Group Name: Advyzr

Submission Video Link: https://vimeo.com/107665538

Case Prompt: Higher Education

Mission
The creators of Advyzr recognize that academic clarity and informational accuracy and availability are key determinants in a student's prompt and efficient completion of degree requirements. Furthermore, we understand that as a young, developing mind, career guidance is highly demanded, yet scarcely dispersed in a meaningful or efficient manner. That's why we focus on providing, up-to-date, customized academic advisement. While we're aware the intimate relationship that exists between profitability and quality products, we know that our success is based on the well-being of our team, and our overall desire to positively shape academic planning in higher education.

Vision
We hope to be the leader in mobile solutions for academic planning with more than 2000 university accounts and a minimum consumer retention rate of 30% (double the national average)[1]. Additionally, we hope to see the average graduation rate shift from 59%- for the achievement of a four-year degree within six years- to 65%- for the achievement of a 4-year degree in 4 years or less [2].

The success of Advyzr is dependent on our ability to:
1. Identify student needs
2. Build/adapt products as effective solutions to these needs
3. Build and maintain relationships with higher education institutions

Value
Advyzr seamlessly combines structured and unstructured data to provide relevant and precise information to users. Structured requests are attached to the app's primary function of scheduling. During registration, users are asked for their desired major, minor and graduation date as well as scheduling (morning, mid-day, afternoon, evening) and learning preferences (evenly distribute, front-load or back-load the most challenging courses). This information is essentially used as a filter, allowing the app to sort through the course catalogue and schedule of class to build schedules containing courses that satisfy degree requirements and that are offered within the specified time windows.

Unstructured inquiries can range from course recommendations to career guidance. Some of the questions users might ask are:

- I'm really good at math, but I hated my accounting class. What other majors might be good for me?
- I want to learn about graphic design- what classes can I take that might also compliment my major?
- I need to take a science course, but am terrible with equations- which do you recommend?
- My dream career is to work in diplomacy/foreign affairs- what should my major be? What sort of internships should I take?
- Which is a better fit for me: ART 2101 or ART 2103?

IBM's Watson Technology allows us to effectively address the aforementioned questions primarily because of its ability to perform hypothesis generation and evaluation and decision-making based on thorough personality profiling. The proprietary technology and value-adding proponent of Advyzr is its use of Watson's User Modeling API. Watson essentially cross analyzes students (through social media accounts) and courses (through course descriptions and syllabi) to make precise course recommendations (matches) for our users. Moving forward, we plan on using that same matching

process to recommend clubs/organizations, on-campus events, scholarships and internship opportunities. Further, through our "class with friends" option, users are able to share their schedules through their social media accounts and even opt to add courses to their schedule that their friends are also planning to take. We understand that as a scheduling tool alone, app usage will follow a pulsating schedule- peeking at registration times. The aforementioned additions not only add value to consumers, but also facilitate continuous engagement for users throughout the entire year.

At most Universities, traditional academic advisors take on much more than their job descriptions. On average they face a student caseload of about 300 students per advisor; and if that weren't enough, there's also seminars, workshops, events and various other responsibilities. With Advyzr, we aim to service nearly 85% of the students in the advisement waiting room. That means traditional advisors are free to do the job they truly love- working one-on-one with students in need to give them invaluable advice and support. That's the power of Advyzr.

Pricing Strategy
Advyzr is designed to earn revenue via licensing agreements with higher education institutions, big data subscription plans and in-app advertising.

Licensing Agreements- These agreements are built on an annual or monthly basis- which is structured around a sliding fee-per-user system. Originally licensing fees were generated using a formula that accounted for student tech fees with respect to the number of undergraduate students. We found, however, that this was an inaccurate pricing strategy because it failed to account for the overall income of the university. While small schools may have lower tech fees/student, it is not the case that such an institution is unable to pay top dollar for this kind of product. In many instances, we've found cases where small school generated enormous revenues due to high tuition costs, but invested very little towards Ed. Tech. projects. These sorts of institutions would receive an unfair price advantage over larger public institutions. We decided to price Advyzr in such a way that fees were allocated on a sliding scale so as to eliminate the unfair advantage that may exist for a smaller school. We were also conscious of traditional pricing strategies by larger firms that have a history of licensing their products to universities for student consumption. For example, Baruch college has 1121 computers in its almost one dozen computer labs[3]. Adobe licenses their product per desktop at $300/machine/year [4]. Even if only, 40% of these computers actually had access to the Adobe portfolio of products, it would still cost Baruch College $134,520/year. At a price point of $40,000/year- we have a sustainable price-leader advantage.

Big Data Analytics- Data analytics has become a major player in higher education. Information collected through student-centered products and services is being used in several ways; from identifying and aiding at-risk (Dropout) students to quantifying course performance and design across multiple student backgrounds. Our analytics aim to address class performance, graduation rates, switching rates and retention rates as they relate to demographic data points and area of study. This will be deployed to our customers (the university) through a tiered subscription system.

In-App Advertising is to be added as a phase 2 revenue stream. Advertisers will be carefully screened to ensure their beliefs are consistent with our brand. Additionally, potential advertisers must represent a product or service that is consistent with the needs of our target demographics; further, this specific need must be backed by presentable and verifiable market research and consumer data.

Higher Education Spending:
According to the 2013 EDUCAUSE Core Data Report, the average spending per Full Time Enrollee (FTE) on technology in higher education is $925 per year [5]. With 21.8 million students nationwide last year (and growing), roughly 20 Billion dollars has been spent on Ed Tech projects [6]. According to the center for digital education, Higher Education received almost $10.5 Billion of this funds- an increase of almost 2% from the previous year [7][8].

Go-to-Market Strategy:
Our go-to-market strategy is designed in stages. Phase one involves focusing on local customers-ideally, a consortium of schools such as the CUNY system. After the product has been accepted and bugs have been phased out through iteration, we will use phase two to expand regionally- targeting schools in the tri-state area (NY, CT, NJ). Phase 3 expansion focuses on the estimated 1300 institutions along the east coast of the United States. These aforementioned phases are expected to take 3-5 years to complete. A phase is recognized as completed when at least 50% of the targeted institutions have been acquired (licensed). At the conclusion of this plan we will implement a similar schedule on the west coast. Once infrastructure and support is established on both ends of the nation, we will work our way inwards, targeting Midwestern institutions.

Works Cited

[1] https://mixpanel.com/blog/2013/11/04/trends-report-the-new-standards-for-mobile-app-retention/?utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Mixpanel-AnalyticsForStartups+(Mixpanel+-+Analytics+for+startups)&utm_medium=feed&utm_source=feedburner

[2] http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=40

[3] http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/bctc/labs/

[4] http://edex.adobe.com/discussion/792457a5/

[5] http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/2013-cds-executive-summary-report

[6] http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372

[7] http://cdn2.content.compendiumblog.com/uploads/user/e7288d2f-362f-474d-b12a-b86571e79692/723ab966-473f-4cfe-836c-fd7e1ee1114f/File/9d1234ea06c4ab569613a13da86f6ab3/center_for_digital_education_2014_market_briefing_webinar.pdf

[8] http://www.centerdigitaled.com/events/EducationTechnologyMarketWatch2013.html