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Student ID	CHC119
Course	Professional Development & Practices
Assignment	Business Venture Proposal – Assignment 2

Business Idea

Cybersecurity Training & Simulation Platform (Website)

Outline:

A platform that allows individuals / small businesses to train for Cybersecurity certification interactively and intuitively. This would include simulations of realistic threats, attacks or scenarios, allowing users to get learning experience without the need for setup and hardware to legally learn. This would include a subscription-based payment model for an account, and a certification at the end of the course, which would have to be paid for.

Demand / Market Gap:

Currently there is a large market gap in interactive learning experiences for Cybersecurity using realistic / real world scenarios allowing users to apply practical experience. With small businesses, the cost of training staff for cybersecurity certification is high, allowing them a platform to train more cost effectively. Researching potential competitors, most use a bulk payment for the course. One of which is found here (<https://skillogic.com/cyber-security-certification-course-united-kingdom/>), it is accredited with many boards, but does not provide an interactive learning environment where the pace is set by the user, only videos and sessions.

Customer Outreach

Using free platforms like Cybersecurity forums, LinkedIn, Reddit communities, YouTube demos, etc. I can market the service to interested individuals who would be interested in the experience gained. I could also use paid services such as sponsorships on other content, B2B partnerships, digital advertising (Google Ads), or paying for better Search Engine Optimisation. Alongside this, a referral program could benefit user count by offering incentives for people signing up.

In the early stages, reaching out to smaller businesses and offering services at a discount / free could prove beneficial for both parties by using testimonials from the business if they find it useful, and publishing it as merit on the website.

Paying for Google Ads, Sponsorships and SEO would not be viable at the early stages, since Google Ads alone would cost almost £500/m at the low end.

Business Viability / Profitability

Financial Breakdown:

Firstly, a place to host the website is needed. OVH offers VPS solutions from £3.99/month ex. VAT, which would be enough resources to get started. Since they offer upgrades to this plan, it allows for expandability as the site grows. Alternatively, I have the option of self hosting – since I have the hardware to do so, and a capable firewall to keep it secure. This would cost me about 21p per day in electricity (at 25w per Hypervisor, 24h a day @ 35p/kWh) or £6.30 per month, but is considerably more

powerful, and can be upgraded much more economically. A domain costs around £5-50 per year, depending on the desirability, at the average this is about £1.90 a month. A safe estimate for running costs on hardware is around £10/m at the beginning of the project.

I could create the website and backend myself, utilising Stripe for subscription payment methods (1.5% + 20p commission), and a free & open source library such as React to create the front end. I would have to hire a designer and a CyberSec expert / course body to create the course, which would be the largest investment, as obtaining accreditation would be expensive. Since there are no costs available to see on the internet, I would have to directly contact an accreditation board such as CompTIA, ISC2, etc. for more information on this. An alternative is to create a concise interactive course revolving around a certification, allowing users to then undergo the exam separately. This would reduce costs significantly, but legal consultation would be required to assess the legality of copyright / IP status of the content. The cost between the 2 options would have to be evaluated with further research outside of the scope of this plan.

Unless I personally invested time into it, advertising media would also be a large cost at the beginning: creating YouTube demonstrations, hiring Cybersecurity experts to review and talk about the service, referral losses, etc.

The Cybersecurity market in 2022 was \$202.72B, with a projected growth rate of 12.3% (GrandViewResearch), indicating the potential profits to make in this industry is huge. Since the service does not specifically have to be catered to beginners, it could be used to maintain certification with intermediates and experts, allowing the potential revenue stream to be increased to envelop every professional in the market. In CompTIA Security+ alone, there are 700,000 concurrent professionals holding certification, and is the #3 worldwide; creating an interactive course around this exam provides a service to a massive amount of people.

Pricing Model & Projections:

As specified in the first section, the course competitor I found charges £540 for a self-learning course, and £810 for a live online course. This means I could reasonably charge £50-100/month – at 100 hours, 3 hours a day, some people may only take a month to complete the course.

Considering 10 people on the course concurrently in the early stage, taking the average of my range, the revenue could be around to £750/m month, with set maintenance costs of £10/month, and a safe estimate of upfront costs around £4000-£7500 if a designer to create wireframes and website plan (£30/h, 5h/d, for a week) and CyberSec expert to help create the course (£30/h, 5h/d, for a month) are involved to aid in the creation if I were to do it alone. Since the customer count would only grow as it is advertised and recommended, up to 100 concurrent users (£7500) is not unrealistic, making the investment recovery period under a year accounting for potential growth rate of the service.