**Marketing Strategy Business Plan**

**Executive Summary**

Last year the doors to 898,000 new businesses opened in the United States for the first time. Most of these businesses were created by entrepreneurs who envisioned an opportunity to develop a new product or service, and pursued that vision in search of independence and financial reward. While these visionaries started with solid ideas to form the foundation of their new ventures, most do not have many of the skills necessary to transform their ideas into reality. Additionally, the scarcity of talent in today's market makes it extremely difficult for small business owners to attract and retain those skills.

**TARGET MARKET**

The Cambridge Strategy Group (CSG), L.L.C. is dedicated to providing marketing and management consulting services to small and emerging businesses looking for opportunities to increase their potential for success. Unlike traditional management consulting firms that focus on analyzing problems for large customers, CSG works exclusively with small business clients to develop concrete, practical, short-term action plans that will start moving their businesses in the right direction. The Cambridge Strategy Group takes advantage of the small business owners' need for marketing and management skills, the scarcity of those skills in the market, and the lack of any major competitor owning the concept of "small business consulting."

**MANAGEMENT**

The CSG management team brings a broad range of industry experience and training from both energetic small firms and experienced industry leaders.

John B. Gordon, Executive Director: John has worked in marketing, business development, and corporate strategy for a number of small and large firms, including EMC Corporation, IBM Corporation, and Larscom, Incorporated. John's participation on the North Carolina Council for Entrepreneurial Development, plus his experience providing consulting services to small businesses, catalyzed the formation of the Cambridge Strategy Group.

Todd D. Kuczaj, Managing Director: Todd has worked in Internet consulting, Web design/development, financial services, and media publications for a variety of companies, including a Big Five consulting firm, Integrated Information Systems Inc., SunAmerica Securities Inc., and the Foothills Sentinel. Todd currently functions as an experienced analyst for a Big Five consulting firm, working with Fortune 100 and Fortune e-50 firms to solve their business and technology issues.

Ben S. Cordell, Managing Director: Ben has worked in business development, account management, systems engineering, marketing, and product development positions at LifeServ and ONE Co. (formerly DC Systems). Ben currently functions as a corporate strategy specialist at LifeServ, discovering and developing merger, acquisition and strategic partnership opportunities.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

The market for Cambridge Strategy Group's services is enormous. Initially, the three founding members intend to work part-time on this venture while maintaining full-time positions with other corporations. As we determine how best to enlarge our operations, we will consider expanding the business as defined in our strategy.

**1.1 Keys to Success**

**UNIQUENESS OF SERVICES**

The Cambridge Strategy Group is focused specifically on helping small and emerging businesses maximize their potential for success. We combine Blue Chip training with small business experience and local presence. We differentiate ourselves in the following ways:

Focus on small business. We place our best people on small business customers. Our mission is to help small businesses of today become the leading corporations of tomorrow. Cambridge Strategy Group will attempt to own the words "small business" in the minds of our potential clients.

Cost-effective personal interaction with local consultant presence. Personal interaction provides small businesses with a level of comfort not available with remote consultants. There may be many occasions where the small business founders may ask the consultant to simply "stop by," to react to a new development, or to answer a question. While this local presence and personal interaction is highly valued, business owners are often unable to afford the cost associated with bringing consultants to them from other areas.

A diverse network of consultants and alliance partners. Solving the unique problems that face small businesses today demands a wide range of skills and experiences. By relying on a nationally distributed talent base coordinated to work together remotely, Cambridge Strategy Group will be able to bring together the skills required by a particular client without incurring the expense of physically bringing all of the individuals together. In the book, 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing, authors Al Ries and Jack Trout note that being first in the customer's mind is more important than being the overall leader. In the world of small business, this is particularly true. With 898,000 small businesses starting each year, there is a significant opportunity for a consulting firm such as Cambridge Strategy Group to become the "first" consulting firm dedicated exclusively to small businesses in the minds of a number of these potential clients.

**1.2 Objectives**

The firm has very small capital requirements. Any capital that the firm obtains will be used to promote the "small business focus" of the firm and cover basic operational costs. For the firm to realize its full potential, the founders would require compensation equivalent to full-time employment while pursuing initial clients and creating a backlog of work requests. This would most likely need to cover at least one year's salary for each of the three managers. Additionally, funding for initial marketing projects would help to ensure that the firm could establish a claim to the "small business consulting" concept in the target market. In exchange for the funding, CSG would provide an equity stake to the funding company. Ideally, we would like to work with the funding company to help its other clients succeed.