

## 1.0 Market Needs

Large corporations are currently using web-based, group-oriented corporate social networking (CSN) software as a tool for operational proficiency and product innovation. The most popular program available today is Salesforce.com, but simply put, small businesses cannot afford that service. If they could, they are not sufficiently computer proficient to utilize its analytic functionality without adequate training. SEE Web Design and Development believes (based on experience) there is a significant demand for an affordable, trimmed-down version of CSN software for small businesses. The product they are building is called SEE Group.

"At that end of the field, a strong understanding of social media (networking synonymous) is vital since small businesses have doubled their rate of social media adoption since 2009. 'Web development and social media creation are hot right now in every industry,' says Bill Cullifer, Executive Director of Webprofessionals.org" (Sole-Smith, 2011). For small businesses, the web is the great equalizer and for its stakeholders, social media is a constant point of access to all pieces of a business supply chain, vision, and agenda.

SEE Group will serve as a hub of information to specified groups within small businesses (and more) by helping them collaborate, share data, and market internally and externally. Through blogs, collaborative projects, and content communities, corporate decision makers can provide, and oversee, their human capital with digital networks to expand innovation socially, collaboratively, and most importantly, profitably. It is wide reaching and strategic. It lends itself to the strengths of management for the convenience of employee work groups and consumers by way of proficiency and innovation.

SEE Group's access point is from SEE's Corporate site, [seewebdesign.com](http://seewebdesign.com). In addition to the service, the location lends itself to the promotion of all SEE's products, especially the building of websites.

### 1.1 The Product Description

SEE Group's target customers are small businesses. The product is web-based software that enables those customers to customize internal and external user-groups such as marketing, operations, and manufacturing departments. SEE Group is a hub (one interface) of modules that include Storage, Links, Chat, and Video. One user (administrator/group initiator) from each group would have complete access to a back end user interface for managing content while all registered users would have access to front end input and resources.

Compared to the industry's largest competitor, Salesforce.com, SEE Group is uniquely simple yet maintains group (team) capabilities (refer to points of parity, points of differences- Table 8.1). For small businesses who are fearful of the size and commitment of a large provider, SEE provides a smaller, more trimmed down version that is less intrusive.

With an emphasis on collaboration and building an ever growing digital platform, businesses can benefit from SEE Group in the following ways:

1. Sales: Build a “go to” place for employees and customers to communicate and share information, fostering a culture of teamwork, transparency, knowledge, and loyalty. Additionally, a customer database provides mass email opportunities for newsletters and specials offers.
2. Service: One administrator (Team leader/Instructor) can direct many users through system resources such as customer accounts, help, and collaborative teams.
3. Project Management: Operations and knowledge sharing with scrollable exchange records. Resources can be posted with categories, topics, links, files, and text exchanges that can be accessed later for reference.
4. Cloud Computing: Automated information technology services from a public cloud infrastructure with a storage capacity that is virtually infinite.

SEE Group’s dominant feature is a decentralized content generation system handed over to a “specified team.” SEE Group is organized as follows: “A” (Team Leader) creates a new group and invites B, C, and D to join. A, B, C, and D are now a complete team, with A being the system administrator. New members can join but must be approved by the team initiator (administrator). Only the administrator can remove a member. All members can collaborate via storage, content, chat, and video. It’s an open source software (OSS) system from top to bottom by way of team input.

Team members can store data on the cloud. Any team member on any device connected to the internet can access all files worldwide. It is coded using ASP.NET (Microsoft framework/resource) which lends itself to the security provided by Microsoft in addition to their support services. Imagine a library of movies or corporate training videos that are accessible by all members. In addition, they could share source information via links and chat. All members in the group would learn from each other and all the modules would be overseen by a single backend administrator in case someone needed to be removed or material needed to be deleted.

## **1.2 Case Examples**

### 1.2.1

#### Academic Application

Although primarily designed to be a business oriented collaborative tool promoting efficiency and innovation, SEE Group could also be used as a virtual classroom. Instructors could build their own organized curriculum including videos, presentations, assignments, and chat. The group-oriented site is similar to Blackboard and WebCT but provides more cost effective models.

Instructors would give the new students a group name on the first day of class. Students would visit the site, enter the group name and wait to be accepted by the instructor. Once inside, the material would be accessible to all. They could also share classroom discussions. If a student had a question, the instructor, as well as any other student, could answer it. This would be very efficient by eliminating redundancies and inviting students to engage in communication by

sharing. According to Stanford University's Barbara Gross Davis, "Researchers report that, regardless of the subject matter, students working in small groups tend to learn more of what is taught and retain it longer than when the same content is presented in other instructional formats" (Davis, 1999). Students' success working in group lends itself to See Groups' strengths.

Instructors can have their own SEE Group for \$300.00 per year. Blackboard and WebCT begin at \$1000.00 or more per year. SEE Design and Development would benefit from the revenue in addition to the brand exposure and interested consumers needing websites (a spinoff benefit).

### 1.2.2

#### Business Application

John Smith is 50 years old and owns a small sanitation company. He has 50 employees. Four employees service trucks, 5 employees work in the office, and the remaining work on delivery and pick up of recycling and garbage material. In total, John has 3 internal groups. John also has several external groups. He manages the tractor museum in Brooks Oregon, and meets with all the other sanitation company owners monthly at the recycling center, also in Brooks. He is a busy and successful self made entrepreneur.

John inherited the company from his father and has worked there all his life. His technology background is limited. He owns a flip phone, and a personal computer. On his devices, he accesses Facebook, other vendors' websites, and Microsoft Office Word occasionally. John currently relies on word of mouth and email to communicate.

Imagine if John created a simple to use SEE Group information hub with his drivers. It could include himself, the office manager, and his 41 drivers.

The process could be as follows: John oversees the content and interaction of routes on chat. In links, he provides route maps in addition to company policy and training resources. The drivers would access all resources from home or in the office but not while driving. Drivers could watch videos and share input with other drivers. Drivers who are in the chat module, but not participating, could learn from the others who are participating. John would oversee the whole process from his office or mobile device to be sure everyone comprehends the material. If John needed to he could intercede on any interaction. If John missed a day of work, the office manager could step in to manage content. If a driver had an accident, it would be clear to government regulators that the driver did have access to important rules and guidelines.

SEE Group is a simple, four module inexpensive interface, with everything on one screen. John could use Salesforce.com or Google instead, but Salesforce.com is complicated and expensive and Google has a service for each need, which potentially creates too many screens for each group making it more complicated and intrusive. With SEE Group, John would have individual group tabs, each with four modules that reside on his browser's home screen. He could have an active tab for Office Workers, United Haulers, and the Tractor Museum, each as an individual mechanism containing information relevant to participants in each team.

## 2.0 The Market

Corporate Social Networking – This author divides corporate social networking into three types: static, individual dynamic, and group dynamic.

**Static Networking-** Includes video, categories, topics, links, and simple blog posts.

**Individual Dynamic Networking-** Includes the resources above and a text messaging component between the host and one user.

**Group Dynamic Networking (SEE Group)-** True team networking is, along with the above, open source. It is where all registered users create and edit material simultaneously with an administrator.

Many large companies and organizations use forms of corporate social media to connect with consumers and employees. Examples include (Uhrmacher, 2008):

1. [www.wou.edu/Library](http://www.wou.edu/Library) - The Western Oregon University library uses a system where students access the library's site from which a librarian guides them directly to resources digitally.
2. [Dell](#) leverages a variety of social media platforms for customer engagement, including an island in the virtual world of Second Life.
3. [GM](#) uses blogs to communicate directly with its customers around topics ranging from design to green tech.
4. [HSBC](#) built the HSBC Business Network to connect entrepreneurs using blogs, videos, and forums.
5. [IBM](#) was the first large enterprise to embrace employee blogging and now boasts thousands of blogs related to every facet of its business.
6. [New York Times](#) is beta testing a Firefox add-on that allows users to share and comment on stories through a decentralized social network.
7. [Nike](#) started a social community on Looped to connect athletes interested in surfing, BMX bike racing and similar activities with the brand.
8. [Sears](#) partnered with MTV to create a social network around back-to-school shopping.
9. [Wells-Fargo's](#) blogs target two audiences; one examines the company's history and the other is for students interested in getting their finances in order.

### 2.1 Market Demographics (our target)

The tables below support that the average age of small business owners is 50.3, and 99.7% of the 23 million U.S. businesses are small (Experian, 2007). This group of business owners is our target market.

Table 2.1

<b>Market Demographics- Owners</b>					
<b>Market Segments</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Decision level</b>	<b>Average Income (\$)</b>	<b>Tech Experience</b>	<b>Education</b>
<b>Large Businesses (500+ employees)</b>	55+	High	100,000+	High	Masters
<b>Medium Businesses (100-499 employees)</b>	50+	High	80,000	Medium	Bachelors
<b>Small Business (10-99 employees)</b>	40+	High	45,000	Medium/Low	High School

(Experian, 2007).

Summary: Small business owners above 40 years old, have low incomes, are not tech savvy, and are less academically educated. SEE Web Design believes this group could benefit from using SEE Group as a tool because it is affordable and easier to use than the competition.

Tables 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 are provided by Amzini Enterprises. **Amzini uses a measuring system based on zero being average, green being good, and red being bad** (numbers high, numbers low).

Table 2.2

## Social Networking Interests by Age

Category	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Gaming	30	4	-10	-18	-29	-19
Creative Arts	19	8	-6	-11	-15	-15
Info-sharing	10	6	-6	-6	-9	-14
Education	10	6	-2	-7	-10	-10
Places	-3	17	-2	-8	-9	-12
Lifestyle	3	10	-1	-5	-9	-10
Friends	8	4	-2	-3	-10	-7
Interests	5	6	-4	-3	-5	-8
Dating	11	-0	-3	-1	1	1
Business	-8	7	1	4	-2	-9
Family	-11	3	5	5	4	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-3</b>	<b>-4</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-10</b>

Table 2.2, Note the following in the context of Social Networking Interests by Age.

- Less education as age rises, particularly ages 45-65+.
- Business interests at ages 45-54 years above average.
- Declining information sharing with age.

Summary: This data supports that as business men and women age, their education levels drop while their interest for using social networking as a tool grows. Could less information sharing be related to a lack of knowledge about how to use social media as a tool? SEE believes its competition is too expensive, and too complicated for the group with an average age of 50.3.

(Nelms, 2011)

Table 2.3 draws a direct connection between the age, education, and browsing interest related to work and business.

Table 2.3

Social Networking Browse Locations

Category	Home	School	Work
Gaming	14	0	-7
Creative Arts	6	1	-3
Info-sharing	1	-11	3
Education	9	-3	-3
Places	-10	-15	16
Lifestyle	-1	-9	6
Friends	3	-6	3
Interests	-2	-7	6
Dating	5	4	-1
Business	-10	-11	18
Family	8	-10	-3
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-6</b>	<b>4</b>

Table 2.3 Note the following in the context of Social Networking Browse Locations.

- At work, users browse most for business related topics.
- At work, users browse more for place related topics.

Summary: Here there is a direct correlation that suggests that if social networking is a tool at work, users prefer to use it for business purposes. While wide ranging, Places could be other businesses, customers, or forms of communication. Also, information sharing, interests, and friends were also above average.

Additionally, ages 55+ were also the highest growing segment of users (more than twice between 2010 and 2011) for Social Networking on their mobile sites (Nielsen, 2011, p. 9).

(Nelms, 2011)

Table 2.4

Social Networking Education

Category	No College	Some College	College	Grad School
Gaming	5	9	1	-6
Creative Arts	-5	7	7	-7
Info-sharing	-8	4	-0	1
Education	-0	7	6	-6
Places	-17	-11	2	13
Lifestyle	-12	-0	8	-0
Friends	-4	6	3	-1
Interests	-6	1	7	-3
Dating	-15	-0	1	6
Business	-17	-3	4	7
Family	-3	4	7	-7
<b>Total</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>-0</b>

Table 2.4 Note the following in the context Social Media Education

- If a user is educated, he/she is more apt to use Social Networking.

Summary: This data can be taken two ways: Users who are educated use social media more, or SEE believes that a simpler social media mechanism would make software more accessible/user friendly, helping less educated users use it more often for business purposes (2.1, 2.2).

Additionally, users are three times more likely to use Social Networking Media (LinkedIn and Wikia) if they have a post graduate degree. (Nielsen, 2011 p. 5)

(Nelms, 2011)

### 2.1.1 Psychographics:

1. Mobile Social Networking users value their networking features second only to downloading music. (Nielsen, 2011 #7)
  - a. 33% of Social Networking users like to exert influence on the interaction. (Nielsen, 2011, p. 11)

Psychographics suggests that users experience entertainment and control while social networking. They are comfortable with its use. Additionally, it would be fair to expect that as they age they will become more experienced and educated. Demand will increase based on these market segment examples.

## 2.2 Market Trends (Growth and Opportunities)

### 2.2.1 Databases

As previously stated in the Market Needs section of this document, understanding the attributes that lead to benefits of corporate social networking will be key to business success in the future (Sole-Smith, 2011). Modern businesses are using their corporate social networking capabilities to learn more about their customers from the databases used to sign them up. Every user of a social networking site must sign-up through a registration form and volunteer valuable information such as names, email addresses, and credit card numbers that could be used for marketing.

For the provider, the sooner a database is built the sooner it can begin to collect data and produce results. Having a head start against your competition in an industry, such as CSN and Technology, that is changing rapidly, is a powerful advantage as it is easier to keep an existing customer than solicit a new one. Customer data can be used to form marketing strategies, such as mass email, that can lead to brand and relationship building.

For consumers, the objectives are finding a reputable brand where satisfaction exceeds expectations and benefits exceed costs. Relationships can be established between consumers and businesses through a database that provides a forum for reminders, specials, testimonials, and feedback. Efficient communication leads to convenience and loyalty by saving consumers time and money.

### 2.2.2 Market Analysis (Trends in Growth)

Graphic one from Marketing Plan Professional illustrates that small businesses represent the vast majority of all businesses (Experian, 2007). Additionally, it demonstrates that a small business's target size should be between 10 and 99 employees, which best supports the trimmed down version of SEE Group's design and capacity as a new product.

## 2.3 Market Size and Growth (Summarization of the above)

1. Small businesses represent 97% of the 23 million businesses in the U.S.
2. Age demographics show that the average age of a small business owner is 50.3 years.

3. Educated users are more likely to use social networking. Education translates into skills in technology.
4. Currently, 18 – 24 year-olds represents the vast majority of social networking users. Their developing skills in the next 10 – 20 years, along with advancements in technology, support growth in the industry.
5. Currently, commercialization of the Internet is only eighteen years old. This is relevant in scope because it presents a young, developing corporate social networking industry. As it grows, it will increasingly benefit consumers and SEE Design because of increased innovation and profit.

Summary: This data supports a correlation between increased interest in business and social media interest with age and education, and an opportunity for SEE Group. Those users will represent small business owners and they will be more than 90% of all the businesses that use corporate social networking as a tool. These users could become SEE Design/Group consumers.

Factors contributing to the rate of the rise of the CSN market are social, political, and economic forces in addition to competition, education, service capacity, and consumer awareness. Those topics are covered in the following sections.

### **3.0 Competition**

Some large companies build their own systems which are specific to their needs. For example, The Western Oregon University Library doesn't need all the analytics and expense of Salesforce.com, but they do need an online chat for the Librarian as a way to direct students to online resources, all inside the same module. This is advantageous for many reasons, but most of all security, control, and branding. The latest trends for development are web designers and developers building modular open source software (OSS) systems where individual components are fabricated into larger “custom” mechanisms over time. Each consumer of a new “modular system” would want their own custom attributes to accommodate their own consumer profile. However, there are fundamental needs that most systems have in common such as chat, storage, links, and video.

Among others, CSN software available today for companies are: Salesorce.com, Google Group, Moodle, and SugarCRM. These vendors offer packages per user per month, although Google is free but has less security. Their platforms vary as SugarCRM is more OSS oriented than Salesforce.com. Salesforce.com, like the others, displays its brand in its interface and access is from its parent site.

### **4.0 Economic Influences**

In any economy, especially a recessive one, efficiency and convenience are a competitive edge but are accompanied by risk. Providers currently use the Internet to manage everything including warehouses, inventories, distribution routes, and sales. For sales, an example is Target Department Store. Expectant couples use Target's database to tell them what to purchase for a new baby. They can order it and have it delivered through the same mechanism. It can be 100% online. Another example is Geico Insurance. One can go to their online website

and get a quote in less than fifteen minutes. Everything from the signup to the payment can be done online.

Incorporating a new system has its advantages, but the risk comes from unexpected expenses, and functional expectations that do not always work out.

Even in a down economy, large companies like Target and Geico have a competitive advantage by way of financial capital to invest into sophisticated information systems. However, small companies need not be left out, as many new IT professionals are looking for opportunities to use their skills, such as SEE Web Design and SEE Group. For many small businesses, corporate social networking systems are in demand. As prices go up and technology advances, there is more room for new and inexpensive developers using open source systems to accommodate that demand.

The providers of social media systems -- IT Developers -- will be in the driver's seat. The field and technology is young as evident by demand. High prices are an excellent example of less competition and a shortage of new entrants to the industry. This report suggests that currently there is more demand than supply for social networking technology and that will continue for some time. While social media technology is the product, consumer demand is the driving force. In fact, according to Gosh (2008), the Internet (including social media) and the economy are now included together defined by, "The Internet Economy," and businesses cannot avoid its participation without taking high risks. (Internet economy, 2005)

## **5.0 Social/Cultural Trends**

More than half of adult mobile device owners used their devices while they were shopping during the 2011 holiday season to seek help with purchasing decisions. During a 30-day period before and after Christmas the following occurred (Smith, 2012):

- 38% of device owners used their devices to call a friend while they were in a store for advice about a purchase they were considering.
- 24% of device owners used their devices to look up reviews of a product online while they were in a store.
- 25% of adult device owners used their devices to compare product prices while in a store.

In a down economy, corporate social networking is the ideal place for providing services and activities like those illustrated above. Consumers save money when they search and share information. Information is gathered, products are sold, and community and loyalty are built.

## **6.0 Legal Influences**

Data security by way of privacy and intellectual rights are leading concerns for developers and the companies who hire them. If neglected, valuable information can get into the hands of hackers who may use it for financial gain. For users and providers the damages can be significant. Those potential damages should be assessed by professionals (Internet attorneys) for the provider, consumer, and company.

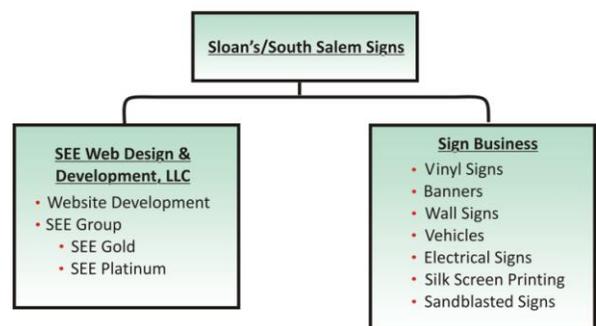
Since data is held in databases, and databases are server side unless a company owns its own server (SEE does not), the security aspect is external. External means the host owns responsibility for its content. The cost for this service is minimal and insurance can be added. Finding a reputable host provider with enough insurance to cover potential damages is an important decision. Framing a business as a corporation also protects investors.

SEE uses open source, ASP.net, as its coding platform; A2 Hosting is its host provider. This framework makes stealing source code for the purpose of doing harm more difficult because it is a Microsoft resource and thus protected by Microsoft security (ASP.NET). It's the same platform as Windows 7.

## 7.0 The Company

SEE Web Design & Development is the parent to SEE Group, the product (Chart 7.1). SEE Web Design & Development is a web development company building websites for clients. The two owners are Graduate Students from Western Oregon University. One of the partners owns Sloan's Signs and SEE Web Design is currently building its new clientele off of Sloan's Signs existing customer base. Sloan's Signs has been established for 35 years.

Organizational Chart 7.1



Along with web development, SEE is committed to building its brand by providing clients with quality web development and CRM, customer relationship management, access for less. SEE understands the needs of small businesses. Quality is important to success, and SEE Group is the line extension that generates the marketing “buzz” for SEE Web Design and Development: that is crucial in the competitive, rapidly changing field of technology. (Sloan, 2012)

### 7.1 Mission

SEE Design and Development is committed to profitability in addition to happy employees and customers. Growth, integrity, honesty, and consistency are values we aspire to provide. We are determined to be perceived as providers of the latest technology in a service-oriented field.

### 7.2 Service Offering

1. SEE Website Development: Build and service websites.
  - Consulting: Free initial proposals on what technology is available to satisfy known and unknown needs. Many consumers are not aware of all the tools available to help them connect with customers and employees.
  - Planning: Construct a complete and detailed roadmap that includes designs, and functionality, and future customer service needs.
  - Development: Execute a plan in a professional and timely fashion.
  - Service: Provide timely service including system updates.
2. SEE Group: Corporate social networking (Customer relationship management software)
  - SEE Storage: File storage.
  - SEE Content: Categories, links, details, and file sharing.

- SEE Chat: Group text messaging.
- SEE Video: Pre-recorded video for instructional training.

SEE Web Design and Development plans an integrated marketing strategy to benefit it and its consumers. The “buzz” for consumers is, “Have SEE build your website and get quality CRM social media software for less. Get personal attention with all your needs met by one vendor in house”.

This kind of service is currently non-existent for most small businesses on the local level commercially. It will save the consumer time and money, in addition to the fear factor of dealing with large nationwide providers like Salesforce.com or SugarCRM. Small business decision makers want providers they can relate to, that are enthusiastic about providing an affordable custom service that is trimmed down and without analytics.

SEE understands the needs of small businesses, in that they need to collaborate and share information to compete effectively, but that they also cannot afford the expensive “Team” systems (\$125 - \$250 per month per user) offered by Salesforce.com. All the data in this thesis supports the reality that demand is growing and, in an Internet economy, businesses need to participate. Factors unique to small business needs are:

- Price: They cannot afford the Team features of Salesforce.com that are provided by SEE Group.
- Product Perception: Fear of large expensive and complicated web based software systems like Salesforce.com.
- Promotion: Less experience and education than large firms. Without the knowledge, they cannot see the benefit.
- Place: CSN is a relatively new technology, and they do not know how to access it.
- Packaging: They have not been approached digitally. The average aged user (50.3) is less digitally inclined and more receptive to direct selling by people they know or referrals.

### 7.3 Positioning Statement

#### SEE and Connect

SEE connects small businesses with professional social media software and web development for less because SEE understands the needs of small businesses.

SEE sees the definite signs of a corporate social networking market shifting toward open source modules. SEE is well positioned strategically to seize its share and share it with small businesses to gain a competitive advantage in CRM Software sales and website development. SEE has built a modern programming infrastructure to develop and expand rapidly.

Small businesses will benefit most. By simply accessing and registering on SEE’s website, they will have access to SEE Group, SEE Content, SEE Chat, and SEE Video in a group specific environment. They will immediately be able to securely group manage, share data, and collaborate.

SEE also believes that its large competitors, like Salesforce.com, have weaknesses that complement its strengths. SEE's trimmed down combination of features are less expensive and are targeted to the needs of small business owners -- a targeted marketing mix will put SEE in a favorable strategic position immediately. Again, SEE understands the needs of small businesses and wants to make it simple, available, and affordable.

## 8.0 Competition (Impact)

### 8.1 Direct Competitors

#### Features (Points of Parity, Points of Difference)

Table 8.1 (Lendino, 2010)

The following companies are direct competitors to SEE Group. They compare by the following features:

	Packages	Cost Monthly	File Sharing	Chat	Tracks Contacts	Interact	tasks	Email Mkg.	Reporting	Analytics	Team	Video
Salesforce	Manager	5.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	X	X	X	Yes
	Group	25.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	Yes	Yes	X	
	Pro.	65.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	
	Enterprise	125.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
	Unlimited	250.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
SugarCRM	Pro	30.00	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X	Yes	Yes	X	No
Google	Group	Free	Yes	Yes	X	Yes	X	X	X	X	Yes	No
SEE	Gold	25.00	Yes	Yes	X	Yes	X	X	X	X	Yes	Yes

Note: While Google offers the Team feature, it does not include it in a one piece mechanism where all the other features are readily accessible to all registered users in the group.

#### Competitors Side By Side

Table 8.2 (Lendino, 2010)

	Size of Company	Quality of Products	Growth Est.	Financial Est.	Market Share 2010	Cloud Services	Open Source
Salesforce	Large	High	High	Large	15.3%	Yes	X
SugarCRM	Small Med	Med	Med-High	Med	3% Est.	Yes	Yes
Google Group	Large	Med	Med	Large	11%Est	X	Yes
SEE Group	Small	Med	Small	Small	X	X	Yes

Market share for Sugar and Google are estimated based on research and scale set by Salesforce. Only Salesforce.com offered a percentage of market share at 15.3% for 2011. (Trefis Team, 2011)

Note: Salesforce.com does not use an open source platform like Microsoft .net. This self designed platform increases the need for R&D and thus prices to consumers.

#### 8.1.1 Interfaces:

Salesforce.com offers a custom interface (Dashboard). There are layers of external monitoring which analyze and report data. In addition there are excellent graph and table capabilities which, together, with the data and analysis, are useful for creating reports (Lendino, 2010).

SugarCRM also has a custom dashboard, but it is simpler than Salesforce.com. The dashboard is more workflow-based in design. For example, "SugarCRM offers an interface that displays open calls, leads, and upcoming meetings, but you'll have to hit the Reports tab to see any data analysis" (Lendino, 2010).

Google Groups consists of web and email discussion services and provides access to the Usenet archive. Users can join a group, make a group, publish posts, track their favorite topics, write a set of group web pages updatable by members, and share group files ("List"). It has an attractive interface and it is free and easy to use.

BatchbookCRM, although not represented in the above tables, is worth mentioning because it offers the best text messaging capabilities. In a business context, with access to data and analysis, it complements other messaging mechanisms like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Resources are gathered and shared with those sources and utilized in useful ways like creating advertisements. Still Batchbook is rated overall below Salesforce and Sugar in terms of overall popularity.

SEE Group's dashboard displays SEE Content (categories, topics, links, and details), and SEE Chat so users can easily manage their resources. To access file sharing and SEE Video you must select a tab.

Small Business Interface (System) Requirements need to be considered for effective customer relationship management (CRM). In the context of CRM, Wikipedia defines the small business customers like this, "For small business, basic client service can be accomplished by a contact manager system, which is an integrated solution that lets organizations and individuals efficiently track and record interactions, including emails, documents, jobs, faxes, scheduling, and more" (CRM, 2012).

SEE takes a piece of Sugar (Content) and a part of Google Groups' team/group collaboration concept and fabricates one limited, but demographic-specific, system that is much less expensive than Salesforce.com's \$125.00 per month per person.

## 9.0 SWOT Summary

### 9.1 Strengths and Weaknesses (SEE Group)

SEE Web Design & Development, LLC recognizes the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of SEE Group, its product:

#### 9.1.1 Strengths:

- Target and foothold: SEE has access to Sloan's Signs clientele list and that serves as a solid foundation to build upon. The list contains hundreds of business contacts in Oregon, Washington, California, and Idaho.
- Expertise: Master's Degrees in Business and Technology, including 35 years of advertising business in Sloan's Signs.
- A committed and motivated team:
  - Team: SEE Web Design & Development, LLC is the team with the partners being: John Sloan - Business and front end programming, and Curt Mullin - Programming.
  - Committed: To excel in the field of website development and corporate social media.
  - Motivated: The industry is young and SEE Group believes it can fill a niche by providing a scaled down, scalable hub of CRM modules to small businesses for less cost than its competitors.
- Product Line: Website Development (Build/Maintain), SEE Group - Corporate Media Mechanism (Hub). *Note: Signs and brochures are not mentioned here or anywhere in this report as a product, but are a compliment forward and backward for SEE Web Design by way of referrals to the benefit of Sloan's Signs.*
- Flexibility: SEE Web design is debt free, income independent, and small enough to be able to change course quickly to meet changing demands.

#### 9.1.2 Weaknesses:

- Revenue: Revenue Streams - Partners are independently employed (Sloan teaching and Sloan's Signs, Mullin programming) and receiving revenue from SEE Web Design projects. Beyond that, the partners are contributing their time to build this corporation with benchmarks leading to full time status. This is a weakness because if they were full time, the business would grow faster, other revenue streams would be threatened (increased risk).
- Limited experience dealing with customers in a website/ CSN context.
- Little experience with local politics and copyrights. Currently Sloan is researching the field of intellectual property rights at WOU under Graduate Advisor Kristina Frankenberger.
- Consumer Forward Integration: Are customers willing to pay? SEE's product is developing. Even on a smaller scale, consumers will need to be introduced and their needs evaluated.
- No insurance (LLC). Currently, the scale of risk is low, but in the future this could be a concern.

## 9.2 Threats and Opportunities

### 9.2.1 Opportunities:

- SEE offers specific features targeting older and less educated small business owners/users:
  - File Sharing
  - Data Storage
  - Resource Links
  - Video
  - Team Collaboration:
    - Salesforce.com - \$125.00 - \$250.00 per user per month.
    - SEE - \$25.00 per user per month.
  - **Spin off web site projects with SEE Group as a lure.**

### 9.2.2 Threats:

- Competitors could expand their features to include teams.
- Competitors could lower their prices.
- New Entrants/Low Barriers to entry.
- Economic recession and a devaluating dollar could affect small business spending.

## 10.0 Marketing Strategy

SEE's marketing strategy is based on meeting the needs of small business owners in website development and corporate social media. Again, from the mission statement, "SEE is determined to be perceived as providers of the latest technology, in a service oriented field." It will continue to build on creating strong/scalable infrastructure for coding and marketing.

For coding, SEE has built an OSS (ASP.NET) infrastructure for rapid development on a large scale using Microsoft's C# programming language. For marketing, SEE will focus on building a strong brand by promoting a unique product to a targeted market beginning with Sloan's Signs existing clientele.

Our marketing strategy falls into these four categories:

- Meet the websites and CSN demand.
- Develop a solid external marketing infrastructure (Sloan Business Marketing).
- Develop a solid internal coding infrastructure (ASP.NET) (Mullin CIO).
- Maintaining industry standards.

### 10.1 Value Proposition

SEE connects small businesses with more efficient social media software and web development products and maintenance.

Customer satisfaction will exceed expectations, and value will exceed costs as SEE modifies its services to accommodate its target. Small businesses will gain access to professional group

collaboration software tailored to their knowledge and needs in addition to a source for website development and maintenance. Having multiple services in house is convenient for consumers.

## 10.2 Critical Issues

In spite of SEE's weaknesses of limited capital, SEE is heavily tooled in this new and emerging market of social media where the opportunities are significant. SEE is in an ideal position, even though there are limitations, due to the following:

1. It understands that small businesses need a custom marketing mix that fits them (Price, Product, Promotion, Packaging, and Distribution).
2. It has the skills (heavily tooled) to satisfy the demand.
3. It is organized internally and externally enough to accommodate rapid growth. See is using open source (ASP.NET) framework to program most efficiently. SEE has an existing clientele list and small business experience.
4. It is flexible enough (small) to adapt quickly to industry changes.
5. It has no debt and very low operating expenses.

SEE's weaknesses will likely be easily solvable with minimal investments. First, it does appear on a large scale that SEE would require increased investment in time spent developing and accommodating clients beyond its current capacity if demand increased beyond expectations. Second, other new entrants could add similar features which would mean an increase in competition. SEE must be innovative to be competitive in addition to expedient to provide services first to a specific market.

SEE is certainly not fully developed. It is aware that there will be significant opportunities ahead, and other than inexperience and lack of startup capital, the threats are relatively low. SEE could grow faster if capital was funneled into programming, but there would be significant risk. It takes time to build an effective website that is scalable with mass marketing capabilities.

## 10.3 Marketing Objectives

Year one goals: (April 1, 2014)

- A strong "web" marketing system and sales protocol/training program.
- Yellow page advertising /search engine optimization.
- Ambitious door-to-door sales campaign focus pivoting around existing clientele referrals.

Detailed Common Goals: On completion of company website (estimated April 1, 2014).

- Hand out cards
- Finish website
- Sign for vehicles
- Grand opening newsletter to sign clientele
- Direct sales to real estate and sanitation companies.

## 10.4 Target Market

SEE's target markets are less educated, small business owners, ages 50.3 years. This group currently represents 99.7% of the 23 million businesses in the US. This age group is the fastest growing (Nielsen #9, 2011) and shows increased interest by way of social media browsing and education.

Salesforce.com demonstrates, by way of points of parity (POP) and points of differences (POD), a targeted interest in large companies. SugarCRM does not offer a Team feature. Salesforce.com's Team System (See Teams, Table 8.1) is \$125.00 - \$250.00 per user per month. Small businesses are unable to pay such a high fee. Sugar has recently moved to open source modules to compete with Salesforce.com thus accelerating development and reducing its costs. SEE's, similar to SugarCRM, niche in the market is a trimmed down Team feature at low cost.

SEE believes the current large providers have weaknesses that complement its strengths. SEE's POP/POD is targeted to the needs of small businesses which puts SEE in a favorable strategic position for its target market.

## 11.0 Branding

SEE represents a visual connection. Its colorful name triggers curiosity and communication leading to a call to action – Come see and connect with our visual communications products and services (websites and CSN). “SEE and connect” also represents businesses connecting with other businesses, employees, and consumers.

SEE promises customers ease of use and the latest technological advances (quality) for less cost. Its attributes are tailored to small business requirements (CRN, 2012). It will measure its promotion effectiveness by phone calls and emails.

### 11.1 Message Theme

Theme - SEE connects small businesses with professional social networking software and web development for less because SEE understands the needs of small businesses.

Door to door verbiage- “Hi, my name is John Smith, I am from SEE Web Design in Salem. I work, or have worked for “so & so” (someone you know). We make websites, but what's really cool, and I'd like to take 2 minutes to show you, is our new customer relationship management system. It's really neat and will save you lots of money in record keeping, training, and overall efficiency.”

Email newsletter- Our logo associated with Sloan's Signs will be followed by a Grand Opening image and details about our new products and services. Initially, these emails will be preceded by a phone call and followed up in person or by phone.

“SEE and connect” is genuine sounding. It exemplifies visual communication with a fun colorful simple design. SEE will use it in many ways with our product attributes such as SEE Group, SEE Content, SEE Chat, and SEE Video.

## 12.0 Marketing Mix (based on analysis)

SEE has an integrated marketing strategy in two ways: SEE Web Design is utilizing Sloan's Signs customer base, and SEE Group is the child of SEE Web Design. SEE's marketing mix consists of using existing clients, referrals, phone directory representation including search engine optimization, and a vibrant web marketing/training campaign (emails/newsletters).

Experience has demonstrated that providing quality CRM software for these small businesses will generate referrals. Initially receiving referrals from clients will determine SEE's success or failure. Those referrals represent startup capital which is exponential in terms of growth. Happy businesses will tell other businesses and SEE can use their testimonials in our web marketing campaign.

Prospective clients will find SEE in Oregon's Yellowbook (Hibu) Directory which has excellent search engine optimization. That connection will lead potential customers to SEE's website, the core of SEE's marketing strategy. Representation in the directory also enhances SEE's image, which allows/facilitates SEE's ability to command an appropriate fee.

SEE's website is in development, and it is extensive (seewebdesign.com). It begins with the header and SEE's logo.

The center content area on the home page is divided into three sections: Step One, Step Two, and Step Three. These steps represent a call to action, leading users to how to obtain a website.

Graphic 8.1

### SEE Web Design & Development's Website

**SEE WEB DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT, LLC** See Webdesign & Development, LLC • Sloan's Signs Products & Prices •

Home Contact

## Custom Websites & Applications

Welcome to SEE Design and Development. Follow the steps below to start building your new website today!

**Step One: Get a Quote**

We will work with you to determine what is an appropriate site for the size and needs of your business. We have experience and samples to share. We'll make sure you get the website you need for a price you can afford.

**Step Two: Approve a Design**

We will build three designs, called comps. If you approve one of them, we will move forward with it and try to improve that design further. We will work with you along the way to address what functionality and design you, and more importantly, your users need.

**Step Three: Build, Maintain, & Update!**

**Build:** With final approval, we take the finished design and build a site to match it.  
**Maintain:** Our websites are made to last and if there is a problem we will be there quickly to fix it.  
**Update:** When the site is complete, we will work with you to keep it current. Technology is always changing and it is important to keep up with it.

We'll keep you in the conversation as we go so you'll always be in control. We want to work with you, not just for you. We want you to work with us too so both you and we are happy with the final product.

[Sign up for updates and special offers.](#)

**SEE Group**

Customer Portal

webdesign.com

(Sloan, 2013)

SEE Group's Form section, behind the SEE Group link, includes a sign-up form that adds users to its database and enlists them with SEE Group and a sign-in form for pre-registered SEE Group's clients. The database contains resources for e-commerce solicitation including newsletters. The database enables SEE to remain connected indefinitely with clients.

SEE Group's Services section includes product and services information in addition to the company mission. This section articulates to potential customers a message of value. Why is SEE worth your time and money? The message is developing as this plan evolves and provides new material.

SEE Group's Promotion section includes business promotions for vendors that provide SEE revenue. There is also a culture element to promotions. There, SEEs' values are displayed to SEE Web/Group customers and employees by way of sponsorships. Currently, SEE donates a percentage of its revenues to Salem Friends of Felines (represented) which provides shelter for homeless pets.

### 12.1 Products/Services Marketing

SEE Web Design will fulfill its service offering promises to small business customers by providing them business augmentation services such as consultation in design, planning, and technical support for their website and social media services. It is our goal to help them meet their financial needs by providing quality products and services, including the latest in technology for less.

### 12.2 Pricing

Table 12.2

SEE's Pricing for Products and Services

SEE Products	Pricing (monthly per user)
SEE Group Service (standalone)	\$25.00
With the purchase of a website	SEE Group 6 months free for 5 users
Website (minimum estimated)	\$3,000
Website (maximum estimated)	\$10,000
Customer Service Calls	\$85.00 per hour

(Sloan, 2012)

SEE understands that for its pricing strategy to be successful, it must be based on customer value and demand. Satisfaction must exceed expectation and benefits must exceed costs. Table 12.2 displays SEE's pricing.

SEE Web Design/Group's pricing strategy is based on experiences in working with small businesses, and a certain volume of sales receipts (see Tables 13.2 and 13.3, Break Even Estimates), which provide an understanding of the market value of the product. It is a price-determined cost strategy. For SEE, website prices are based on what Sloan's Signs' customers are currently paying. The main determinants are as follows:

- Salesforce.com's customers are paying \$125.00 to \$250.00 per month per user (Team Feature).
- SugarsCRM's customers are paying \$30.00 per month per user (Non-Team Feature).
- SEEs' Website Services' customers have the ability to pay using a price structure similar to the ones used by the following Sloan's Signs clientele samples: Rickreall Farm Supply, D&O Garbage, Loren's Recycling, and Salem Friends of Felines.

For SEE Group to compete with Salesforce.com and SugarCRM, SEE offers its target market a Team feature with the analytics removed (See Target Market, Value Proposition, and Product Positioning sections above for details).

SEE Group invoices customers via its database at registration. Billing is 30 days net with a penalty for late payment. Website customers are billed at 30 – 60 days net with a discount for COD payment, again, with a penalty for late payment. These rates are based on market value, not necessarily the internal time required to complete the task. All projects are contracted. SEE must perform efficiently and effectively to command a professional rate. SEE is a start-up company and there are many circumstances in the beginning that are appropriate for reduced rate billing due to inefficiencies. Adjustments are made as issues arise.

### 12.3 Pricing Objective

SEE Web Design and Development wants to accumulate capital and invest it in product development, especially SEE Group. It wants to build a customer base of more than 100 website clients using SEE Group (combined) in addition to as many SEE Group (standalone) customers as possible (see Tables 13.2, and 13.3). It is an integrated strategy using both website development and Corporate Social Media (SEE Group). For a description of capital amounts in relation to time, see Marketing Objectives 10.3.

### 12.4 Pricing Strategy

SEE's target market is sensitive to new products in pricing and value. For the Team feature, Salesforce.com is charging a high rate that small businesses will not pay initially. To small businesses, the Team feature, and CSN in general, is a new product. If the product costs too much and messaging is weak, the customer will not try SEE Group. If the customer buys the service and satisfaction does not exceed expectations, they will drop the service.

SEE is using a price cost strategy because there is a strong lack of CSN "Team" awareness for small businesses based on experience. On SEE's current clientele list, there are no customers currently using a "Team" attribute for CSN beyond Facebook Groups. SEE feels strongly that if the customer tries the product, they will value it sufficiently enough to justify the expense. Customer feedback will be useful in adjusting prices after customers have used the system over a period of time.

For SEE Group to compete with Salesforce.com and SugarCRM, SEE targets small businesses and offers them website development in addition to CSNs Team feature with the additional features of SugarCRM trimmed down (See Pricing, Target Market, Value Proposition, and Product Positioning sections above for information about the value and competitiveness of these features).

SEE's marketing strategy is direct by way of its word of mouth sales and in-house programming labor (see section 12.6.1 Sales Strategy). Its core is its website database and its contacts. Marketing time spent includes knocking on doors, making phone calls, and writing newsletters. It also has extensive representation indirectly in Yellowbook (Hibu.com).

SEE is a bootstrapping startup. When SEE reaches 20 clients, the partners will need to devote more time to operations and thus require an ever increasing percentage of income (fixed costs) sufficient enough to accommodate living expenses. As the list of clients grows, so will that percentage. Before committing to full time development, SEE will utilize programmers on a sub-contract basis as a variable expense.

## 12.5 Promotion Strategy

These are the critical components for marketing SEE Group:

1. As a startup, utilize an existing Sloan's Signs clientele.
2. Use referrals to spread the word.
3. Enhance our profile from sign manufacturers to qualified professional web product developers.
4. Use existing technology, including our in-house computer capabilities and our website for e-commerce newsletters. Both offer SEE the tools to spell out why they are useful to its target market.
5. Aim for exponential growth. As the scope of our clientele grows, SEE will grow with it by scale.
6. Provide signs and brochures as a way to introduce web services

Sloan's signs clientele related referral list:

- United Haulers
- Manufactured Housing
- Real Estate firms
- Pursue sales outside Oregon in familiar industries.

Relationships and referrals are vital to the success of this "pay as you go" start-up business. Industries like the United Haulers and manufactured housing have a shared community where they cooperate with each other. They share events and trade shows together, and when one finds a good vendor, that vendor usually ends up in "the loop". Building on these relationships will provide a sales pipeline for new products and services.

## 12.6 Sales Plan

SEE's sales plan involves making a good impression that leads to customer referrals. It is easier and less expensive to retain existing customers than solicit new ones. Our main focus is establishing a strong customer referral trend.

### 12.6.1 Sales Strategy

SEE is a new company. It has two partners (LLC Partnership) who share the marketing and programming responsibilities that are as follows:

- Partner One (Sloan)
  - Accounting- All general bookkeeping including taxes.
  - Marketing- Door to door sales, referrals, newsletters, phone calls, follow-ups.
  - HTML/CSS/C#/PHP Programming (aesthetic)- Responsible for the view
  - Service- Customer consultation, planning, and follow up completed projects as needed.
- Partner Two (Mullin)
  - Programming (functional)- Interactive coding. Responsible for functionality.
  - Service- Customer consultation, planning, and follow up completed projects as needed
  - General- Plays a role and maintains awareness in all SEE endeavors.

SEE estimates that it can currently maintain its workload capacity with the two partners up to 100 websites in addition to an infinite amount of SEE group clients. When SEE needs help, it will subcontract programmers. SEE will do its own (in house) bookkeeping. At over 100 website clients, the partners expect to shift to full management mode, delegating responsibility to employees (2 coders, 1 marketing/bookkeeping). Following that benchmark, the partners expect to continue the trend of delegating while focusing more of their time on marketing concepts, quality products, and customer care.

SEE's website contains a portal. The portal is an information database. In the portal, SEE has already begun laying out the framework with its own version of SEE Group to provide consistent messaging for the partners, and future employee training groups. When complete, any representative of SEE Web Design and Development could enter its SEE Group team and access large topics like pricing, protocols, in addition to small topics specific to individual projects.

SEE Design, itself, plans to use SEE Group to manage the business. Again, SEE Group provides consistent messaging and overall transparency.

#### 12.6.2 Sales Process

SEE plans on utilizing the current clientele of Sloan's Signs in the beginning and using those websites and SEE Group clients for referrals. In the process, SEE's database will accumulate names and email addresses in addition to casual visitors. All those email addresses will be used to begin a vigorous newsletter/coupon campaign offering incentives for prospective clients to buy websites and/or initiate a SEE Group Team/account.

Access to sales leads for the database does not have to exclusively come from door to door sales and referrals. At any point if additional small business data can be collected, those resources could extend SEE's marketing reach in the time it takes to enter that data via e-commerce.

All prospective clients are greeted and offered free consultation, free planning, free artwork, and a free proof/proposal. They are also provided six month access to SEE Group. In total this gives potential clients all the tools they need to make informed decisions that best benefit their professional interests. These incentives will give clients the opportunity to gradually become comfortable with the services offered by SEE Group.

## 13.0 Financials

### 13.1 Income Taxes

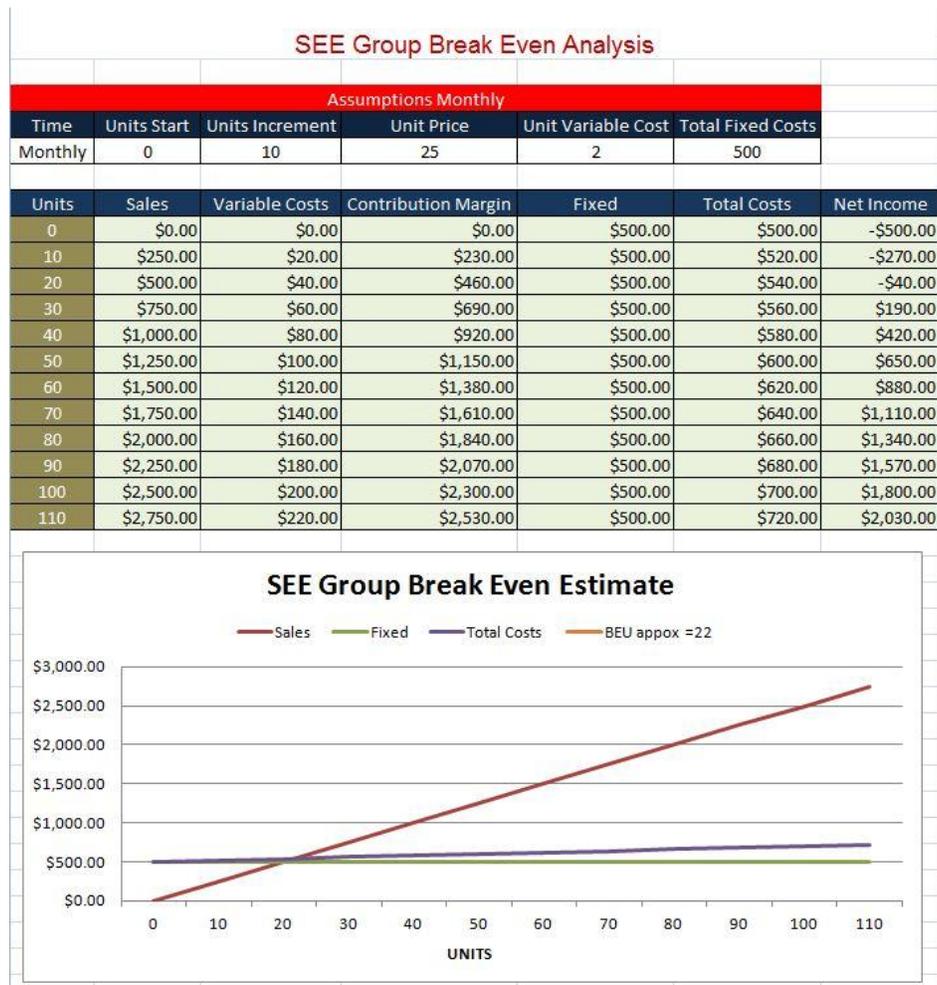
SEE Web Design is a Limited Liability Corporation (Partnership). Each Partner is treated as a sole proprietor after the initial revenue and expense calculations. The corporation files IRS forms 1065 and 65. Each partner independently files a K1 form with a list of deductions. Below is the break even analysis for both SEE Group and SEE Web Design. SEE Web Design showed a modest profit for 2012; the partners are committed to investing more time and money into both SEE Web Design and SEE Group in 2013.

### 13.2 SEE Group Break Even Analysis

- Initial Investment Required: \$3,000.00 (Programming and Sales)
- Units: Once the program is complete, SEE Web Design expects to sell 10 units per month for the first 12 months
- Sales: \$25.00 per month per user
- Variable Costs: Site and customer maintenance.
- Fixed Costs: Domain name, Hosting services, wages, and shelter
- Break Even Point: 21 units

Summary: Once SEE Group is completed, it will require very little time and money to maintain. Break even analysis demonstrates SEE Web Design expects to sell 10 units per month at \$25.00 per unit. After the initial investment of \$3,000.00, it expects to spend \$500.00 annually for upgrades, maintenance, and shelter. Initially variable costs are insignificant as wages are contributed. SEE is meant to serve as the marketing buzz for SEE Web Design and Development website sales. It is clear however that if all things remain constant, as sales accumulate past the breakeven point of 21 units, it is profitable and wages become payable. If all does not remain constant and SEE decides to expand and forward integrate in the industry (compete with Salesforce.com), the cost per unit could increase.

Table 13.2



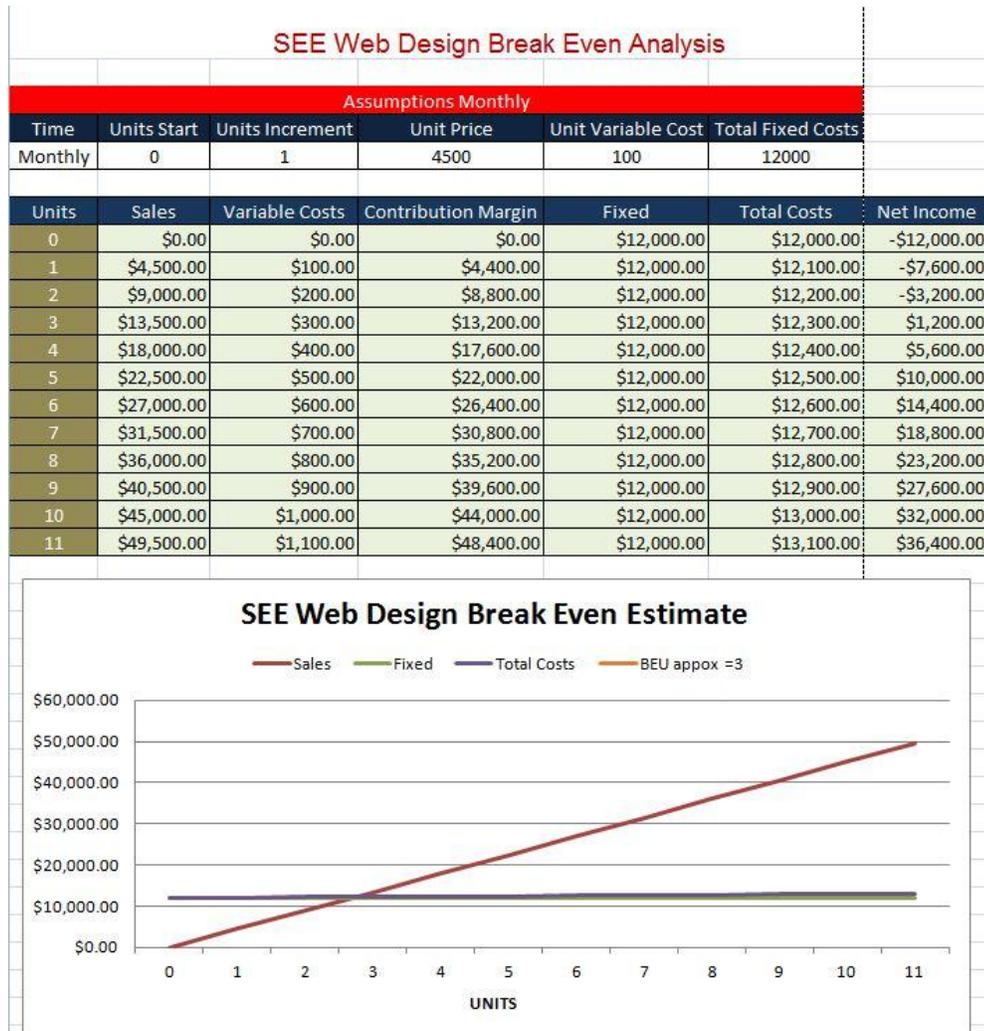
(ExcellsFun, 2010) Tutorial

### 13.3 SEE Web Design & Development, LLC

- Initial Investment Required: \$12,000.00 (Programming and Sales)
- Units: Once the program is complete, SEE Web Design expects to sell 1 unit per month for the first 12 months
- Sales: \$4,500.00 per site
- Variable Costs: Site and customer maintenance
- Fixed Costs: Domain name, Hosting services, wages, and shelter
- Break Even Point: 3 Units

Summary: SEE Web Design is a functional business and paid taxes on profits for 2012. It currently has 4 clients (Sloan's Signs Clientele). What is not clear in the break even analysis above is: the partners have contributed the initial investment, units sold per month were 4 for 12 months, and cost per unit was less than planned, but made up from maintenance revenue. Fixed costs included R&D. The breakeven point where wages became possible was 2 units.

Table 13.3



(ExcellsFun, 2010) Tutorial

**14.0 Conclusion**

SEE Web Design and Group are both in excellent positions for rapid growth after the fixed cost of building the software. These fixed costs are not annual occurrences. Once built, the systems require maintenance. Website maintenance is \$85.00 per hour extra beyond the scope of the above analysis. There is ample room for future partner profit as can be seen in Tables 13.2 and 13.3 past the breakeven point under net income.

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## 16.0 Appendices

Purpose: Supporting Data

Content: Three tables supporting age, education, and browsing interests. It is based on a measuring scale of plus and minus numbers with zero being average.

Title: The Demographic Landscape of Social Networks, Tables 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4

Source:

Nelms, D. (2011, June 1). *The Demographic Landscape of Social Networks*. Retrieved February 27, 2012, from Social Media Today: <http://socialmediatoday.com/amzini/301914/demographic-landscape-social-networks>

Purpose: Pricing

Content: Pricing list for SEE Group and other SEE Web Development Services.

Title: SEE's Pricing for Products and Services, Table 8.3

Source: Sloan