
Snider Center Venture Consulting MBA Information Session

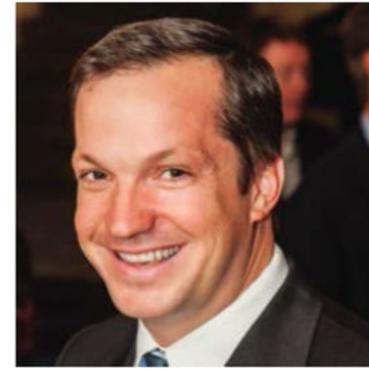
August 2019

Introductions



Erin McGowan,
Senior Associate Director

MS Non-Profit Leadership, Penn



Jon Potter
Venture Consulting Director

MBA, MIT Sloan

Introductions

Professional backgrounds and interests?

How and when did you hear about this program?

What do you know about this program?

Why are you interested in this program?

What differentiates Snider Center Venture Consulting?

Professional consulting mindset

Client impact focus

Track record of success

Continuity through professional staff support

MBA-undergrad collaboration

Venture Consulting program mechanics

Commitment

- Academic year commitment, with aspiration for 2-year participation
- Time commitment is 5-10 hours per week, with peaks and valleys

Participants

- Consultants are employees of the program and submit weekly timesheets
- Program participants are both MBAs and undergrads, with no formal differentiation in roles

Projects

- Consultants participate in one project for one client each semester
- Project teams consist of two consultants supported by a student engagement manager
- Projects are organized around kickoff, midpoint, and final meetings with the clients

Activities

- Weekly project cadence includes:
 - Full program meeting
 - Team meeting with engagement manager
 - Client call
 - Team working session(s)
 - Independent work
- Consultants also participate in trainings and developmental feedback

Training opportunities

Three hour upfront training for new MBAs

One training each semester hosted by BCG Philly, custom developed for this program

Ongoing trainings through the weekly program meetings

Recent project examples

See appendix for further details

- 1** Developed a supply chain optimization model for a consumer foods startup (second engagement with this company, raised \$4.5M between engagements, launching in Kroger and Walmart this fall)
- 2** Recommended priority applications and developed go-to-market strategy for healthtech startup developing a point-of-care diagnostic technology platform
- 3** Diagnosed challenges to the core business of a \$3M fashion designer through financial analysis, industry research, and internal interviews
- 4** Conducted profitability analysis for a food & beverage retailer and service provider that informed the decision to close the flagship retail store
- 5** Supplemented the go-to-market strategy for a tech startup that is developing automated threat detection software to prevent active shooter situations in public school settings
- 6** Developed a predictive model of consumer behavior and performed a conjoint analysis to understand consumer preferences for a regional lifestyle publication
- 7** Supplemented the growth strategy of a farmtech startup developing AI solutions for farmers (raised \$1.5M shortly after our engagement)

Application process

Thursday, 8/29 (by noon): Cover letter and resume due (submit here: <https://forms.gle/7zZAiCfjpx3x9y166>)

Tuesday, 9/3: Interview invitations

Wednesday-Thursday, September 4-5: Interviews

Tuesday, September 10: Offers

Thursday, September 12: First program meeting

Q&A

Staff:

- Erin McGowan: mcgowane@wharton.upenn.edu
- Jon Potter: jpot@wharton.upenn.edu

2nd years:

- Greta O'Brien: mobr@wharton.upenn.edu
- Runqi Song: rungis@wharton.upenn.edu
- Shujin Peng: shujin@wharton.upenn.edu

Appendix

Consumer foods startup

Client Overview

Founded in 2017, this client sells better-for-you Bouillon Cubes and on-the-go Soup Cups. The company recently raised \$4.5M, are currently in 5,000 retail locations nationwide, and will soon be launching in Walmart and Kroger.

Situation

- As this client has scaled, so has inventory and supply chain management needs.
- This client's various food ingredients and packaging supplier have varying lead times, costs, and capacity constraints.

Tasks / Actions

- Develop a model that optimizes Soup Cup inventory levels and supply chain management, incorporating issues such as sales projections, seasonality, and storage costs.
- Minimize stock on hand while ensuring that supply meets customers' orders.

Results

- Shared monthly rolling model that minimizes Soup Cup production costs based on sales projections.
- Shared model handbook that explains model logic and structure.

Key Takeaways

- Key skills learned include supply chain optimization, data structuring, and advanced Solver usage.
- Client is very cooperative and accessible.

Point-of-care diagnostic startup

Client Overview

This client is developing point-of-care (POC) diagnostic technology platform with the aim of bringing centralized laboratory testing to the patient's bedside.

Situation

- The client is in the process of developing a POC test for liver disease and was looking to understand what other markets they should prioritize.
- Among specific diseases, the client was interested in understanding the demand, competitive landscape of POC testing, and market entry strategies.

Tasks / Actions

- Size and analyze the market for each application identified by the client
- Develop a prioritization framework
- Propose 2-3 applications for further investigation
- Conduct deep-dive primary and secondary research on prioritized applications
- Develop effective go-to-market strategies for prioritized applications

Results

- Based on our research and analysis we provided the client with a detailed picture of the landscape for 3 applications
- For each we outlined the market size, patient journey, competitive landscape (future and pipeline)
- We also offered recommendations on how to position the client's product in each market

Key Takeaways

- The client leadership team was extremely accessible and committed to a strong output of the project.
- As the client is in the early stages of outlining their objectives, purpose, and market value-add we were in a unique position to drive actionable insights that will help the client going forward.

Fashion design business

Client Overview

This client sells fashion print patterns to major retailers, mostly in the clothing industry focused on swimwear and women's categories. Studio comprises three business units: Originals which designs original prints, CAD which designs bespoke prints by request, and Vintage which acquires and resells old prints

Situation

- After several years of positive profitability growth, the client in 2018 faced significant drops in profitability (driven mostly by nearly 30 contraction in Originals revenue)
- The client asked us to investigate revenue and cost drivers to understand causes of drop in profitability, particularly related to retention and larger market issues

Tasks / Actions

- Examined trends in client spending data from 2015-2018
- Examined trends in designer retention and productivity
- Conducted interviews with owners, sales and design managers, as well as office manager/bookkeeper
- Researched larger market dynamics of fashion industry

Results

- Based on our research and analysis we provided the client with a detailed picture of the landscape for 3 applications
- For each we outlined the market size, patient journey, competitive landscape (future and pipeline)
- We also offered recommendations on how to position the client's product in each market

Key Takeaways

- Confluence of small problems at time of soft market growth caused profitability problems
- Client strategy should encompass high design and sales quality, volume-based sales, and flexible costs
- New focus on accountability to ensure designers maintain high productivity (12 prints/week) for volume of sales
- Focus on rising overhead costs as the one area of cost structure that didn't fall in response to fall revenue

Food & beverage retailer and service provider

Client Overview

This client operates three retail stores (East, West, and Jersey), which sell homebrew equipment and supplies. In addition, it owns a services business which services tap lines for restaurants in the greater Philadelphia area.

Situation

- Profitability analysis across retail stores: how profitable is each store, what product categories are the most / least profitable
- Profitability analysis within services segment: how profitable are installations vs. recurring tap services

Tasks / Actions

- Break down overall P&L into five buckets: East, West, Jersey, Installations, Service
- Use Tableau, R, and Python to clean sales data and invoices to obtain high level profitability analysis
- Segment further as needed

Results

- The client decided to close East after gaining a clear understanding of profitability within each of the five segments identified earlier
- Clients really took out advice to heart

Key Takeaways

- Client is great to work with
- Make sure to request data early and be prepared for a lot of cleaning
- Client is responsive to data-driven recommendations and acts quickly

Tech startup developing early detection software to prevent mass shootings

Client Overview

Building an automated threat detection software to prevent active shooter situations in a K-12 public school setting.

Situation

- The client wants to find out where did security grants go (to which states and school district)
- The client also wants to verify their pricing model and to understand given their product, what is a better way to sell to school

Tasks / Actions

- Customer Analysis: Identify states and school districts with high grant money
- Go-to-Market Strategy: Verify pricing model and understand school procurement process by interviewing stakeholders and studying cases

Results

- We provided the client with the grant data for each states and identified school districts with high total grant.
- We also provided clients with the recommendation on pricing and selling process

Key Takeaways

- The client is very responsive and willing to share all the information they have got.

Regional lifestyle publication

Client Overview

A multi-platform media company whose business areas include regional lifestyle magazines, website, e-newsletters, social media and events.

Situation

- The client is looking to shift focus from advertisement revenue to monetize current and new customers
- The client hopes to analyze customer data to define customer personas and identify strategies to convert those customer groups to revenue generating members through subscriptions, event ticket sales, etc

Tasks / Actions

- Analyze customer data to identify personas
- Created a neural network to predict personas of current and new customers
- Research industry trends and best practices in the event space
- Analyze customer event attendance to determine trends and preferences
- Conducted surveys and conjoint analysis to learn about customer event preferences

Results

- 7 persona types the client can use to categorize customers with
- List of clients with highest potential of generating revenue for the client to target marketing towards
- Type of events liked by customers that clients should consider adding to portfolio
- Event bundling strategies that can help increase event attendance
- Marketing strategies for events to increase ticket sales

Key Takeaways

- Diligent data analysis (understanding how different factors affect each other)
- Survey and conjoint analysis development
- The client was very responsive and accessible for the team, and was very enthusiastic about the project.

Farmtech artificial intelligence / robotics startup

Client Overview

This client seeks to solve the labor problem facing farmers by making robots like Wall-E a reality. They do this through starting with a collaborative robotic platform, which helps people work more productively and builds a base for the future where farming is fully autonomous.

Situation

- The client was in the midst of early stage funding rounds and interested in identifying and prioritizing functionalities that they should enter (scanning, maintenance, harvesting, etc.)
- In addition, the client was interested in assessing the market demand for a “platform” and to better understand what potential partners would expect in a platform / partnership.

Tasks / Actions

- Evaluate and assess each functionality, by degree of competition, size, and technical difficulty
- Develop a prioritization framework
- Propose functionalities for near- and mid-term expansion
- Conduct deep-dive primary research on platform / partnership opportunities
- Assess the funding landscape

Results

- Based on our research and analysis we provided the client with a short- and mid-term market expansion plan, with functionalities to focus on
- We provided an overview of the markets’ appetite and perspective for a platform
- We also offered recommendations on how to position the burro in the market to gain traction and achieve a “platform”

Key Takeaways

- The client leadership team was extremely accessible and committed to a strong output of the project.
- As the client is in the early stages, with a focus on technical expertise, we were in a unique position to provide strategic perspective and frameworks for evaluating the market opportunity and driving future growth.