Narrative

Iteration One

CIS 320

Scarlet Birds

Sweet Karoline’s Cakes has several business processes that aren’t in place. We recommend the following business processes to be implemented; an accounting system, an outbound logistics system, a newsletter, schedule management system, order management system, inventory tracking system, order process system, a customer database, and an order changes tracking system. The business will benefit greatly once these systems are in place.

The first problem to Sweet Karoline’s business process is there isn’t an accounting system in place. First, is keeping track of cash flow. This is a big problem for any business because this keeps track of inventory and how much you’re spending. The business may be overspending on inventory. If you cannot keep track of your cash flow, you don’t know if the business is having success or a loss, which can lead to debt. Debt can lead to legal issues regarding tax evasion. Whether it be unintentional or unknown, the IRS can get involved and shut the business down. To prevent this from happening, having an accounting system in place is vital to business success. This could mean having a personal accounting assistant or an online accounting system to prevent problems with cash flow. For example, using QuickBooks can be an inexpensive way to implement this system.

The benefits of implementing an accounting system to an organization can lead to money being saved. This can include avoiding legal issues due to not having an accounting system. Next, brings up the issue of overspending or underspending on inventory. This can lead to not only inventory being potentially wasted, but time and money are also being spent inefficiently. We’ve estimated about $100 can be saved in inventory costs by implementing an accounting system. Another potential loss can be traced back to underpayment of products. A business with no accounting system may not know the true cost of their product, this can lead to a loss in profit. We’ve estimated an average of a 10% increase in revenue.

**Technical Feasible:** With no accounting system there will be a greater risk of unfamiliarity. This can be resolved by using an accountant. However, a more affordable solution can be using an online software. This can be easy to learn and there will be no maintenance involved for the user. With compatibility, there are no pre existing systems, so we will be starting fresh with no need to worry about compatibility with existing systems.

**Economic Feasibility:** In terms of economic feasibility with an accounting software, there aren’t any development cost. Annual operating cost will depend on the type of software the company will be using. There are accounting software available for download that is free. However, using a SaaS gives more features and security than free software. Some accounting software starts at just $20 a month. This includes tracking income and expenses, invoicing and accepting payments, running reports, sending estimates, and tracking sales and sales tax. The benefits of using account software can save an estimated amount of $100 annually.

**Organizational Feasibility:** In this case, there are no preexisting systems or operations. The goal of this project aligns well with the outcome the business owner wants. The current project champion, which in this case is the same as the user, will be the only one who needs to be happy with this implementation.

Currently, Sweet Karoline’s Cakes lacks a way to properly schedule orders for cakes and other goods. This raises issues when dealing with customers that cannot quickly see if a specific date or time is fully booked for orders or deliveries. Karoline herself also needs quick access to this information. We plan to implement a calendar system that can be updated to reflect what dates and times are available for customer orders.

Time and date slots that are readily displayed for both the customer and Karoline allow for order booking decisions to be processed and made at a quick glance. The user will be able to quickly and efficiently determine if the order can be fulfilled on the preferred date. Centralizing this information allows Karoline to work more efficiently by freeing up time that would previously be devoted to answering customer questions about which days are open or booked because the customer will already have an idea about which dates are open after looking at the calendar.

**Technical Feasibility:** Our team has little experience with baking and the baking industry, so we must maintain communication with the client and development team to ensure necessary items get implemented as requested. Our development team consists of CIS majors with experience in creating and designing databases, an important part of implementing this calendar item to the website. Due to our familiarity with databases, the technical risk associated with this item is low. This is a relatively small project when looking at the website as a whole, so there is little risk involved. Compatibility should be no issue at all since Sweet Karoline’s Cakes does not currently have a website or database at all, we will be able to build everything from the ground up.

**Economic Feasibility:** The development cost of this calendar item should be low due to it being a small business and a small project, most of the cost will be going to labor and not technology costs. Annual operating costs vary depending on which service is used to host the website, but many services are commonly found within the range of $20 to $30 per month, which equates to $240 to $360 per year. This is for the entire site, not the small calendar portion of the site. The benefits derived from this item are mostly intangible, as this item is designed to save time when dealing with customers. More time saved means more cakes, or other items, can be made and sold, allowing for more money to be made.

**Organizational Feasibility:** The current project champion, Karoline, will also serve as the system user. The system aligns well with the business objectives because it streamlines the business process of taking orders, making customer interaction flow more seamlessly.

As of right now, Sweet Karoline’s Cakes does not have any sort of customer database. This creates difficulties with promotional deals, customer relationship management (CRM), email marketing, keeping track of past orders, and maintaining accurate data on both new and returning customers. It is our plan to create a customer database that will allow the accurate tracking of useful customer information.

Having this information stored in a database will streamline the order process and allow information to be sent to customers via their preferred method that will keep them updated on promotions or new additions to the business. It will also allow for CRM which will create a greater experience for the customers, hopefully bringing them back in the future and increasing sales.

It should be feasible to add a customer database to the website but there are some things that must be considered.

**Technical Feasibility**: It will be important to maintain a high level of communication between client and development team to be sure the database contains everything that is necessary for Sweet Karoline’s Cakes to be successful. Many of us on our team have little experience with baking, especially when it comes to custom cakes, so our familiarity with the functional area is somewhat low. Our development team are all made up of CIS majors with database experience, so familiarity with the technology necessary to make a relatively small customer database on the backend of a website holds little risk. The customer database is a sizeable portion of the overall website development project, however given the timeframe and amount of people we have working toward the goal, project size should not be an issue. Since there is no active website or database for Sweet Karoline’s Cakes compatibility is also a non-issue, due to the fact we will have the ability to start from scratch and implement what is necessary for the database and website to function smoothly.

**Economic Feasibility:** The development cost of a customer database should be relatively low for a business of this size, most of this money going to labor of the developer building the backend of the website. WordPress for businesses starts at $25 per month billed annually and uses MySQL for backend database management. The annual operating costs shouldn’t be much more than the cost of the website, especially if the client wishes to take over website management after its creation. After the database is up and running, the potential cost savings or revenues could vary. However, the increase in the amount of time the client will have, having all the customer information in one place, instead of having to search for it in multiple locations, could be put toward making more cakes. This could also be an intangible benefit. The amount of time saved, combined with a likely increase in customer satisfaction is well worth the upfront cost of the database and the website.

**Organizational Feasibility**: The system is very feasible organizationally since as of right now there is only one adopter of the system who serves as the project champion, and the system user. Unless the business grows, and the client eventually hires employees, this is the only user that needs to be happy with the way the database is implemented.

Sweet Karoline's Cakes wants to be able to manage all orders, update, and process them efficiently. Currently, when a customer begins the ordering process they are directed to use Sweet Karoline's Cakes' email to place their order. However, because the company has many ways to place an order other than the email and many of the customers are friends and family of the owner, orders come from several different sources such as emails, phone calls, Facebook messaging, and text messages. When the owner receives these orders they are written down on any usable writing surface, some go into a basic excel spreadsheet. When locating an order for reference she sometimes cannot find the order details. The business lacks a single location to store orders and this makes it difficult for order management and update requests.

This will be solved by implementing a form ordering system within the bakery's website. This will be the input process into the database in which past and current orders will be located. All orders will be attached to names, contact information, a location for delivery if applicable, and a description of the desired dessert item. This will allow for easy reference by the baker as well as easy updates to orders, while recording past orders.

With a new order management database the owner will no longer be looking for order details, or contacting the customer for information that was already collected and agreed on by both parties. This will save the baker time, in that instead of sifting through physical and electronic notes and communication she can be creating the cake.

**Technical**: This process will be implemented by adding an order form within the website. All orders will be on one centralized location. The familiarity with this function area will be a medium risk. The reasoning for that is the business owner is able to operate a computer fluently, however, the owner may not be familiar with any backend maintenance for the website if something were to go wrong. With that being said, it brings up the familiarity with technology. We are going to rate this as a high risk. The reasoning for this is because the business owners ability to run the backend website maintenance. Next, we’re going to talk about the project size and compatibility when implementing the project. The size of the project is relatively small compared to the rest of the business processes we are going to implement. If the system is cloud based, it will be very compatible with anything.

**Economic:** The development cost of this business process should be relatively low. This part of the website should be very easy to implement. Just being able to add a page to the website for the customer to input their info will save an estimate of $50 per order. With the business owner not having to call and reassess the order details with the customer, she can save that time and put it toward making more cakes and generating more revenue. The will also help with customer service. It will create a better experience for the customer. The more problems with the customer the more they will be unhappy. However, with this process, there will be less problems making the customer happy.

**Organizational:** At its current state, Sweet Karoline’s Cakes doesn’t have any systems implemented. We will not have to worry about this process interrupting any pre existing systems. This project aligns with what the business owner wants in their business. The risk is relatively low because it aligns with what the business is requesting.

Sweet Karoline’s Cakes doesn’t have an inventory management system. This can create a problem for the way she conducts business. She cannon track how much supplies she currently has, nor can she track how many supplies she will need. With no inventory tracking system, she will have a problem keeping track of what she needs. She can potentially run out of ingredients during the baking process. This can lead to lost time. This can be solved by subscribing to an inventory management system will solve these problems.

Some benefits of implementing and inventory management system include saving time and money. The business will be able to save money if they buy supplies in bulk. The more you buy, the more you save. The business will also have a better representation of what is in stock and what isn't in stock. They will have a better representation of what they can sell and what they cant during that period of time. This will also give you information to be used to secure tax expenses during tax season.

**Technical:** The business owner wouldn’t be an expert at using any inventory management system software, however, she can learn. This could be a medium risk to the business. Next, the business owners familiarity with technology is good. In terms of using a inventory management software, we will rate it as a low risk. The last aspect of feasibility is compatibility. Compatibility isn’t a big issue with this project. There are no existing systems to worry about compatibility issues. This will be rated at a lower risk.

**Economic:** The cost of operating in this software is very affordable for the paid services. We will be implementing Zoho. This is a subscription for inventory management. In the free version, the business will be provided with 20 orders a month. Any more than that will require a paid subscription. We’ve estimated that this software could save roughly $50-$150 per month. This software will also free up time in terms of worrying about ingredients and more time cooking cakes.

**Organizational:** This process, like the other ones, will not interfere with any pre existing systems. The goals of this project aligns well with the goals of the business. In terms of alignment, it will be rated at a lower risk. There will not be any stakeholder analysis due to there not being anyone affected by this system. The project champions will include Dr. Barker and Karoline Gardner. Karoline will also be the organizational manager as well as the system user.