

Pop Up Bus (and Boat) Business Model: Centered Around Microwork

by Pop Up Bus Team Member Daniel Kolodziej

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Executive summary:

When setting up a new initiative or developing a new product or service, it can be a good idea to focus on one specific area, or niche set of customers/users. This allows for an easier and safer and more effective set up/development process, which if successful can be scaled up and built upon. The Pop-up bus could provide training and pathways to employment for a number of different areas of learning. However, the resources required to create many types of learning and training opportunities could be difficult to source, deliver and manage due to limited initial resources. It would seem to be a good idea to focus on one area of learning, that could also provide revenue generation opportunities, whilst still meeting the brief set by the Clinton initiative, which stated “Young people need skills and experience relevant for 21st century jobs”.

Based on the above outline, I suggest that the Pop-up Bus starts as a mobile learning hub for teaching IT skills to young people in remote, economically deprived geographical areas. Basic IT skills are a prerequisite for successful 21st century employment, from where the young people can learn within context by partaking in Microwork activity which helps to fund the ongoing costs of the Pop-up bus. The Microwork activity could also help to fund other products and services for the communities that the Pop-up engages with, but we need to conduct some suitable financial modelling in order to discover what the realistic opportunity is.

I have done an initial business model canvas prototype and have also done significant research into Microworking, where I have been able to find a business case that outlines the potential revenue generation opportunities. I also found a decent outline of the Samasource business model that follows the basic headings of a business model canvas,

- **Value proposition** – Its value proposition is its ability to source projects from the likes of Google, LinkedIn and Microsoft and to recruit and manage labour in developing countries. It also adds value by being to break apart large projects into manageable short-term pieces of work and then recompile them in a form, which creates value to the customer.
- **Customers** – large technology companies that need large data verification and moderation services done at a low-cost (similar motivation as traditional outsourcing).
- **Channel** – is 100% done online through proprietary software platform which allows them to verify the quality of work
- **Revenue Streams** – Samasource presumably gets paid on a contract basis from large companies needed outsourced data verification services. It could also in theory receive revenue through training programs and licensing of its software to third parties.
- **Cost Structure** – Costs include the overhead from the office in San Francisco, the field centres and technology infrastructure as well as the development and maintenance of its proprietary software SamaHub. The majority of its costs though should be from the wages it pays to its microworkers – who are paid fair wages and also who receive free training as part of their employment.
- **Key Partners/Resources/Activities** – The key resource I would say is the software technology platform, which allows jobs to be separated and done on a wide variety of machines at a low-cost. In addition the relationships with key donors and tech giants are fundamental to its success.

SOURCE: <http://sibm.co/2013/04/27/samasource-providing-women-dignity-through-microwork-opportunities/>

Tech infrastructure

IT: Servers on the bus setup as a LAN (Local area network) which can download and upload information from Impact sourcing providers at a

geographical location that allows for access to wireless broadband. Or, we have the option to have the costly inclusion of a mobile internet antenna

http://www.groundcontrol.com/prod_ig2500_001.htm

I have provisionally contacted a military expert who can advise on the network infrastructure, should we decide to explore this area further.

Energy requirements: The IT equipment would obviously need power. In order to keep fuel costs down and make the initiative more financially sustainable I searched for systems that would allow the IT infrastructure to be self powered by the community that the Pop-up bus engages with, we could potentially have a 'bank' of these devices that could be operated on a shift basis,

<http://www.businessinsider.com/this-bicycle-desk-charges-computer-2014-1>

Once we have shared the canvas prototype document with the team and gained some consensus, I would be more than happy to do some actual financial modelling. I can also invite the full team to www.mural.ly, which will allow us to work remotely and input and iterate the business model canvas too.

I have used the following additional sources,

“Training Models for Employment in the Digital Economy”

<http://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/uploads/files/e4f57266-169e-4521-9557-eac7bb49d4da.pdf>

Samasource – creating jobs for the rural poor by impact sourcing microwork

<http://sibm.co/2013/04/27/samasource-providing-women-dignity-through-microwork-opportunities/>

Amazon Mechanical Turk: Providing businesses and developers access to an on-demand, scalable workforce. Workers select from thousands of tasks and work whenever it's convenient.

<https://www.mturk.com/mturk/welcome>

KEY PARTNERS

Amazon Mechanical Turk - Welcome



The online market place for work. We give businesses and developers access to an on-demand scalable workforce. Workers can work at home and make money by choosing from thousands of tasks and jobs.

Mturk

Our Mission



The Problem There is a global shortfall of 1.8 billion formal jobs. That means unemployment for 60% of the 3 billion people seeking formal work. Now is the time for change.

Samasource

Clinton Global Initiative



The Clinton Global Initiative convenes global leaders to create and implement innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges →

Clintonfoundation

KEY ACTIVITIES

ETHICAL -
MicroWork/Impact
Sourcing

Financial
Sustainability

KEY RESOURCES

Bus: Internet
tracking antenna,
Low cost laptops,
LAN (Local Area
Network) Servers

Training/Driving
personnel

ReadySet Solar Kit - Fenix
International



Bicycle powered
generators for IT
equipment

The ReadySet is a renewable energy system that charges from a weatherproof solar panel and can be used as a power source for cell phones, tablets, lights, radios, and even Wi-Fi hot spots.

Fenixintl

VALUE PROPOSITION

Mobile, 21st
century
employability skills
training: IT Training

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

Dedicated
personal
assistance with
stakeholders, until
trained & able to
utilise impact
sourcing systems.

CHANNELS

Local economic
development
agencies.

Local agents for
international aid
agencies I.E
Department for
International
Development
(DFID)

CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

Young, low skilled
people in remote,
economically
deprived
geographical
areas.

COST STRUCTURE

Cost driven, to ensure financial sustainability in the first instance, whilst creating value once established and prototyped further.

After initial capital expenditure and fixed costs for key resources, variable costs come into play with fuel and transportation

REVENUE STREAMS

Samasource

Amazon
Mechanical Turk

Sale of data from
stakeholders and
communities

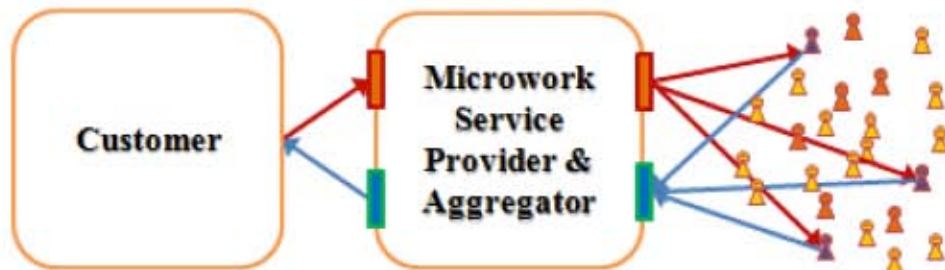


Image Classification Microtask



Does this image contain something of concern to somebody?

- Yes
- No
- Uncertain

Cost efficiency

- ▶ Overhead reduction
- ▶ Reuse
- ▶ Low fix costs
- ▶ Hybrid IT/ human meshes
- ▶ Dynamic pricing

Quality

- ▶ Long-Tail (productivity)
- ▶ Quality Management

Speed

- ▶ Time2Solution
- ▶ Scalability

Business Problem

1,000,000 images

Microworker

15 sec per classification
\$0.02 per task
\$4.8 per hour

Customer

Pays \$0.025 per classification
\$25,000 in total