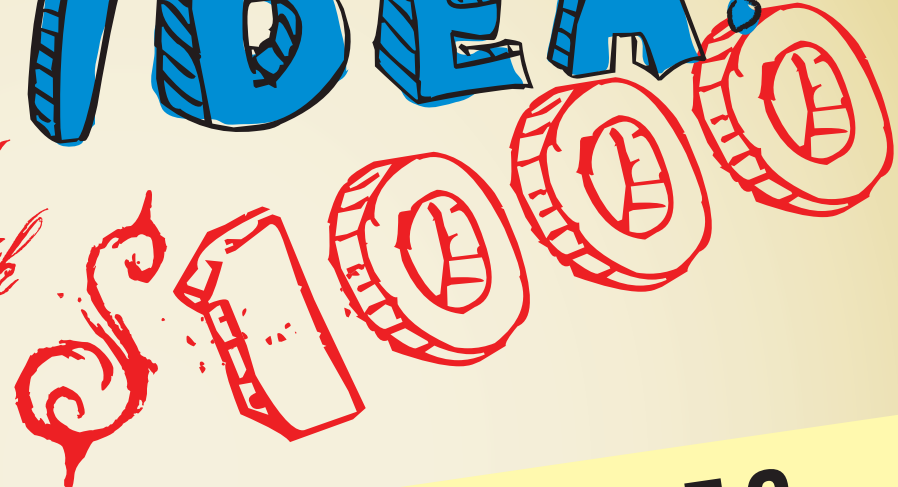


what's your
BIG IDEA?

*It could
be worth*



COMPETITION GUIDELINES



BIG IDEA



www.BIGIdeaSD.com

EVERY IDEA NEEDS THE CHANCE TO GROW

The Business Idea Competition


The purpose of the BIG Idea Competition is to foster entrepreneurship by getting high school students to think about business opportunities and the possibility of creating those opportunities in South Dakota. Student ideas can be for any type of business they choose. It could be an idea for a business that would serve a local area or an idea for a new or innovative product or service that a student has identified. The business idea will be judged solely on the written entry.

The Marketing Design Competition (optional)

In addition to the Business Idea Competition, an optional Marketing Design Competition allows students to create a logo and a marketing piece to support their proposed business idea.

Since the marketing competition is optional, marketing designs will not be considered in the judging of the written business idea. Judging for the Marketing Design Competition will be based on both the marketing pieces and the written business idea. The Marketing Design Competition is not strictly an artistic competition. The design pieces will be judged primarily on how well the design elements relate to and promote the business idea itself.

The Competition Process

 – **Submitting Your Entry Online:** Students submit their business idea by going to the website (www.BIGIdeaSD.com) and creating a login at the Student link. Each entry will require a unique email and password for the login. If students are participating as a team, only one student login is needed for the entry. Students should record their email and password for future reference. The login feature allows students to work on the entry, save their work and return to the website to work on the entry until it is ready to submit. Once a login is created, students will choose their school and advisor from drop down boxes and enter relevant contact data for themselves and any team members. Be sure to click the “Save Your Info” button at the bottom which will save your data and allow you to access the Big Idea entry form.

In developing the entry for the business idea, students will cover important points that entrepreneurial professionals (entrepreneurs, bankers, venture capitalists) want answered. These important points fall under the following sections:



- **Concept Overview (75 words)**
- **Product or Service (250 words)**
- **Market Opportunity (250 words)**
- **Competition (250 words)**
- **Management and Operations (250 words)**

Each section has a word limit, and a word counter is shown at the bottom of each section on the website.

If text is being cut and pasted from another program, the space bar should be pressed after pasting text to update the word count. The word counter will allow text beyond the word limit; however, the entry cannot be submitted until the text is within the allowable word limit for each section. Once the BIG Idea written entry is completed, students will select the “Submit Your Idea” button. The students will then complete a short survey to finalize their idea submission. Nothing further is required for submission into the main competition.

– **Submitting Your Marketing Design:**

For those students who choose to participate in the optional BIG Idea Marketing


Design Competition, their marketing pieces will need to be uploaded to the appropriate section of the website prior to submission. The Marketing Design Competition is not a stand alone competition; students/teams must compete in the Business Idea Competition to be eligible to compete in the Marketing Design Competition. The required marketing pieces will be: (1) a logo representing your company or product, and (2) a full page ad design. It is recommended that you work in a format of 8.5” x 11” for both the logo and ad. The only file types that will be supported for uploading are .PDF and .JPG. File sizes are limited to 2 MB each for the logo and the ad. **See page 13 for instructions on how to save your files in the correct format.**

Once a business name has been entered and saved, students can click on the “Your Marketing Design” button to upload the two files for the optional Marketing Design Competition. Once the designs are complete the written entry has been submitted, students should choose the “Submit Marketing Designs” button at the bottom of the page. Again, a short survey will be presented. The designs will be accepted for competition upon completion of the survey. Once the entry and optional designs have been submitted, changes to the entry cannot be made. Completed entries and designs must be submitted by midnight, Central Standard Time on **Monday, October 31, 2011.**

How To Upload Your Files:

Use the “Browse” button to find the design files and click “Upload Files” to save designs to your entry. Once a file is uploaded, a delete option is available. To change a file, click ‘delete’ and then browse to find the new file and upload it.




 – **Final Competition:** All submitted entries will be reviewed and scored by a panel of judges and the eight business idea submissions with the highest scores will advance to the final competition. Finalists will be notified during **the week of November 14, 2011**. One winner will be chosen from all marketing design submissions prior to the Awards Ceremony. The winner will be announced at the Ceremony.

The eight competition finalists will be required to make a 5-minute maximum presentation with a visual component to a panel of judges during the final competition. The required visual component could be a PowerPoint, storyboard, handout, demonstration or other visual component of the finalist's choice. Presentation rooms will be equipped with a screen, a computer and a projector. The judging is based on the viability of the business idea and information conveyed during the final presentation. Spectators are not allowed in the room for the final presentation. Media may be present during the final competition to capture footage. Following all the presentations, a luncheon will be held for the finalists, their teachers and the judges.

For the Marketing Design Competition, judges will rate all entries and one winner will be chosen from among all entries and notified prior to the Final Competition. No further design competition will be held at the Final Competition.

The Final Competition and Awards Ceremony will be held on **Thursday, December 8, 2011** at Northern State University in Aberdeen. More details will be forthcoming.

 – **Award Ceremony:** All schools and students who submitted entries to the BIG Idea Competition are invited to the Awards Ceremony. Students, teachers and parents will join in recognizing the students' entrepreneurial spirit as the winners of the competition are announced. The ceremony will include a panel discussion with successful entrepreneurs, and the eight finalists will deliver their elevator pitches. (The elevator pitches given by the prior years' finalists can be viewed at the BIG Idea website under the Previous Winners link.) The winner of the Marketing Design Competition will be recognized and invited to display their marketing pieces and give a brief presentation of how the design pieces promote the business idea. Awards presentations will then be made to the top three winners in the Business Idea Competition. The ceremony will take place on the same day as the final competition.



Note to Advisors

Any teacher, advisor, or other school personnel who is overseeing a student participating in this competition is considered an advisor. An Advisor Control Panel has been created on the BIG Idea website specifically for advisors. To access it, each advisor must create a login (email and password) by choosing the Advisor link on the home page. From there, the advisor will be prompted to choose (or add if necessary) their school and contact information. At this point, both the school and the advisor will be listed and available for students to select when completing their entries. Be sure your school contact information is accurate because advisors will not be able to change school affiliation once a student has chosen them as an advisor. Once advisors log in to the site, they will have access to the Advisor Control Panel and Advisor Dashboard.

(Note: Students are not required to have an advisor and can choose Independent Study for the Advisor field.)

The Advisor Dashboard includes links for Students, Completed Projects, Draft Projects, Marketing Design Submissions and Advisors. These links give the Advisor information about which students have created an entry and where they are at in the process. The Student link shows student name, contact information and submission status for all students who have chosen you as an advisor. The various project related links are populated once the student(s) has completed the Business Name field in their entry. In the Complete and Draft Projects links, advisors can click on the business name to view the student entry, gauge progress, or print. Advisors can view which students have uploaded marketing design by choosing the Marketing Design Submissions link on the Advisor Dashboard. Clicking on the uploaded files will open the marketing design file for display. The Advisor link displays the list of advisors who have registered on the BIG Idea website, whether or not they are active in this year's contest.



Important Dates

September 1, 2011: Competition is launched and online login and entry form can be accessed. Complete entries can be submitted anytime after September 1st.

October 31, 2011 by midnight CST: Final date for each student or team to submit their business idea and marketing designs online.

Mid-November, 2011: Finalists will be notified.

Late November, 2011: There are various deadlines for the finalists and for any schools participating in the Award Ceremony.

December 8, 2011: Finalists present their idea to panel of judges. All students are invited to the awards ceremony where winners will be announced.

Rules and Guidelines

Any high school student currently enrolled in a public, private or home school may submit a business idea entry. Ideas may also be submitted by teams of students (up to three students per team). A student (individually or as part of a team) may create as many entries as they wish as long as each business idea is different. Students will need to create a separate login for each entry. The top eight finalists from prior BIG Idea competitions are not allowed to resubmit their previous business idea but may participate by submitting a new idea for the 2010 competition.

Students who enter the competition understand and agree that:

- Students will complete a short survey as part of the submission process.
- The primary contact person (Team Member #1), as identified in the login and entry process, is responsible for communicating with other team members any information related to the competition.
- Students who enter the competition and are chosen as finalists **must be** available on **Thursday, December 8, 2011** to present their business idea to the judges as well as attend the awards ceremony.

Judging Guidelines

Judging The Submitted Idea. The first round of judging will consist of a panel of judges from the entrepreneurial community, which may include successful entrepreneurs, professors and business professionals. Each of the five sections for every BIG Idea submission will be judged based on how well the questions in that section were addressed and on the following criteria:

- Completeness of business idea
- Viability as an ongoing business
- Creativity and innovation



The judging criteria assigns 10% of the score (100 points) to grammar and spelling so students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to proofread their entry for grammar and comprehension. (NOTE: The website itself will not have spell-check functionality unless your web browser has this feature installed.) A maximum of 1,000 points will be awarded in the first round. The top eight ideas will advance to the final competition. Those entries that score within 10% of the finalists' scores will be designated as Honorable Mention.

Judging The Final Competition Presentations. In the final round, a panel of judges will evaluate the eight finalists' presentations. The judging will be based on how well they can communicate their BIG Idea using a visual component and on the following criteria:

- ♦ Ability to communicate the idea
- ♦ Visual component
- ♦ Overall professionalism

A maximum of 600 points will be awarded in the final round, 200 for each of the above criteria. Scores from the first round and final round will be added together to determine the winners. Rubrics for the preliminary and final judging can be found at the Rules link on the website. All finalists will be recognized and the top three entries will be awarded cash prizes of \$1,000 for first, \$500 for second and \$250 for third. Scholarships will also be awarded by Northern State University and Presentation College.

Judging the Marketing Design Piece. All students that choose to participate in this phase of the competition will be judged on the marketing design pieces as well as how effectively they promote the business idea. The required elements of the Marketing Design Competition include: (1) a logo representing your company or product, and (2) a full page ad design. The judging criteria include creativity, legibility, appropriateness to product or company, and professionalism.

The Marketing Design Competition entries may not be submitted without a Big Idea submission. It can only be an addition to the written entry. The winning prize is \$500 and awarded to the winning entry as determined by a team of judges.

The score sheets which judges will be using for each section of the competition can be found at the BIG Idea website under the Rules link.



How to Develop Your Business Idea

A business idea is a summary of what could later be developed into a business plan, a formal document that requires extensive components. This competition requires that you address your business idea in the following five sections:

- ♦ **Concept Overview**
- ♦ **Product or Service**
- ♦ **Market Opportunity**
- ♦ **Competition**
- ♦ **Management and Operation**

The following pages provide further details on each sections:

Concept Overview (75 words or less)

This summary of your idea should grab the reader's attention. This is an overview and should include important points from the other sections.

Questions to answer include:

- ♦ What is your business idea?
- ♦ What is the problem you are solving or need you are satisfying?
- ♦ Who are your customers?

Resources/Links

Small Business Tools

http://www.toolkit.com/small_business_guide

Writing a Business Plan

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/businessplan>

Teen Business, Young Entrepreneurs

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/tsu>

Example: Prairie Hill Lawn Care will serve the newly developed Prairie Hill neighborhood where homeowners want to have a nice lawn but may not have the time or equipment to care for the lawn themselves. In this upscale development, our customers are homeowners who can afford lawn care services.



Product or Service (250 words or less)

Questions to answer include:

- ♦ What is the product or service?
 - ♦ How will the product be produced or the service performed?
 - ♦ What are the features and benefits of the product or service and its potential drawbacks?
 - ♦ What are the unique aspects of your product or service?
-

Example: Prairie Hill Lawn Care will offer lawn care services to the Prairie Hill neighborhood by providing quality service at an affordable price. Prairie Hill residents take great pride in their new homes and are interested in having a good looking, well-kept yard. The services will include cutting the lawn, trimming the edges and bagging the cuttings. Currently, there is not a contracted lawn care provider in this development. That is why our business will be the first mover into this location. No other landscaping services will be provided by this business at this time. We seek to target busy professionals with careers and families as well as renters and owners who do not have lawn care equipment or do not care for their yard themselves. It is estimated that a lawn cutting service is needed mid-April through the end of October for a total of 26 weeks of service but is subject to change depending on weather conditions. It is estimated that the average lawn will need cutting twice a week during the peak season of June-August and once a week during other times, again, subject to weather conditions. I will provide the services myself as owner and seek to develop a relationship with my customers by gathering specific information from them about their lawn care needs.

Resources/Links

Business ideas

<http://www.whynot.net>

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/businessideas>



Market Opportunity (250 words or less)

Questions to answer include:

- ♦ Describe your industry - size, trends, growth, etc.
- ♦ Describe the characteristics of your customers (location, age, race, income, lifestyle, etc.)
- ♦ How will your product or service be priced and why?
- ♦ How will you promote your product or service?

Example: There are currently an estimated 654 households in the Prairie Hill neighborhood of Prairietown (based on the census data for the zip code). It is estimated that over 50% of the households have lawns and therefore might have a need for my service. It is estimated that the average household spends \$100 per year on lawn care services, which would indicate a total market of \$65,400 in the Prairie Hill neighborhood. The neighborhood has a median income of \$58,664 with 84% consisting of households with children where both parents are working. This segment of the population and income demographic is growing and would likely have the ability to pay someone to take care of their lawn. Starting out as a one-person business, I am hoping to gain 15-20 regular customers by the end of the first year, which is a small percentage of the total neighborhood market. I will promote my business through local newspapers and flyers to individual homes. As I gain customers, I will provide incentives to my customers to refer my services to their neighbors. I estimate that I will be charging in the area of \$20 per hour for my services. Jobs can be priced by the hour or by the job.

Resources/Links

Business Research

<http://www.bplans.com/dp/article.cfm/16>

South Dakota Data

<http://www.sdreadytowork.com/location-tools---data-data-center.aspx>

Census Data

<http://www.census.gov>



Competition (250 words or less)

Questions to answer include:

- ♦ Who are your competitors?
- ♦ What is innovative about your product or service and how does it differ from the competition? (Why will people do business with you instead of your competition?)
- ♦ Know the strengths and weaknesses of your business. Compare and contrast your strengths and weaknesses of your business to your competitors.
- ♦ How easily can others compete with you?

Example: While there are 14 lawn care businesses in the county, there are no established lawn care services within the Prairie Hill neighborhood since the area is fairly new. I plan to differentiate my business from other services by my close proximity to my customers and by offering a reliable, efficient and affordable service that is personalized to fit each customer's needs. Competitors are primarily full-service, large-landscaping and lawn care businesses located five miles or more from the neighborhood. These competitors are well-established businesses with an existing client base, and therefore have less capacity to serve new clients, particularly in an area some distance from their location. Services provided by the competition include not only lawn mowing services but also landscaping and weed spraying services. Their average charge is \$30 to \$40 per hour. At closer to \$20 per hour, Prairie Hill Lawn Care will be an attractive alternative for new homeowners who want a nice looking yard but have other demands on their disposable income with new homes and families. The charge for a typical residential yard is estimated at \$15-\$20 for a basic cut. New customers will be interviewed to gather pertinent information about their yard maintenance needs (times of service, obstacles or specific features in the yard, any special events, etc.). Customers will also be confident knowing the person gathering this information will also be cutting their lawn each time. Possible weaknesses of the business are the inexperience of the business owner and limited services.

Resources/Links

Researching the competition

<http://articles.bplans.com/writing-a-business-plan>

Industry sizes (Census Bureau's Economic Fact Sheets)

<http://factfinder2.census.gov>

Understand your Competition

<http://articles.bplans.com/business/understand-your-competition/95>



Management and Operation (250 words or less)

Questions to answer include:

- ♦ Identify the key persons and skills needed to implement your idea.
- ♦ How will your product or service be created and be delivered to customers?
- ♦ What physical facilities or technology are needed to produce or deliver the product or service?

Example: I will provide the labor for services as well as management and promotion of the business with no employees for at least the first year. I could manage 15-20 customers based on an average of 1 hour per yard two times a week during the peak season. As I acquire more than 20 customers, a second employee will need to be considered in order to help run an efficient business. Gathering customer data and yard specific information will require me to meet with the customers and learn what the customer wants done with their lawn so that we can satisfy their needs. Customers will be quoted a price for their lawn services, and payment will be expected at the time of service in order for smooth business operations. Bookkeeping will be completed during off peak hours. The equipment needed for the business consists of riding and push lawn mowers, a trimmer, rakes, bags for the cuttings and a gas can. The necessary vehicle and trailer will be stored in my father's garage at no cost to the business. Other expenses would be printing of flyers, fuel for equipment and vehicles, insurance, cell phone, licensing of the vehicle and trailer, and bookkeeping materials.

Resources/Links

Management Plan

<http://www.usd.edu/business/south-dakota-small-business-development-center/frequently-asked-questions.cfm>

Equipment Needs

http://www.toolkit.cch.com/text/P04_4000.asp

People who Work for Your Business

http://www.toolkit.cch.com/text/P05_0000.asp



How to Develop Your Marketing Design Pieces

The required elements for the Marketing Design Competition include: (1) a logo representing your company or product, and (2) a full page ad design. **Both should be submitted on separate 8.5" x 11" size layouts in .PDF or .JPG format, not to exceed a file size of 2 MB each.**

When designing a logo, don't necessarily try to replicate the product or company in the logo itself. Sometimes it works; sometimes it makes for a complicated logo. After all, there are no hamburgers or French fries in the McDonalds logo, nor are there shoes in the Nike Logo. Think simple, think legible printing, and think of appropriate colors.

For the sales sheet or full page ad design, here are some tips to keep in mind as you create your entry:

- Logos are not headlines. Don't use your logo as the main element of the design.
- A good design that communicates effectively typically has a dominant image. That image can be a photo, typography or some other form of graphic.
- Your headline type should relate to the image you show.
- Try to think of things that make your idea truly unique. Perhaps you will only use the main feature as the basis for your ad or sales sheet.
- Stay away from word associations which make no sense like if you're selling a lawn mower don't say things like, "It'll shave time off your yard chores" and show a picture of a guy shaving his face. The face shaving doesn't relate to yard chores. Now if the picture was someone cutting a lawn in the shape of a face, you have a better word association.
- Make sure you include enough information so a person can actually obtain your product or get in touch with you.
- Keep your descriptive text to a minimum. Use bullet points whenever you can as they are quick and easy to read.
- And never, never use the phrase, "For all your _____needs." If you do, you haven't thought enough about the emotional benefits of your Big Idea.

How To Save Your Files:

Microsoft Word 2007 and later: Make a PDF

Click the Office button and choose Save As PDF or XPS

Save as type: PDF

Microsoft Publisher 2007 and later: Make a PDF

Go to the File menu and choose Publish as PDF or XPS

Save as type: PDF

Microsoft Word 2003: Make a JPG

Select all (Ctrl+A)

Copy (Ctrl+C)

Open Microsoft Paint

Paste (Ctrl+V)

Go to the File menu and choose Save As...

Save as type: JPEG

Microsoft Publisher 2003: Make a JPG

Go to the File menu and choose Save As...

Save as type: JPEG

Note: PDF and JPG Files created in other programs are also acceptable.

Resources/Links

How to Develop Your Marketing Design Pieces

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/marketing/marketingbasics/marketingmaterials/article71902.html>



The following example is for a real company that was presenting their Big Idea at a competition. In this case, the logo does include a visual reference to the product, but it's so basic that the design works. Note that the sales sheet includes a headline about reputation and depicts a negative situation of a messy job site. Feel free to look at magazines to see more examples of ads and how the headline works with the image.

Logo Example:



Full Page Ad Example:

Sample of Ad or Sale Sheet

Protect Your Jobsite & Your Reputation

NEW Patent Pending

Net Weight
32 +/- Pounds

Containment Capacity
1.5 +/- Cubic Feet

Dimensions
34 7/8 x 16 7/4 x 7 1/2 Inches

Other methods of erosion and sediment abatement aren't effective and are difficult to clean out. The D.I.P. Basket provides the most reliable results.

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 www.skyviewconst.com

Introducing, the Drop Inlet Protection Basket

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- **Economical** – welded angle iron and steel mesh for years of use.
- **Common size** – basket fits into road drain frame and will sit beneath the grate.
- **Easy to use** – uses high flow silt fence zip tied to basket for filter.
- **Reduces overflow** – 2"x4" lumber fits in channel iron guides to deflect run off.
- **Easy to maintain** – sediment can be removed with a flat bottom shovel, by removing the filter, or dumping the basket.

To Order, Call Toll Free
1-888-498-7333

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Visit www.BIGIdeaSD.com for a complete list of resources. For more information, or if you have any questions, please contact:

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