



## Advertising and Promotion Practicum

### 2010 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



#### Background information:

Farm Safety is a very important issue in our industry. Especially in the spring of the year, young farm kids are outside playing around farm equipment, PTO (power take off) shafts, and flowing grain in gravity boxes. In a matter of seconds, a kid can be backed over by a truck or tractor, can be playing in the grain of a gravity box and get pulled under by flowing grain, or can get a piece of clothing caught in a spinning PTO shaft, entangling the youth and causing death. Our youth don't always think about the dangers of the farm. It is your responsibility to raise the awareness of these dangers to keep our kids safe.

#### Assignment:

You have been hired by the "Farm Safety 4 Just Kids" program to develop a 1 page (8 1/2" X 11") add to go into the Michigan Farmer Magazine. The goal of the ad is to raise awareness of the dangers on the farm in the spring of the year. It is to be in full color and will be published in the May, 2010 edition. Your target audience is all Michigan farmers with kids or grandkids, ages 2 to 18. You have 30 minutes to prepare this advertisement.



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## Customer Relations Practicum

### 2010 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



#### **Background Information:**

You are the sales manager at “Spring’s-A-Blooming Greenhouse” in Silvertown, Michigan. Your business has been open for 5 years and has experienced solid business growth each year. Your competition is the local mega-mart 3 miles down the road who also has a greenhouse. Your company markets annual and perennial bedding plants (petunias, begonias, geraniums, tomato plants, pepper plants, hosta, etc.) to consumers who demand high quality products, knowledgeable staff, and lots of friendly service.

The Jenkins family, customers for the past 2 years, purchased a flat of petunias last week and planted them. Unfortunately, they were killed by frost last night. They are bringing them back into your store to see what you are going to do about it. They are very unhappy that they paid top dollar for these high quality wave petunias, and they died just as easy as the inexpensive ones would have done if they had purchased them down the road at the mega-mart.

Your company policy is that you offer a full refund if plants die within 1 month of purchase due to disease, insect infestation, or poor quality from your store. **Your store does not, and cannot guarantee plants that die due to frost or customer neglect.** You value all of your customers’ business and try to provide them with information on plant selection, placement, and care, but you cannot control mother-nature. Your challenge is to help your customer understand the policy and reinforce the value your business offers. You can also offer free services such as weekly plant care clinics held every Saturday in May from 1-2pm and weekly landscape planning clinics held every Saturday in May from 3-4pm. Do your best to delight this unhappy customer and keep them as a customer.

#### **Assignment:**

You have 5 minutes to prepare and then 10 minutes to resolve this situation (*A warning will be given at 8 minutes*). Please make sure that you adhere to company policy.

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## **Market Analysis Practicum 2010 Michigan FFA Ag Sales Contest Contestant's Copy**



### **I. Background:**

You have been hired by the Castle Family Farm to help them decide how to expand and diversify their corn, soybean & wheat farming operation. They currently produce 500 acres of field corn, 500 acres of soybeans and 500 acres of wheat each year. They have 2 sons, Ken and Bill who are 21 & 19 respectively and attending Michigan State University. Both sons want to return to the family farm, but additional land to support them and their future families is not easily available. They have hired your team to do a Market Analysis and make recommendations to them about their options.

### **II. Market Research:**

Upon doing your research, you learned that their farm is 18 miles south east of a city of 100,000 people. Land values are going up in their neighborhood as people from the city are moving to the country and purchasing land for housing. The Castles own 1000 of their own acres, and rent the remaining 500 acres from neighbors who have retired from farming.

You also learn that there is a growing demand for hay and wheat straw in the area as many people in the area own small acreage farms with horses and pets. This high value market will allow the family to sell straw for \$4.00 per bale and good quality alfalfa hay for \$6.00 per bale. The wheat will produce 100 bales of straw per acre as a by-product of the wheat production and can be baled with the purchase of the neighbor's good used baler and wagons. He wants \$6000 for the baler and wagons. You could also plant alfalfa hay at a cost of \$100 per acre (must re-seed every 5 years) and a yield of 200 bales per acre, per year. The same baler could be used. Labor is hard, but could be done by the family. Storage of up to 2000 bales could be accommodated by the current buildings on the farm. Additional production could be sold directly out of the field.

Agri-tourism has also been successful in other parts of the country, including the creation of corn maizes, pumpkin patches, and hay rides. These would also take time and labor, but could create additional farm income opportunities.

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### III. Your Assignment:

You need to help the Castle family make some decisions on the future direction of their business:

1. Goals: Both short term (less than one year) and long term (greater than 1 year) goals.  
*Note: Be creative and thorough/complete in your responses.*
2. Development of a Proper Marketing Mix to reach those goals, including:
  - Products and possible services.
  - Style of business (retail, wholesale, delivery, etc).
  - Price, Product, Place, and pricing policies
  - Promotions or Programs to secure business.*Note: Be sure to show your knowledge of Marketing Concepts, ie: knowledge of customer orientation and ease of purchase.*
3. Development of Evaluation and Control procedures.

In the next 20 minutes, you are to prepare a one-page summary of your recommendations to be given to the judges, as well as your team's oral presentation. Upon the completion of your 20-minute preparation time, you will then have 10 minutes to present your recommendations and summary page to the judges.

*Note: Due to the time constraints of the Castle Family Farm representative (the judge), your presentation will be limited to the allotted 10 minute time frame.*

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## Prospecting Practicum

### 2010 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



#### **Background Information:**

You are a salesperson for the Upwards Bound Landscape Company. Your business sells retail landscape materials, trees, shrubs, design and installation services, and product delivery. You have been in business for 49 years and you are the grandchild of the original owner. You are located in Smithville Corners, just 15 miles South West of Lansing, Michigan.

Your company has just created a “Spring Landscape Shade Creation Special” and has been promoting it to local homeowners in the Smithville Gazette. There are 3 separate offers available to customers:

1. “Buy One Tree, Get One ½ Off”: This offer is good only for trees of \$50.00 or more in value. The free tree must be the tree of lesser value.
2. “Mini Forest” Program: For \$200.00, you get 6 trees of your choice. Trees can be either conifers (pine trees) or deciduous (lose their leaves in the fall), but have an individual value of no more than \$60 each.
3. “Lumberjack” Program: For \$400.00, you get 16 trees of your choice. Trees can be either conifers (pine trees) or deciduous (lose their leaves in the fall), but have an individual value of no more than \$60 each.

In addition, you can offer the homeowner “4 free tree fertilizer spikes” just for setting up an appointment to come into the store at a specific date and time in the next 3 days to discuss their landscape tree needs. This is a limited time offer that will only be available in April.

#### **Your Assignment:**

You will be receiving a phone call from Mrs. Johnson who saw your add in the local newspaper and wants to know more about your landscape tree specials. As a customer prospect, Mrs. Johnson has the potential to become a first time customer if you can convince her to come into your store and purchase products based on your special offers. Additionally, if you can provide her with the right buying experience when she does come in, you may create a loyal customer for life. You are to set up a time and date for her to come into your store and meet with you to discuss her landscape needs. You have up to 10 minutes to prepare and 5-7 minutes to complete your call.

**\*Let the contest volunteer know when you are ready to receive the call and begin the contest.**

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## Telephone Skills Practicum

### 2010 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



#### **Background Information:**

You are the service manager for the local John Deere farm equipment store. Your top sales person, Sara Simpson, sold a new John Deere 9870 STS combine to Mrs. Wilkinson yesterday. She is a 2500 acre corn and soybean farmer who was widowed 3 years ago when her husband died in a grain bin suffocation accident. She lives 20 miles down the road. This is her first John Deere brand combine; she had previously only owned Case brand equipment.

You find out from Sara that Mrs. Wilkinson is a very well known farmer in the area and always keeps her equipment in perfect condition. She expects a lot out of herself as well as the people with whom she chooses to do business. Sara began calling on her 2 years ago, and because of her persistence, and because she was able to make her a good deal, Mrs. Wilkinson decided to give one of our John Deere brand combines a try. This will be one of 3 combines working on this farm and the only one from John Deere.

#### **Your Assignment:**

Sara just stepped into your office to ask you to give Mrs. Wilkinson a call to introduce yourself as the service manager and to begin building a relationship with her. You have 5-7 minutes to prepare and 8-10 minutes to handle this call, including checking on the delivery experience and condition of the combine. You should also explain your service department's services including the fact that you have 4 fully certified mechanics on staff, a complete parts department, an "on-the-road" service truck for field repairs, and 20 years of personal experience working for John Deere. Remember to engage Mrs. Wilkinson in discussions of how she might be able to take advantage of your services.

**\*Call the judge when you are ready to begin the contest.**

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