

SAMPLE SWOT ANALYSIS ON AN ANIMAL SHELTER BUSINESS

# Custom Essay

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### Sample SWOT Analysis for an Animal Shelter Business

Hearth for Paws is an animal shelter and rescue organization that will establish its brand in Kansas City, Missouri. The organization will conduct rescue operations for abandoned and abused animals. Hearth for Paws will focus on meeting the needs of mammals, reptiles, birds, fishes, and other animals that experienced mistreatment. It will organize events and programs to help in the rehabilitation of animals. Pet supplies such as pet foods, toys, and cages will also be available for purchase to increase the organization's profit.

Hearth for Paws has investors from different industries that help in its capacity to pay for operating and other expenses. These investors are individuals who are passionate about helping animals and are not concerned with their return on investment. For this reason, Hearth for Paws can focus on rescuing and taking care of animals over profits and investor satisfaction. Still, the organization will charge administration and adoption fees to help cover their expenses.

To help assess the company's feasibility and develop an effective business plan, Hearth for Paws will conduct a SWOT analysis. This analysis will discuss the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The discussion will include macro and micro factors that can affect Hearth for Paws' operations. This SWOT analysis will also help in developing marketing, operating, and financial strategies.

#### Strengths

Hearth for Paws' main strength is from the company's investors that are more than willing to finance a portion of the operating costs. These investors allow the organization to set its focus on rescuing and rehabilitating animals. Without the

investors, Hearth for Paws will need to rely on charity events, donations, and the profits from their retail supplies. As the investors finance the company's expenses, Hearth for Paws' owners and managers can effectively focus on their objectives rather than earning enough profit to maintain the operations.

Hearth for Paws' other strength is its practice of hiring individuals who sincerely care for the well-being of animals. Most of these individuals are pet owners and conservationists that have experience with handling animals. The company ensures that its employees have the proper skills for animal rescue and rehabilitation. New employees will undergo training to improve their knowledge of handling abused and aggressive animals. It is also important to note that the company avoids hiring radical animal activists due to their capacity to harm animals and disturb other individuals.

Hearth for Paws' Chief Executive Officer is an expert veterinarian with years of experience tending to abused animals. The CEO along with another expert veterinarian will oversee the medical needs of injured rescue animals. This ensures that rescue animals will receive the proper medical care they require within the organization's facilities. The expertise of the veterinarians also ensures that Hearth for Paws can cater to the needs of any type of animal including reptiles, birds, and other exotic species.

The high volume of animal adoptions and fostering is also a strength for animal shelter organizations. According to a 2019-2020 APPA survey, a large percentage of owned animals are from animal shelters and rescue centers (Pets by the Numbers n.d.). The data revealed that 36% of owned dogs and 43% of owned cats in the U.S. are from animal shelters. The second popular source for pets is the pet store industry which

contributes to 9% of owned dogs and 12% of owned cats. This suggests that Hearth for Paws has an active market that chooses animal shelters over pet shops.

### Weaknesses

Hearth for Paws' investors will finance roughly half of the company's expenses. This means that the organization is dependent on the continuous support of the investors. While this fact is one of the organization's strengths, it is also a weakness.

Hearth for Paws will struggle to maintain operations if some of its investors suddenly stop contributing. The reliance on investors voids the organization from independent management. Conflicts between investors and management can potentially cause adverse effects to the organization.

The company's Chief Executive Officer and other managers have no experience in marketing. This can make establishing a trusted brand difficult due to the lack of expertise in the field. Hiring an expert marketing officer will also be a challenge since most of the organization's resources are focused on animal rehabilitation. This weakness in the marketing aspect can slow down the organization's progress and make it difficult to build the brand.

Another significant weakness is Hearth for Paws' lack of a unique characteristic. The organization prides itself on the fact that it can focus on animal rescues due to the support of its investors. However, Kansas City has a large number of animal shelters and rescue centers that focus on the same objective. Some of these organizations are bigger and already established brands. Hearth for Paws' lack of another defining characteristic can lead to average brand perception.

## Opportunities

The popularity of social media use has provided businesses with a cheap but effective marketing medium. Social media pages like Facebook and Instagram allow companies to create pages for commercial use. Hearth for Paws can use this opportunity to establish the brand and let the population learn about the company. Social media posts, images, and videos can help increase brand awareness and drive the potential market towards the organization. The medium is also a good place to discuss taking care of animals and the importance of adoption centers.

The coronavirus pandemic has forced many individuals to stay at home and avoid visiting public places. People have begun spending their days indoors which can cause boredom and stress. However, an online survey revealed that having animal companions during lockdowns can help people feel comfortable and less stressed (Carver 2020). This finding caused an increase in animal adoption and fostering in some areas. This is a great opportunity for Hearth for Paws to market their brand and showcase the sheltered animals in the facilities.

The news regarding the positive effects of having animal companions can also help in attracting new investors to the organization. With the increased rate of adoption, investors will see the social and economic significance of animal shelters. This provides Hearth for Paws an opportunity to discuss the market's potential with prospective investors. Aside from investors, the organization may acquire new partners, suppliers, and other relationships.

## Threats

Issues and downtrends in other industries can affect Hearth for Paws due to its reliance on investor's financing. The organization has investors in different fields such as airlines, agriculture, and manufacturing businesses. Instability within these industries can result in some investors' withdrawal or lower contributions. Some airlines and businesses have even filed bankruptcy reports due to the effects of the coronavirus pandemic. Events like these can greatly impact Hearth for Paws' stability and operations.

Hearth for Paws has a limited number of kennels and cages for rescued animals.

If the volume of rescued animals is greatly higher than the adoption rate, the facilities can become overpopulated. Overpopulation is a serious threat since it is a common issue in animal shelters and rescue centers (Smith 2014). This is due to the high number of strays and their ability to quickly reproduce. The overpopulation inside the facilities can lead to disease outbreaks and poor living conditions for the animals. This will affect the organization's operations as well as public perception. Threats of an animal disease outbreak may even force the organization to conduct humane euthanization.

The high number of well-known competitors in Kansas City is a serious threat to the organization. Individuals looking to adopt animals will more likely visit the well-known animal shelters since they trust them. For Hearth for Paws, the biggest competitors are Wayward Tails and Ark Project. Both of these organizations own large facilities and are self-sustaining organizations. Their well-established brands will be a big factor in the industry's competitive environment.

## Conclusion

The SWOT analysis revealed that Hearth for Paws relies on investors to maintain its stability while the organization's passionate personnel will focus on its main objective of rescuing abused and stray animals. The company can greatly benefit from the current high adoption rate and social media trends. However, the organization's reliance on its investors prevents it from becoming independent like the bigger competitors. The company's financial limitations can also affect necessary expansions to avoid overpopulation. From the analysis, Hearth for Paws should find avenues that will allow it to become a financially independent unique brand and better compete with the local businesses.

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