



Advertising and Promotion Practicum 2015 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background information:

The Michigan Agri-Business Association (MABA) has created the “Agriculture Feeds You” campaign. It is an initiative to help Michigan residents understand the value that the agricultural industry provides in the food they eat every day. One of those initiatives is the attached bumper sticker:



Background on the MABA: The Michigan Agri-Business Association was formed on June 25, 1903. The primary interests of the group have been consistent and clear; to further the development and prosperity of businesses engaged in agriculture!

The Michigan Agri-Business Association is also a strong supporter of education and informational programs on a wide variety of topics throughout the year.

Members of the Association are encouraged to become involved in committees as they choose and are kept up to date on the latest issues and happenings with timely and informative publications. The Michigan Agri-Business Association; the organization of agriculture businesses!

Assignment:

You have been hired by MABA to develop a 1 page (8 1/2” X 11”) advertisement to go into the Lansing State Journal newspaper. The goal of the ad is to get consumers more aware of where their food comes from – Michigan Farmers and Agribusinesses. The advertisement is to be in full color and will be published in the Sunday, May 3, 2015 paper. Your target audience is Michigan residents in the urban Lansing area. You have 30 minutes to prepare this advertisement.

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Customer Relations Practicum

2015 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You are a Customer Service Associate for “Cabalas”, a national chain of outdoor hunting and fishing equipment. “Cabalas” sells products directly to customers both in store, and on-line. Earlier today, one of your customers purchased 2 new fishing rods and reels so that they could take their child out fishing this weekend. When the customer opened up the second rod, it was found to have a crack in it. The other rod looked to be in good condition. The customer is very unhappy because they live 20 miles away from your store and they have now had to make two trips to your store because of this problem with your product. They want you to not only replace the cracked rod, but also reimbursement them \$20 to cover the cost of the return trip to your store.

The customer service policy for “Cabalas” is to replace any defective merchandise. (It is unclear to you whether the rod was broken prior to it leaving the store, or by fault of the customer opening the package.) If they do not have a replacement in stock; they will order it and send it to the customer’s home, free of charge. Luckily, “Cabalas” has 3 more of these rods in stock. “Cabalas” will also refund the purchase price of the defective merchandise if the customer decides that they no longer want the product. Under no circumstances will “Cabalas” reimburse customers for driving to their store. The local FFA Chapter is selling hot dogs and chips in the lobby of the store, and you do have the authority to give unhappy customers a free meal at the FFA booth. It is your responsibility to empathize with the customer, hold to your policy, and ensure that this customer will continue to be your customer in the future.

Assignment:

You have 5 minutes to prepare and then 10 minutes to resolve this situation. At the end of your 5 minute preparation time, the contest volunteer will take you from your preparation area to your “customers” (the judges). There will be 2 judges in the room. One judge will play the part of the “customer” while the other judge evaluates your effort.

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Market Analysis Practicum 2015 Michigan FFA Ag Sales Contest Contestant's Copy



I. Background:

You have been hired by Bill Babbit, owner of the Pleasantville Feed and Grain store. Bill and his wife, Nancy, have owned this business for 30 years and are now in their mid-50's. They are not yet ready to retire, but are ready to slow down and not work daily in the store. They have 2 sons that are done with college and working in the area. Bob is an electrician working for a local company, and Jim is a salesman for Crop Production Services selling seed, fertilizer and herbicides to area farmers. They both love the family business and enjoy helping out mom and dad at the store. But, they are both now married and it is hard for them to find time to work, have a family, and help out at the store. With the current business, Bill and Nancy make good money, and employ 3 part time workers in the feed mill. They would like to see one or both of their sons take over the business within the next 5-7 years, but are not sure how to make that happen. 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 learn that the feed mill currently sells horse, cattle, pig, sheep, chicken and rabbit feed. They also have a storefront that sells general farm merchandise. Pleasantville is located 30 miles outside of Grand Rapids, MI with a population of many small farms, a few large farms, and many residents who simply enjoy living in a rural area close to an urban area. The population of the area is growing as people move out of the city to be able to raise a few small animals. The current gross sales for the store are \$2.3 million. Expenses, including salaries, equal \$2.1 million dollars annually. This leaves \$100,000 annually to reinvest into the business. Bill and Nancy take \$120,000 annual salary combined out of the store, and they pay their 3 part time employees each \$50,000 including the cost of insurance and retirement.

The store currently sells both pre-bagged Kent brand feed as well as their own custom blend feeds from the mill. The greatest increase in sales has come from horse feed and chicken feed sales due to the growing local population's interest in these types of livestock. Their only current competition is the TSC store 20 miles to the north and the Platteville Elevator 15 miles to the south. Their store is currently open from 8:00am–6:00pm on weekdays, and from 8:00am-1:00pm on Saturdays. They are closed on Sundays. The storefront is original from when they bought the business 30 years ago, but they put in all new office and mill equipment 5 years ago. They also have \$200,000 in reserve for potential future improvements in the storefront.

III. Your Assignment:

You need to help Mr. Babbit make some decisions on the future direction of this business operation:

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, and pricing policies
 - Promotions or Programs to secure new business.*Note: Be sure to show your knowledge of Marketing Concepts.*
3. Development of Evaluation and Control procedures.

In the next 20 minutes, you are to:

1. **Prepare a one-page “summary sheet” of your recommendations to be given to the judge prior to presenting.**
2. **Prepare 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 judge.

Note: Due to the time constraints of Mr. Babbit (the judge), your presentation will be limited to the allotted 10 minute time frame.

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Prospecting Practicum 2015 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You are a salesperson for “Flowers For Fun”, the local floral design company. You are in charge of sales to new customers by making cold calls and trying to get these customers to sign up for your “Fill Your Floral Calendar” program. This program delivers one arrangement of fresh flowers each month to any address within a 15 mile radius of your store. You are a new employee at this store, hired specifically to sell this program.

The details of the “Fill Your Floral Calendar” program are as follows:

Each month, you will receive an arrangement of fresh flowers delivered to your door.

The flowers will come with a personally written “To” and “From” card.

The flowers will be seasonally appropriate.

Delivery is free within 15 miles of the store.

The program can begin in any month, and will continue for 12 months total.

The cost of the base program is \$180/year. (Payable in cash or by mailed-in check)

- This can be paid monthly at a rate of \$20/month (\$240/year total) if it is set up with a credit card for automatic monthly charges.

Upcharge opportunities would include:

Premium floral selections (includes some roses): \$299/year (or \$35/month: \$420 total)

Delivery outside of the 15 mile radius will be charged at \$1.00/mile/month.

Your Assignment:

You will be cold calling Charlie Johnson, a local resident, to discuss the “Flowers For Fun” program and try to sign Charlie up for the program. Customers may purchase the flowers for their spouse, for a friend, or for a parent/grandparent, etc. They can purchase as many of these programs as they want, but there is no discount for ordering multiple programs. Be sure to secure payment plans for any sales agreed upon.

You have up to 5 minutes to prepare and 8-10 minutes to complete your call.

****The adult volunteer will tell you when your 5 minute prep time has expired. You can then call the judge to begin the contest.***

Call the judge at the following phone number: _____

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Telephone Skills Practicum

2015 Michigan FFA Ag. Sales Contest



Background Information:

You have an SAE project that includes raising and selling lambs to 4-H and FFA members to take to the county fair to sell. The SAE project has evolved into a business and one of your customers, Pat, (an FFA member from the Pontiac FFA chapter) has purchased two of your lambs 7 days ago. The lambs are currently 60 pounds each, and Pat plans to raise them to 130 pounds each between now and the county fair on August 1st.

When you got home from school today, you received an angry message from Pat that one of the lambs purchased was not eating very good and was limping. Pat wants you to return the call.

Your Assignment:

You are to call Pat and find out what is wrong with the lamb. You should find out what has happened with the lambs since they left your farm 7 days ago and learn more about what is wrong with the lambs. You have a policy that all livestock sales are final (due to not wanting to spread any disease between farms), but that you would be glad to stop over tomorrow to see what is wrong with the lamb. You should also ask some probing questions that might determine the severity of the problem with the lamb. Examples might include asking if they have looked at the hoof to see if there is anything in the hoof, or ask if they have taken the temperature of the lamb (normal is 102 degrees). If the problem is severe, you should suggest calling a veterinarian as a precaution. Any veterinary costs would be at the expense of the customer. Be sure to clarify your next action with the customer before ending the call. You want Pat to return next year to buy more lambs.

****The adult volunteer will tell you when your 5 minute prep time has expired. You can then call the judge to begin the contest.***

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