

2016 – 2017 Company Report



<http://goconnexions.wixsite.com/gocx>

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We would like to offer a special thanks to Mr. Keith Fockler for his guidance and support throughout this endeavor. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Matt Strobelt and Josh Ippolito from Walsh University's Business Department for their help in shaping GO Connexions.



Executive Summary

Our Mission at GO Connexions

We at GO Connexions match the talent in GlenOak High School’s Career-Technical programs with community members who are looking for low-cost, affordable and professional services.

Our Service

For a small one-time match fee, we at GO Connexions will pair a student service provider with a client based on their need. Our student services include the following:

Video Productions

After Effects (2D and 3D),
Camera Work, Sounds and
Video, Animations , And
More!

Graphic Design

Coding, Photoshop,
Design Logo's, Edit Images,
Enhance Images In-Design,
Business Cards, Letter Heads,
Brochures, And More!

Photography

Action Shots, Portraits, Studio
Lights, Family Photos,
Landscape, Commercial
Brand, Fine Art, City
Landscape, Food, And More

Landscaping

Mulching, Trimming,
Weeding, Fall and Spring
Cleanups

Tutoring

Any subject matter by our
Teacher Pathways students

Finance Summary

GO Connexions had an initial loan from Junior Achievement for \$150, plus an interest rate of 10% making our pay back to JA a total of \$165. We have made 4 matches to date, at \$10 each (service charge for use of Square = \$.19/each match). We will be donating back our 10% of each match fee to Neighbor’s in Need. Marketing expenses totaled \$78.08, and at this time, we are “in the red” at GO Connexions.

Company Performance

Although we did not meet our financial goals at this point in the year with our business, we feel as though we have had a lot of success with our company. We cannot simply quantify our performance based on financials. From the beginning, the company members of GO Connexions were looking to create a company that was different from every other Junior Achievement company, and wanted to be “service based”. As a company, we love that we are mutually benefitting our students and Plain Local Community by bringing them together. From the matches that we have already made, we have been able to fulfill our mission. We feel that more time would allow our company to mature more, resulting in a net profit.

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Introduction

Our Story

Each fall through the High School of Business™ program, our senior Principles of Management class organizes a charitable event called the High School of Business Gives Back Day. This event serves as a “dry run”, low-stake practice for our businesses that we will later run (through JA Company). Leading up to this event, students are responsible to plan, market and organize all necessary action items required for the event. On the actual “Give Back Day”, teams of students and volunteers (headed up by the Management students) go out into the community to rake the leaves of community members in need. We do this at no cost, and accept donations of non-perishable food items for our local Neighbor’s in Need program at Grace United Methodist Church. Each year, we raise around 500 pounds of food and \$200 in cash, which is given to local families in need just in time for the Thanksgiving holiday.

This event tugged at the hearts of the members of our groups so much, and helped us to realize that there is a huge need for a variety of services within the Plain Local community. We also recognize that GlenOak is rich with tremendous talent within its student body as evidenced by the awards and competitions that our students win through their CareerTechnical programs. Realizing this, and desiring to create a company that is totally unique for the JA Company Challenge, we took our ideas to Walsh University to go through a “Think Tank” on November 21. Here, we were able to further develop our ideas and try to mold it into a business.

On December 16, we took our refined business model to present to a group of local business professionals, called “Sharks”, and asked for start-up monies. From here, GO Connexions was funded and ready to start match-making. The concept was highly popular with the CareerTechnical students and building the internal database was easy due to the large interest students had in becoming entrepreneurs.

What’s Behind Our Name



Our company, GO Connexions, developed its name from GlenOak (GO), and the mission to “Connect Hands with the Community” (Connexions). We wanted a name that would stand out, and decided to use an “X” in Connexions. We feel that it’s a trendy way to spell “connections”.

Our logo was specially designed to reflect our mission statement, and ironically, was designed by a fellow GlenOak High School student from the Graphic Arts Career-Technical program. He was GO Connexion’s first student service provider. Our logo demonstrates our core mission, which is to match people. Thus, we used the hands that are shaking with our motto, “Connecting hands with the community”.

Competitive Advantage

Outside of Angie’s List, which is a national web-based service provider option, there is nothing else like our company in our Plain Local community. Our company looks to benefit both client and student service provider. We start by selecting students who are at the top of their skill-set within their Career-Technical program to be service providers, and add them to our internal database. Next, as clients subscribe to our match service with their specific needs, we select the best suited student service provider in their requested category. Our student service providers offer a variety of services from the following categories: Photography, Video Production, Graphic Animation, Landscaping and Tutoring. To sum it up, we MATCH TALENT with COMMUNITY NEEDS here in Plain Local.

GO Connexions not only promotes our own GlenOak talent, but works to encourage all students participating in our company to build entrepreneurial skills and further their portfolios for the future. At GO Connexions, we believe in helping our own community so much that we are donating 10% of each match service fee to the Neighbor’s in Need program at Grace United Methodist Church.

SWOT Analysis

	Favorable	Unfavorable
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Internal	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are helping out community • Our fellow students are gaining entrepreneur skills in their career pathway, advancing their portfolios, and making money • Students provide services at more affordable rates than area businesses • We are an innovative business • It's a win-win for community members and student service providers 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compressed timelines and lack of time to grow and execute business • Lack of webpage design knowledge and IT design • Having community members understand the work skill and work ethic of our student service providers • Complex business concept
External	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our student service providers have an opportunity to make money • To one day expand our service offerings as more Career Technical programs sign on 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of trust in high school students • Angie's List – our competition • A student service provider giving bad service to a client

Execution

The Process

After being approved to start GO Connexions, we generated an application for students to become service providers. This application includes what category of skill set they will offer, a reference from their Career-Tech teacher, and a section for the parent to sign that allows the student to offer their services. Our clients also sign a disclaimer regarding the services that our students will be providing.

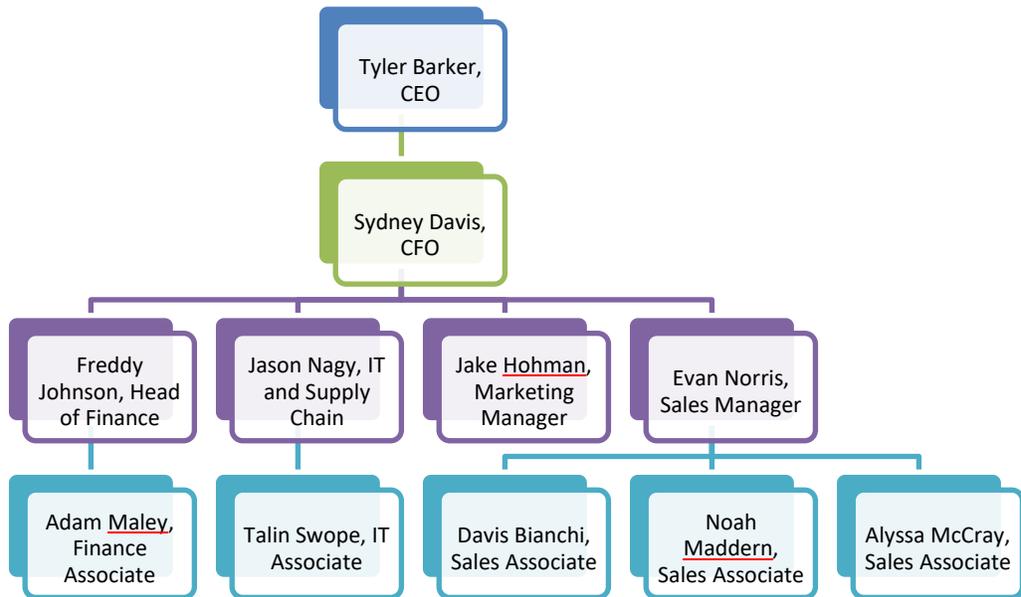
No student information will be given out to our clients by GO Connexions. After a client has subscribed and completed the paperwork, we match them from our internal database. Once this has happened, the student will then contact the client and discuss the job as well as payment. At this point, the student can decide to accept or deny the job. We simply serve as the match-maker between the client and student service provider.

Innovation

At GO Connexions, we feel that we are forward thinking by creating a company that is a totally unique service provider - we wanted a new and fresh idea to present to Junior Achievement. In brainstorming ideas for our company, we started by meeting with local

business leaders in our community to hear about their needs. From this, we were able to realize that there is a need for low-cost services and that our students could provide these services.

Company Structure



Target Market

Our target market is the Plain Local community, and within this market, we are focusing on: Small businesses looking for low-cost services, Individuals who are looking for low-cost services, and non-profit organizations who have a reduced budget/income who could benefit from low-cost services.

Marketing

Because our concept at GO Connexions is something that is new for our target market, we tried many different ways to approach its marketing.

Our External Database of Clients:



- Plain Pride Paper – GO Connexions was able to communicate our message to more 30,000 people in our target market through an advertisement that went out in the Plain Pride Paper!
- Social Media – We utilized social media accounts on Twitter and Facebook. In order to clearly communicate our message, we created a social media square that summed up key information regarding our company.
- Flyer and Business Cards – Our marketing team created a flyer that was mailed to our database of families from the HSB Gives Back Day. We recognized that they utilized the services of GlenOak students in the past, and would be open to doing so again.
- Personal Sales – Our sales team was present at highly attended school functions, equipped with flyers and business cards to communicate our message.
- Website – We realize that a website was necessary to provide more detailed information about our company, and our materials directed potential customers to it. There is also a payment feature linked to our website.



Our Internal Database of Student Service Providers:

- Student Work Application – We created an application for students who had an interest in providing their services.
- Personal Selling – Our entire company went to each of the career-tech classes with a stack of student work applications to generate student interest.

Finances

As mentioned earlier, GO Connexions has ended their company with a net loss as evidenced in the income statement below:

Income Statement/ GO Connexions	
Income	

Client Match Sales	\$ 40.00
Loan from JA	150.00
Total Revenue	\$ 190.00
Expenses	
Accounts Payable - Loan	150.00
Loan Interest Expense	15.00
Wix Web Hosting	60.00
Business Cards	18.08
Graphic Design	25.00
Neighbor's in Need	4.00
Electronic Payment Fee	2.36
Total Expenses	\$ 274.44
Net Income (Loss)	\$ (84.44)

From the beginning, we were concerned that our business concept would take a lot of time to get off the ground. Because of this, we tried to be as conservative as possible with expenditures and made sure that any expenditure that we made brought as much impact to the business as possible. Unfortunately, we are facing a net loss at this time – however, given more time to get our company out of the infancy stage, we fully expect that it would be highly profitable.





Obstacles and Challenges

From the beginning in our Think Tank, we recognized that creating this business would be a challenge. Here are a few of the challenges that we faced:

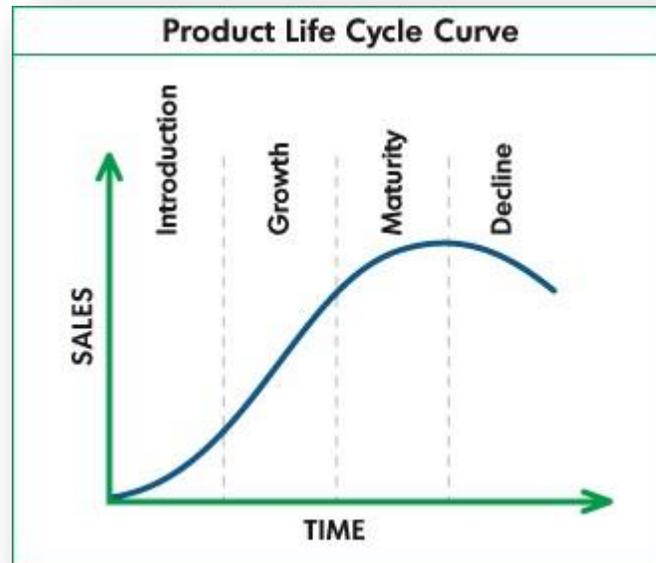
1. Initially, we considered charging our match-making fee to community members who were looking to access our "volunteer database" .
2. Our service line was going to be open to all students at GlenOak, not just focused on Career-Techs. This would open up services for babysitting and tutoring.
3. Not all Career-Techs were a fit for our match-making services based upon liability and need.
4. Our teacher delayed telling us that she was pregnant, and would be out on maternity leave from January 27 – April 3.
5. Compressed timelines for business operation.
6. New, unique and complicated business venture.
7. Class meeting schedule at GlenOak, being that we are scheduled to meet only everyother day for 90 minutes as opposed to other CT programs which meet for 135 minutes each day. Our momentum and focus was interrupted.

Resolution of Obstacles and Challenges

At GO Connexions, we pride our team for their ability to overcome all obstacles and challenges that were presented above:

1. In pitching this idea to fellow peers, it was not very popular and received much negative feedback. From here, we decided to make the database of student-service providers ones who were looking to be paid.
2. In the rejection of our initial application to JA for approval, we met with our community volunteer who helped us narrow down our liabilities and service offerings to focus on just our amazingly talented Career-Technical departments.
3. The rejection of our application again highlighted a few areas of liability that we needed to be clear of. The first area is in construction trades and the use of power tools – and so we eliminated them from our service offerings. The second was in tutoring services offered through the Teacher Pathway's program – and it was only approved if these services were offered in the public library, not inside of anyone's home.
4. Our company had to be well disciplined during the time that our teacher was away, and made sure to utilize the help and guidance that our community volunteer, Mr. Fockler, was able to provide.
5. This business is really starting to gain speed and momentum, and if given a few more months, would certainly prove to be profitable.

6. We knew going into this that we had to streamline this business to make it easy to understand and attractive to our target market. We worked to eliminate and add service offerings based on client need, and promoted our company through different marketing venues.
7. Because of the unique scheduling of our class, our company had to be more focused with our business plan and objectives. We set a variety of goals to accomplish in order to ensure success.



Learning Experiences and Future Application

For those of us in the business program, the opportunity to create this student run business has been quite eye opening. We have been forced to work outside of our comfort zones, by having to learn web design (on the fly) and making our company pitch to a group of sharks. Also, our initial company application was rejected, forcing our group to rework our business plan a few times. For the students service providers who were assigned a client, they really enjoyed being able to earn money for their talents. Our company experienced several setbacks, rejection, and complications – but we as a group managed to deal with each thing head-on.

The future of GO Connexions is bright! This is a company that is in its infancy stage, and will only continue to grow and attract more student service providers as well as paying clients over time. We hope to sign up more Career-Technical programs, such as Cosmetology and Construction Trades, and eventually expand beyond Career-Technical programs to offer such things as: Art lessons, music lessons, completed works of art, dancing lessons and drama/acting coaching. Perhaps one day, we will fully expand to also include a sports division.