CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

A Microbrewery Business Plan

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Business Administration

By
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family for the support and sacrifices they made during the challenges of graduate school. To my husband Garrett, thank you for being a constant source of love and encouragement. To my children Jonah and Micah, you have taught me so much; I am stronger and wiser because of you two.

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Abstract

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The purpose of this thesis is to examine and address the needs of our client, the owner of a local microbrewery. Our client faces the challenge of growing their business in the midst of an increasingly competitive landscape. We conducted comprehensive primary and secondary research to identify the appropriate business plan for our client.

First, we conducted an in-depth analysis of the craft beer environment, discovered influencing factors and identified key opportunities and threats. Second, we analyzed the client's resources and capabilities to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the business. Third, we performed a robust competitive analysis to identify the dimensions that our clients' rivals compete on and to determine the intensity of that competition along those dimensions. This secondary research provided our team with an ideal perspective of where our client fits within the industry as well as key insights as to what can be leveraged to improve their position within their industry.

In order to gain greater insight into the minds of craft beer consumers, our team also conducted eight discrete hour-long interviews with highly involved craft beer consumers. Four consumers were frequent customers of the client and four were craft beer consumers that did not frequent our client's brewery. The questions in the interview were open ended and the discussions were conversational in nature. These interviews provided our team with a unique perspective on craft beer consumers and we were able to gather complex, in-depth data that could not have been obtained through questionnaires.

The findings in both our primary and secondary research heavily influenced our business plan and recommendations. The actual findings and recommendations are proprietary to the client and shall remain confidential.