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**Research Request Agreement Presented to Eskimo Joe's Promotional Product  
Group by Team #1 MKTG 4333**

**Background:**

Stan Clark and his friend, Steve File, opened Eskimo Joe's in 1975 in a small building on Elm Street close to campus. Bill Thompson, a freshman and close friend of Stan and Steve, created the Joe and Buffy brand. Starting out, Eskimo Joe's was only a bar, and it wasn't until 1984 that it served food to the general public because the drinking age was raised from 18 to 21. Eskimo Joe's soon became the place to be and gained a lot of media attention as well as customers from OSU and Stillwater's "Jumpin' Little Juke Joint". Stan soon bought out Steve's share of the company and became the sole proprietor of the company. In 1987, Stan opened up his second restaurant, called Mexico Joe's and continues to run and operate today. In 1984, Stan opened up another restaurant called Stillwater Bay Oyster Company, which has since closed. Next, in 2000, Stan opened up Joseppi's Italian Kitchen which closed in 2014 and was replaced by Mojo's, a bar and grill. Mojo's closed as well in 2017, now bought out by the Wondertorium. Stan then opened up Eskimo Joe's Clothes in 2011 next door and began selling Eskimo Joe's shirts and co-branded t-shirts with OSU there. In 2002, Stan Clark wanted to share his marketing expertise and knowledge of the promotional products industry and opened Eskimo Joe's Promotional Products Group, along with a t-shirt printing factory, out by the Stillwater airport.

### **Decision Problem:**

#### **How to increase awareness of EJPPG and differentiate the company from Eskimo Joe's among Stillwater locals and OSU Students?**

The purpose of this study is to increase awareness of Eskimo Joe's Promotional Products Group and the business it holds. This increased awareness is desired among the population of Stillwater, including local businesses, students, and the University. This strategy-oriented decision problem is an unplanned change that stems from the popularity of EJPPG's sister company, Eskimo Joe's. The focus of this problem is on the overall awareness of the company, but also on the differentiation of EJPPG and Eskimo Joe's as well as what a promotional product group does. As the awareness of EJPPG brand increases, the opportunity for the company to reach new customers expands.

### **Research Problems:**

The research problems that we found may be of valuable information to the decision problem that was presented by Eskimo Joe's Promotional Products. We have evaluated the research problems based on their importance and likely usefulness to the company.

#### **(Research Problem 1) Raising awareness of what a promotional products company does among the Stillwater Community.**

Promotional products, or specialty advertising, are useful items imprinted with an advertiser's name, logo, message or offer. The concern that arises within EJPPG is the fact that a majority of people within the Stillwater community are not aware of this service; therefore, they are not utilizing the services available to them that EJPPG can provide. This awareness could be easily assessed through surveys and depth interviews.

#### **(Research Problem 2) Differentiating Eskimo Joe's vs. Eskimo Joe's Promotional Projects Group.**

When someone mentions Eskimo Joe's, the first thing that probably comes to mind is a sports bar, restaurants, and food. Promotional product group not being on that list is a problem for this sister company. The client wants to stand out, or at least be present in the conversation with the rest of the Eskimo Joe's entities, instead of being shadowed by them as they currently are. This can be done by presenting the company in a way that makes them the go-to promotional company in Stillwater.

**(Research Problem 3) Current awareness of EJPPG in Stillwater businesses and to OSU (Students and Organizations).**

While individual Eskimo Joes companies have a lot of awareness and recognition among Stillwater businesses and OSU students, the promotional company is lacking. The Spears School of Business uses EJPPG, but it would be beneficial for the company to expand its reach to other on-campus departments and organizations. Greek life, student groups, and significant departments would be potential places to raise awareness. It would also be beneficial to raise awareness to the local businesses present in Stillwater because of their desire to support other local businesses. It would also be beneficial to evaluate the alternatives to EJPPG to get a better understanding of what the customer is seeking.

**(Research Problem 4 )Determine the best ways to reach people needing “promotional products”.**

Say a company needs promotional products created. How do they know that EJPPG is the group that can solve that problem? This research problem serves to figure out who needs promotional products and how to effectively communicate that EJPPG wants their business. We must understand who needs promotional products and how to market specifically to those groups.

**Research Problems Selected:**

After our team fully analyzed each of the proposed research problems, we have decided on focusing on problems 1 through 3. We have chosen these research problems because of their ability to best articulate the trouble areas for the company. Since some of the problems deal with the populus of Stillwater (locals and Oklahoma State University students), we will have to utilize various forms of research to best optimize our results.

**Use:**

**Determining the best ways to reach the Stillwater community including local businesses and University groups.**

The information the group gathers, through different methods, will assist in the understanding of what EJPPG can do differently to reach the local community, including businesses and University groups. We will first interview local business owners, heads of marketing within OSU colleges, and presidents of large student organizations to determine what they are looking for in a printing company. We will also determine if they had heard of EJPPG, and if they know the potential use of this company for their groups. Our second form of information collection will be through written surveys on our current customers to establish how they heard of EJPPG and why they continue giving their business to the company.

This information will help by allowing us to focus on what sets EJPPG apart from the other printing companies, including their strengths and weaknesses. Our goal is to determine what businesses and organizations are looking for in a printing company. Once that is established, the questioned posed will be “are we meeting those needs.” After evaluating the information collected, our group can begin developing a strategy to distinguish EJPPG from the restaurant while still using the Eskimo Joe’s brand to their advantage.

**Population and Subgroups:**

The first population/subgroup we wish to examine is student leaders on campus. We will conduct depth interviews with twenty presidents of different organizations and clubs. Since EJPPG's minimum shirt order is 72, we will restrict our search to organizations of that size or larger. We also plan to conduct interviews with all six of the heads of marketing from the different colleges on campus. Our second subgroup will be with existing customers and the third will be ten potential customers of EJPPG. Based on the information gathered from the depth interviews, we will create a survey intended for the general student population to solve our research problems. We will strive to get 200 responses on our survey.

**Logistics:**

This research study will take place over the course of 4 months, in accordance with the length of MKTG 4333. As stated in the syllabus, we will be mandating this research free of cost for Eskimo Joe's Promotional Product Group. By doing so, this will allow them to gain valuable information about how they can further their business without the expensive costs of research. This research will be recorded within four different sections: the Research Request Agreement (RRA), the Exploratory Research Report, the Research Proposal, and the Final Research Report. Each of these reports will be based off of research conducted through market research, primary research, surveys, and survey analysis.