I-20** for easy access
- Newly renovated building that houses small businesses
- **Unique product offerings & experience** compared to malls
- Strong management (DeSoto Chamber of Commerce partnership with DeSoto Economic Development Corporation) and **supports entrepreneurs**
- **Vegan** food options - not common in Desoto

WEAKNESS

- Owners are not always inside their shops
- Consumers think Grow Desoto is a **grocery store** until they visit
- No designated space for hosting events (filled by new tenants)
- Smaller space compared to malls
- **Lack of reliable transit** to Grow Desoto

OPPORTUNITY

- Desoto has a **1% population growth** rate each year
- Products and services can cater to the 70% of the population that's African American
- Small space makes it easy to provide **combined product offerings**
- A lot of different events every year
- **Low local SEO competition** in Desoto & surrounding areas
- Nearby attractions to partner with

THREAT

- Competitors American Dreams mall, Pleasant Run Village and Fountain Village are all nearby **shopping centers that attract a lot of customers**
- Yelp reviewers complain about how establishments are **not true to their open and close times**

EXTERNAL SEARCH - CREST



Competition

While small shops and walkable areas are growing in demand, Desoto still has much competition when compared to areas such as Deep Ellum, Downtown Plano and The Hillside Village.



17 miles away
(approx. 25 min)

Although, the concept of Deep Ellum and Grow DeSoto is different, both provide several shops, restaurants, and events in a close quartered area. Deep Ellum is branded as a place to get a first tattoo, to attend shows, to find a new favorite drink, and most importantly where anyone can start their new business. Deep Ellum brings in a large crowd of various demographics; however, they primarily attract young adults. The area is well known for its history, its arts oriented atmosphere, and lastly its lively weekends.



34 miles away
(approx. 45 min)

Downtown Plano consists of two roads that hold small mom-and-pop shops and is inclusive to all demographics. However, the primary audience is middle aged couples and families who usually visit weekends around noon. Later around night time, middle aged couples like to visit for happy hour. Grow DeSoto can learn from how Downtown Plano supports their local artists' work and which events attract the most audience.



6.5 miles away
(approx. 15 min)

Based on distance and services provided Hillside Village is one of Grow DeSoto's biggest competitors. Hillside Village is an affluent outdoor shopping and dining experience where visitors like to stay for several hours on the weekend. The space draws in a variety of people but the primary audience is young adults and families. Grow DeSoto can learn to adopt Hillside Village's outdoor scene that enhances the shopping experience to keep visitors around.

R

Regulatory

With the change in online privacy laws, it can be difficult for small businesses to collect information on customers through their ecommerce sites to learn about them. California has passed the CCPA and the law will affect any business that serve California residents. While it does not go into effect until January 2020 and it does not affect Grow Desoto's businesses, this is a sign that online privacy laws for other states may come in the future.

E

Economic

Overall, in the U.S. Market, retail sales have begun to decline. According to reports from Reuters, the slowdown is not currently concerning, but can indicate a larger decline in the near future. This drop only affected auto, home centers, department stores and internet sales. However, only pharmacies and health stores were the only ones to escape the decline.

Also, analysts have hinted at a recession coming within the next six to twelve months mainly due to geopolitical factors happening internationally. This could lead to consumers conserving their money and any business must prepare financially for this new change when it hits.

S

Soci-cultural

Desoto is a small town. The city is really focused in on football and sports with sports usually dominating headlines in their local news. On a bigger scale, there has been a recent surge of pushing for sustainability and a healthy lifestyle and diet.

T

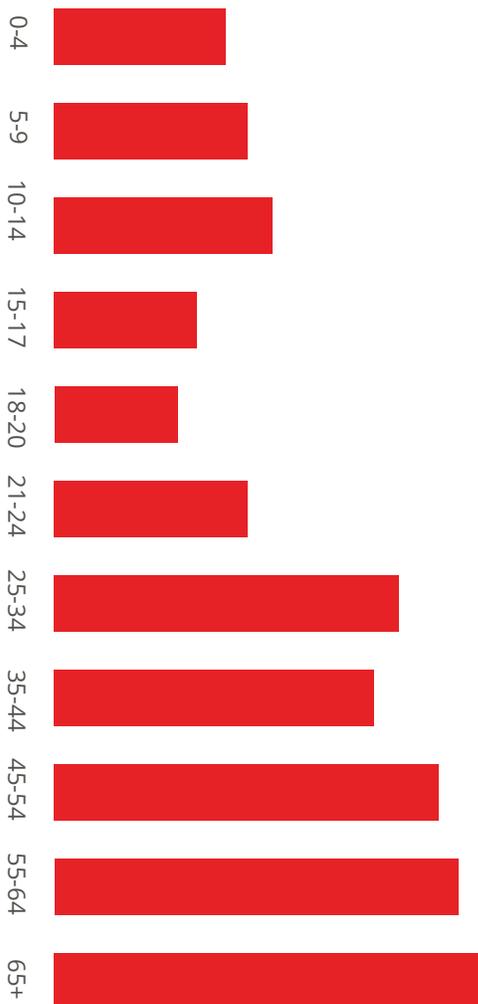
Technological

As smartphones are taking the world by storm, many consumers are making their physical cards into digital ones in their mobile wallet. With that, they would only need to bring their phones to go shopping. Even bigger retailers such as 7-Eleven has implemented Google Pay and Apple Pay just last year. Integrating payment systems such as Square not only streamlines the payment process, but also offers more payment options to customers.

Target Market

SEGMENT

According to Claritas and census data, there are several segments within the Desoto area. There are three primary segments: Families, Young Adults and Seniors with a variety of lifestyles.



Families consist of a married couple with usually at least one child. Parents tend to possess college degrees and work in management positions that allows them an annual median income of about \$68,000-\$70,000. These families own their own homes and can afford luxurious items such as pools and technological devices. They enjoy eating out at quick service restaurants and staying updated through social media.

Around 25-35 years old, these **Young Adults** are well-educated and ready to succeed in their careers. Mostly living as couples, they make a total of \$62,000 per household and work mostly in management positions. Technology is a big player in their household and they often enjoy going out for events, concerts or dining. Some have kids, while some do not.

Adults consists of those who are 50 and older. Most are at the later stages of their careers or are already retired and enjoying their life with an annual median income of over \$63,000. Most of them own their own homes and do not have children living with them. They tend to enjoy sit down restaurants and having a TV on for a majority of their day compared to using a mobile device.

TARGET & PERSONAS

The ideal customer for Grow Desoto are **young adults** and **adults** who live within a **10-15 mile radius** and are looking for **fun events and places to eat and shop**. Customers are usually single or couples looking for a spot to hang around, shop and eat. Especially those who are health conscious and are aiming for healthier lifestyles.

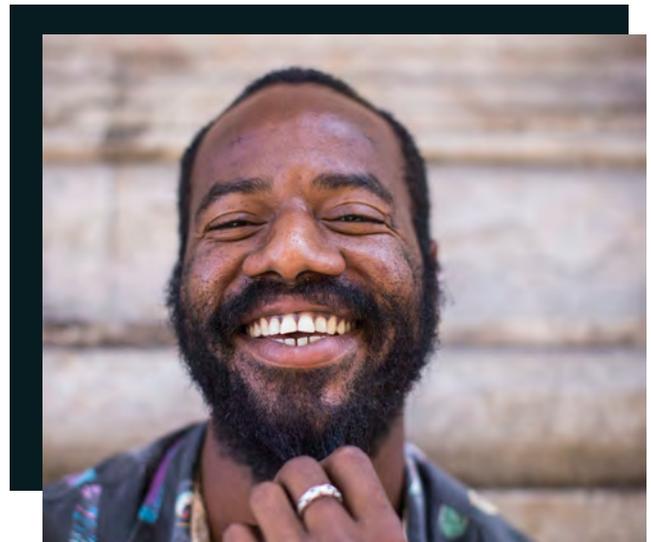
Desoto is a small town, so they are looking for that same connection between themselves and the shop owners. These customers want to support small businesses while seeing familiar faces within the shopping space. They might spend an average of 2-3 hours here to have a nice meal and shop around. Many of these customers are also comfortable with technology and like to engage in multiple channels to shop.



KAREN YOUNG

Age: 31 years old
Family Status: Married w/o kids
Job: Office Management
Household Income: \$60,000
Education: B.A., Business Administration

- Values culturally diverse media & experiences
- Owns smartphone & laptop
- Spends time on social media
- Enjoys eating out/going out with friends
- Omni-channel shopper



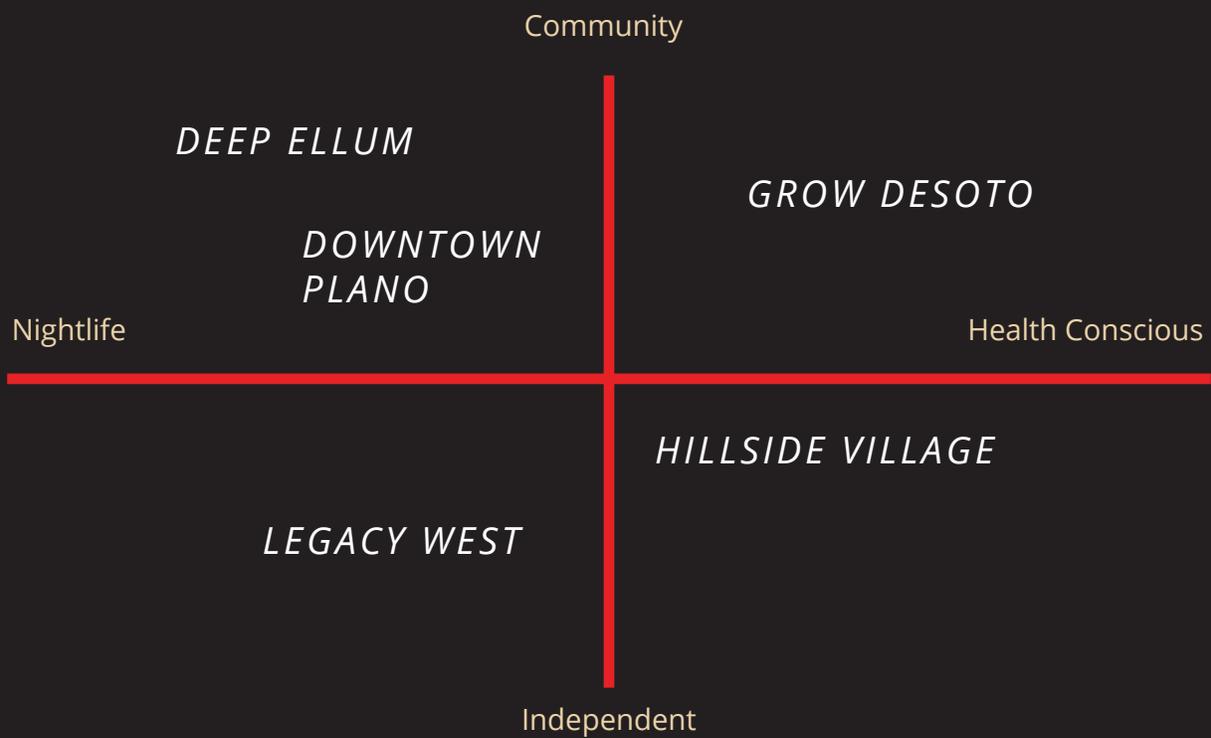
JOEY SMITH

Age: 50 years old
Family Status: Married w/o kids
Job: Senior Regional Logistics Manager
Household Income: \$60,000
Education: B.A., Supply Chain

- Enjoys going out to eat at sitdown restaurants
- Owns a smartphone & laptop
- Likes to watch local news network to relax, especially football
- Doesn't like super crowded or loud areas

POSITIONING

Grow Desoto can have a lot of potential for becoming an area that can provide healthy alternatives in a community setting. Customers can expect Grow Desoto to be a place where they see familiar faces and engage in conversations with fellow customers. Additionally, Grow Desoto already offers healthy lifestyle options with the vegan and natural, therapeutic product offerings and services.



Nightlife is defined by late night activities that usually involve music, alcohol and delicious, fusion, dining options. Cultural areas such as Deep Ellum and Downtown Plano offer these product offerings and typically attract young adults. Comparatively Health Conscious is defined by promoting a clean eating and healthy lifestyle choices such as working out and using natural products.

Community is defined by the relationships between shop owners and customers and between customers themselves. Independent/Singular Groups are areas where customers tend to go on their own or with a group of friends, but may not necessarily have relationships with shop owners or with other customers.

Objectives & Strategy

1. INCREASING AWARENESS

Based on Google Reviews and Facebook, Not a lot of people know about Grow Desoto and its unique product offerings. Online, they have received awards and recognition for supporting small businesses, but Grow Desoto should be receiving recognition from customers and testimonials about their experiences there. Increasing their community and online presence is important for driving in new customers and getting them interested in the small businesses.



STRATEGY

- Mail Chimp Email Marketing
- Google Ads
- Billboard on I-35
- Social Media
- Events & Community Partnerships

OUTCOME

Continuing the email marketing campaigns in Mail Chimp and implementing Google Ads would help increase Grow Desoto's digital presence. Additionally, for individual businesses, posting quality content consistently will help establish their business online and draw in new customers. To increase community awareness, Grow Desoto can put up a billboard to notify passing drivers and increasing public relation efforts to connect with local businesses and organizations.

Objectives & Strategy

2. COMMUNICATING COMMUNITY VALUE

Currently, Grow Desoto is seen as a grocery store and not so much as a community center. Because this is the value that the owners of this space want to communicate to their customers, there should be marketing strategies to deliver this message. The goal here is to create this community internally between shop owners and externally with customers.



STRATEGY

- Website
- Events & Community Partnerships
- Internal Marketing
- Combined Product offerings

OUTCOME

Externally, A great way to deliver Grow Desoto's brand story is through their website. Constantly updating the site shows growth and encourages new visitors. As mentioned above, increasing public relation efforts will also help fulfill this goal. Internally, Grow Desoto's small businesses can partner together to create unique product and service offerings for their customers they would not get elsewhere.

3. INCREASE SALES WITH NEW & EXISTING CUSTOMERS

After one year of business, shop owners want to continue to grow. When awareness is increased, hopefully sales will follow due to the new customers coming in. Additionally, Grow Desoto should continue to encourage existing customers to repeat purchase.



STRATEGY

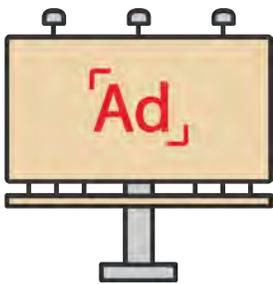
- Brochure
- Email Marketing
- Website
- Loyalty Cards

OUTCOME

To do this, the brochure is a tangible deliverable for customers to grab and read about Grow Desoto's unique product and service offerings. Some shop owners in Grow Desoto have ecommerce shops, so providing those links in the email campaign and the website might help drive customers to purchase. Lastly, to encourage both customers to visit the actual marketplace, a loyalty card program can be implemented to reward those who decide to make repeat purchases within Grow Desoto.

Marketing Programs

ADVERTISING



Billboards: The billboard will be placed in a neighboring city (Cedar Hill, Glenn Heights or Duncanville) to expose Grow DeSoto to a potential market within a 10 – 20 mile radius. The message on the board should communicate how close Grow Desoto is and the unique experience they will receive when they visit.

Google Ads: There will be two campaigns that run year round: Dining and Shopping. Dining will have two ad groups that highlights the healthy and cultural nature of Grow Desoto's dining options. Shopping will have two ad groups that highlight its unique clothing offerings and health services and products.

Emails That Highlight The Businesses: However, having a section to highlight one of the small businesses would help increase sales and encourage vendors. These could be highlighting partnerships within the marketplace or with local organizations that emphasize Grow Desoto's brand.

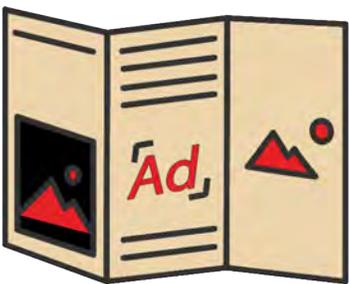
PUBLIC RELATIONS



Events: Grow Desoto is all about cultivating community so to strengthen community, different events will be held such as baking classes, cooking lessons, and customizing your own perfume. The events would be held by the respective shops (customizing your own perfume held by ChasFragrance, baking classes held by Delightful Sweets, and cooking classes held by any of the small restaurants in Grow Desoto) which will give publicity to the small businesses in Grow Desoto and will also help nurture relationships with customers.

Community Partnerships: Grow Desoto will receive good publicity and will be making partnerships with essential parts of the community such as students, teachers, PTA, and firefighters. Making lasting partnerships with the community will help Grow Desoto connect to the community surrounding it and may even lead up to bigger partnerships in the future. Partnerships are essential, because they help you branch out and build relationships that may lead to valuable opportunities.

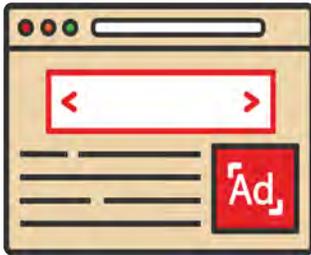
SALES PROMOTIONS



Loyalty Cards: Customers can get a loyalty card when they first visit Grow DeSoto. Once the customer gets all holes punched they will give the card to the shop owner. An incentive for the customer could be that once they get all 5 holes punched, they can get 15% off. This will help to gauge which stores are the most popular and help less popular stores adopt the same practices.

Combined Product Offerings: To increase the community feel between shopowners, partnering together to offer unique product packages would be a great way for them to do business together. This can be anything from getting a workout package with The Pit Fitness and HeyyHealer's Yoga Studio to a catering package for vegans with ThaiBinh's and Delightful Sweets.

DIRECT MARKETING



Social Media Upkeep: Keeping an updated, quality and consistent social media page is important for Grow Desoto and these small business owners to gain customers online. This is where interns can come in to help take/edit pictures and post consistently.

For Facebook, the interns can write longer posts and post pictures after each event and/or highlight anything happening within Grow Desoto (such as success stories from the Pit Fitness, HeyyHealer's aromatherapy and yoga, etc). For Instagram, the interns can write clever captions and provide wonderful imagery to help tell the brand's story.

Most of all, having consistent, quality posts can help establish Grow Desoto's online presence so that customers trust Grow Desoto and want to come in.

WEBSITE

Homepage Redesign: The video is a great way of showcasing the space and showing similar to Deep Ellum's site. However, to emphasize events, putting a slider in its place (above the fold) might entice consumers to come in. Additionally, the last two call-to-actions can be more customer focused. Like Downtown Plano, they can use "Shop", "Eat", "Play" to highlight the small businesses and their product/service offerings. If a small business wants to become apart of Grow Desoto, redirect them to a seperate page through the main navigation or the footer area.

Update Social Media Links Sidebar: Grow Desoto only has a My Google Business Page and a Facebook. While this doesn't affect SEO, since these links lead to off-site error pages, it can hurt the user experience. It's best to remove these icons so potential customers can have a smooth experience as they try to find out more about Grow Desoto.

Update Directory Page: Keeping site content is best for current and potential customers. When new businesses are added to Grow Desoto, they should be added to the respective directory section. Additionally, adding social media links and ecommerce sites to the directory page would be helpful for the small businesses to increase sales. Because most of the consumers in the Desoto area are tech users, they are likely to use the internet to discover and purchase. A nice addition would be providing a legible map with all the current vendors and without the pricing of each room.

Financial Plan

MARKETING COSTS

In order to fulfill the objectives, a year-long implementation of the marketing programs is a must. Table 1 shows the breakdown of the individual costs for each marketing program: advertising, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing. These are based on average costs that small to medium-sized organizations use to market their services and products. Marketing costs for individual businesses in Grow Desoto will vary per business depending on their market needs and goals.

Item	Price
Google AdWords <i>(2 week campaign per month)</i> <i>Keyword research will be included in strategy documentation</i>	\$200
Brochures <i>(Full color print at Office Depot)</i>	\$120
Billboard + Printing Cost <i>(1 month on one billboard along I35E or Hwy 67)</i> <i>*recommend 2x a year</i>	\$2750 + \$400 <i>(median price of \$1500 - \$4000 billboard rental estimated cost + median price of \$300 - \$500 printing cost)</i>
Loyalty Cards <i>(Pack of 500)</i>	\$20/month <i>(print as needed)</i>
Social Media Management - Buffer <i>(monthly subscription)</i>	\$99 (Business Tier Subscription)
Personnel (yearly) <i>Part-time Social Media and Email Marketing Intern</i> <i>Part-time SEO, HTML, & CSS Marketing Intern</i>	\$19,200 $\$10/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ Hours} \times 48 \text{ Weeks} = \$9,600$ $\$10/\text{hour} \times 20 \text{ Hours} \times 48 \text{ Weeks} = \$9,600$

Table 1

Financial Plan

12 MONTH PROJECTION

On the other hand, Table 2 displays the Total Marketing Budget for a 12-month period. The budget is staggered throughout the months. For the months of February, May, July, August, October, November and December, there is an increase in the spending for social media campaigns and Google Adwords. This is to promote popular events in these peak months such as but not limited to: Valentine's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Fourth of July, Back-to-School, Halloween, Black Friday and the Holiday season. The year-long budget also features the cost of having two part-time marketing interns for the Spring, Summer and Fall semesters which is far more inexpensive than hiring a full-time Marketing manager. Lastly, these costs are a projection of additional costs to be added to future Grow Desoto budget. Costs for current budget is not included and thus not part of the projection.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Google Adwords	\$100	\$200	\$100	\$100	\$200	\$100	\$200	\$200	\$100	\$200	\$200	\$200	\$1,900
Social Media Managment	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$99	\$1,188
Brochures	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$120	\$1,440
Loyalty Cards	\$20						\$20						\$40
Billboards		\$3,150										\$3,150	\$6,300
Personnel	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$1,600	\$19,200
Marketing Plan Total Cost	\$1,939	\$5,169	\$1,919	\$1,919	\$2,019	\$1,919	\$2,039	\$2,019	\$1,919	\$2,019	\$2,019	\$5,169	\$30,068

Table 2

Metrics and Implementation

LOYALTY CARD METRICS

Each month, Terry will be collecting any loyalty cards that customers have filled and turned in to the respective stores. A spreadsheet with all of the businesses on a 12-month chart will be used to track which stores are successful at getting their customers to come back and which ones need help attracting return customers.

SALES METRICS

A monthly sales report will be submitted to Terry. Store owners will check Square/Clover or any payment option they use to track when they get the most traffic and transactions. A spreadsheet with active business hours and amount of sales per hour will help store owners determine their peak hours during the days of the week.

DIGITAL MARKETING METRICS

(SOCIAL MEDIA, GOOGLE ADS, EMAIL CAMPAIGN AND WEBSITE)

Data tracking for all digital marketing programs are easily accessible. Social media networks have their own analytics and insights. A consolidated view of this can also be viewed through Buffer's (social media management platform) Dashboard. As for the Google Ads, Google provides a detailed dashboard of data that pertains to ads such as but not limited to: Direct and Organic Search traffic to the website. Google Analytics has a free version that is suitable for small to medium-sized businesses that can track engagement of the website. Almost all email marketing services provide metrics on Open Rates and CTRs (Click-Through-Rate). For all of these programs, conversions are determined by measuring Impressions against CTRs and Engagements.

ROMI

Return on Marketing Investment

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
Marketing Cost	\$9,027	\$5,857	\$5,977	\$9,207	\$30,068
Sales Target (30% ROMI)	\$11,735	\$7,614	\$7,771	\$11,969	\$39,089

A successful campaign will have an ROMI of 30%. Using the table of costs and projection for the starting cost of marketing investment, multiply it by 1.3 in order to get an ROMI of 30%. The product will be sales target for the end of the campaign. Table 3 shows the quarterly sales target for each quarter with regards to the costs and projection of Tables 1 and 2.

IMAGES SOURCES

Table of Contents images belong to Small Businesses within Grow Desoto

[Grow Desoto Exterior](#)

[Deep Ellum](#) | [Downtown Plano](#) | [Hillside Village](#)

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*Medium-Well Chick-fil-a Team of
the Fall 2019 MKT 4380 Marketing Capstone course*

Must See



THAIBINH'S

rich, savory twist on thai foods you've never seen before



DELIGHTFUL SWEETS

the perfect treat for a sweet-tooth with vegan friendly options



TAYLOR'S FASHION

boutique with cute outfits for the night out



TRIP-Z ART

creative painting with instruction for any occasion

PARTNERS



grow DeSoto
MARKETPLACE

324 E. BELT LINE RD.
DESOTO, TX 75104

Sun: 12pm - 5pm
Tues: 10am - 7pm
Wed-Sat: 9pm - 7pm

About

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

Grow Desoto Marketplace is the spot to get connected with your neighbors by spending a day together shopping and dining. Get the latest vegan dish or shop around for a unique gift for your family or for yourself.

With over 20 small businesses up and running within the marketplace, there is no doubt you'll find something unique. These stores are guaranteed to make your visit special each time. Grow Desoto will always have a friendly face to greet you each time you come.

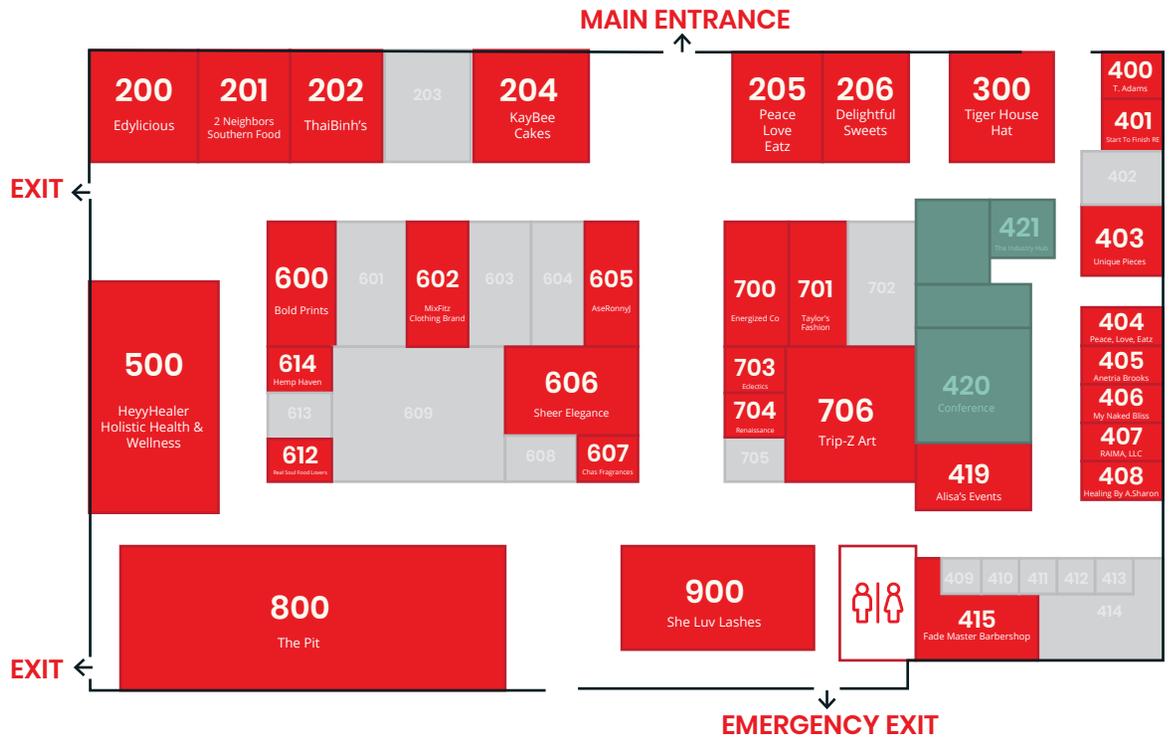
Here at Grow Desoto we prioritize your experience and hope to help build a community you can be apart of.

CONNECT WITH US

 www.growdesoto.org

 @growdesotomarketplace

Directory



RETAIL

- 300 Tiger Hat House
- 403 Unique Pieces
- 415 Fade Master Barbershop
- 419 Alisa's Events
- 500 HeyyHealer Holistic Health & Wellness
- 600 Bold Prints
- 602 MisFitz Clothing Brand
- 605 AseRonnyj
- 606 Sheer Elegance
- 607 ChasFragrance
- 612 Real Soul Food Lovers
- 614 Hemp Haven
- 700 Energized Company
- 701 Taylor's Fashion
- 703 Eclectics

- 704 Renaissance
- 706 Trip-Z Art
- 800 The Pit
- 900 She Luv Lashes

BITE TO EAT

- 200 Edylicious
- 201 2 Neighbors Southern Bite
- 202 ThaiBinh's
- 204 Kaybee Cakes
- 205 Peace Love Eatz
- 206 Delightful Sweets