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Case Study: Trauma Healing Project

Background

Trauma Healing Project, founded in 2003, provides help and resources to people who have been a victim of violence and other trauma in the hope that resolving such conflict will help both the individual and the community. The organization was founded by a group of students, survivors, professionals, and other community members. Trauma Healing Project's goals are to provide safety, healing, liberation, and justice to people who are affected by trauma, and it does so by providing classes, such as yoga, and workshops, where people are able to express their experiences creatively.

Mission

"The Trauma Healing Project is 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We are a multidisciplinary effort that includes advocates, activists, administrators, counselors, survivors and students committed to the elimination of violence and the healing of trauma through:

- Identifying and coordinating available healing resources and services
- Increasing awareness about trauma and effective responses through community and provider education
- Creating learning partnerships between clinicians, survivors, students, researchers and policy makers to ensure our work is effective and well-supported
- Enhancing and creating new healing services and support as needed"

(<http://www.healingattention.org/>)

Economic Scan

Much of Trauma Healing Project's money comes from grants and donations. The grants are contributed by private foundations, the state of Oregon, and the national government, which means that they come in a wide range of amounts. Additionally, Trauma Healing Project receives money through contracts with community partners. Another way Trauma Healing Project makes money is through donations. According to Elaine Walters, the donor base is growing, but it is still somewhat small. On the organization's website, there is a meter that shows up to date donations and the goal for the end of the year. Currently, Trauma Healing Project has raised over \$10,000, but it is still only halfway to its goal, and the end of the year is quickly approaching. If Trauma Healing Project fails to meet its goal of \$20,000 by January, it risks not having enough money to operate. Apart from grants and donations, a third source of income comes from class fees. Most drop in fees for classes and workshops are very affordable, but there are some that are more expensive. For example, the "Trauma Basic Awareness Training" workshop has a \$15 fee, while "Healing Trauma through the Body" comes with a \$60 fee; however, there are scholarships for these classes if there is a great enough need.

Demographic Scan

There are two main sectors of people who make up the constituency of Trauma Healing Project. First, there is a group that is dedicated to education and training. These people work with those seeking help while learning methods and techniques for working with people who have been affected by all sorts of trauma. Trauma Healing Project prides itself as being a place where people can hone their skills in a real world environment, which is part of what makes the organization so unique.

The second group of people involved with Trauma Healing Project are people who have been subject to trauma and are trying to move beyond it. These people are made up of all demographics, but a large part of this group is Latino. Trauma Healing Project is currently trying to widen its audience; one problem is that the

organization is just not well known enough to be visible to everyone who would benefit from it.

Cultural Scan

The overall atmosphere behind the scenes of Trauma Healing Project has changed drastically in the past few years. Only three original members of the Board of Trustees remain, and the new members have a much more business-oriented outlook. Formerly, the Board was made up of survivors and caregivers, but this new emphasis on business might be helpful for an organization that is barely staying afloat. Currently, the Board is focusing on fundraising and bringing on an attorney to help Trauma Healing Project with any legal issues that may come up.

That being said, one of the reasons Trauma Healing Project is struggling is due to its very specific name. The word “trauma” turns off audiences who might feel guilty for participating in its classes and workshops, when in reality, Trauma Healing Project seeks to be an open place where everyone can be open and supportive of each other. Since workshops and classes are so affordable, Trauma Healing Project sees an opportunity in gaining new audience members.

One cultural aspect Trauma Healing Project is trying to capitalize on is online media. The organization has had the same website for about ten years, and recognizes the need to update it. Right now, it is dark and looks incredibly dated. The logo in the top left corner is hard to look at for a long time. While the simplicity of the design makes it easy to navigate, it just looks unprofessional. But, Trauma Healing Project now has a presence on social media, like Facebook (around 400 “Likes”) and Twitter (12 followers). Unfortunately, it does not have a very wide reach. The pages are both relatively new, but I think Trauma Healing Project is struggling to gain followers, especially people who have never heard of the organization.

There is a method of contacting its audience that is going well for Trauma Healing Project: email. This reliable form of communication is a helpful tool for many organizations to spread their messages to many people at once. Trauma Healing Project has a new email management system that keeps track of data such

as how many people open the email, whether or not any links are clicked, and how many people unsubscribe to the email service.

Other Elements

There are several difficulties in raising awareness and support for Trauma Healing Project. A major problem with the organization is its branding; there is a huge stigma that comes with the word “trauma”. People have an aversion to visibly hurt people because there is a discomfort in our society with talking about violence and abuse. Because of this dilemma, it can be difficult to find donors who are willing to donate multiple times. Additionally, government funding can be limited because it generally goes to more formalized health institutions that deliver “quantified” results. In the past few months, there have been several discussions about changing both the name and the logo of the organization.

SWOC Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges) of the organization's cultural product, pricing strategies, product access (place), and promotional effort

Strengths

- More than a place where people can come to get treatment; people can also learn how to treat
- Unique product for Eugene community
- Important service
- Open to anyone who wants to heal
- Variety of classes and workshops
- Many classes happen weekly, so there is consistency within the schedule
- Drop in prices for classes and workshops are very low, and nobody is turned away if they cannot pay the full price

Weaknesses

- Potentially going through a rebranding, which would cause confusion
- Low social media presence

- Promotional efforts seem to be lacking; they mainly stick with email announcements, which only reach those who are on the email list
- Because there are “scholarships”, THP potentially loses money from their classes
- Overcrowding can be a problem; there are sometimes waitlists for certain classes and workshops

Opportunities

- Location in suburbia could help bring in different demographics
- Partnership with the Heron Center, located next door

Weaknesses

- Location in suburbia could also be a problem for people who live downtown and cannot get to the center by walking
- Very little awareness about THP within the community
- Stigma surrounding the word “trauma” might turn people away
- Lack of funding for non-institutionalized health organizations

Audience Analysis

Unsurprisingly, Trauma Healing Project has focused much of its attention on survivors and supporters. Much of its makeup, therefore, is fairly homogenous. As mentioned earlier, there are two main groups that comprise Trauma Healing Project’s audience: educators and learners, and survivors. Unlike some other centers, Trauma Healing Project is dedicated to bring together the entire community, and what better way than to offer educational classes that help teach students how to deal with healing trauma? This educational aspect is important because it somewhat diversifies the audience.

The second group of people is the survivors, people who are trying to work past previous trauma through creative methods. This second group is comprised of a variety of demographics, including youth, but the main demographic is Latino. Within this group of people, some actively sought help while others were coaxed into coming by friends and family.

Trauma Healing Project is currently trying to reach out to other communities within Eugene and develop its customer base. Because of its location, the organization wants to feel more inclusive for people who aren't survivors but want to live a healthy lifestyle. In particular, Trauma Healing Project wants to market its classes to suburban families who want to try something new. Because of its consistent schedule, this would be a great approach. Reasonable pricing and a wide variety of classes could help bring in a new audience if they can figure out how to market the package.

Another option Trauma Healing Project is working on is after school programming for children who would otherwise not have such an opportunity. While this program would bring in children, it would also bring in their families and raise awareness in the community, so it would help on multiple levels.

Trauma Healing Project's Board of Trustees recognizes the dire need for a wider audience within the Eugene community. Although they have a solid base, the organization is in constant need of money and support, and the best way for them to find new sources of income is through a wider base.