



MERAKHI

BUSINESS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Merakhi Mission

Merakhi is a social innovation startup working to put an end to sexual assault on college campuses through smart jewelry. The company designed a bracelet with GPS and audio recording capabilities that would help prevent and process sexual assault cases. Merakhi promotes individual empowerment and peace of mind to its users through comfort knowing that they are never alone.

The Problem

Sexual assault is a pervasive issue on college campuses. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, about 25% of all women on college campuses will experience some type of sexual assault (NSVRC). Yet 90% of these victims do not report the assault, which could be because 85-95% of victims know their perpetrator or because only 0.6% of perpetrators reported are actually convicted (RAINN). These rates are alarming, especially since this is a country that has made great strides in equality and human rights.

Sexual violence is a complex issue and oftentimes victims face mental and emotional damage in addition to physical harm. Many victims fear retaliation, loss of reputation or career prospects, and lack of support once sharing their story or reporting the incident. Rape culture, including “victim blaming, trivializing sexual assault, scrutinizing the victim’s dress, mental state, motives, and history, dismissing rape accusations, and even teaching women to avoid getting raped” all contribute to this problem (CONNSACS). Sexual assault is not just a criminal problem or a women’s problem, it’s a societal and cultural problem.

The Merakhi Solution

The Merakhi bracelet is designed to be a culturally appropriate piece of jewelry, meaning that it looks like something someone would *want* to wear, not wear because they feel like they have to. When a user presses the button on the bracelet, the audio recording is activated and a GPS signal of the user’s location is sent to

pre-programed contacts, notifying those contacts that the user needs immediate attention.

In addition to having the Merakhi bracelet as a response, the Merakhi team understands the importance of changing the culture in order to prevent an assault from happening in the first place as a proactive measure. The team is designing and began implementing empowerment and educational programs to educate students from as young as elementary school through college age students. Through these outreach programs, we will not only educate people about the language of consent but also empower people to treat everyone they come into contact with respect and to be the best versions of themselves. We will make strategic partnerships with local organizations like Girl Scout troops and greek life organizations to create a collaborative, open learning environment.

The Market

Merakhi aims to give everyone a peace of mind and to feel safe. Because many sexual violence instances occur on college campuses, the Merakhi team is focusing its efforts on college-aged women and men (ages 17-24) including members of the LGBT community to be inclusive of all and support the notion that sexual assault is not only a women's issue.

In regards to selling the bracelet, Merakhi's target market will also include parents, grandparents and loved ones of those in college. Friends and families often would do anything to keep their loved ones as safe as possible.

Competitive Advantage

Merakhi is in a unique place to begin prototyping and bringing life to the idea of the Merakhi bracelet. With #metoo and many other movements surrounding sexual assault in the U.S., more and more people are aware of the high rates of violence and are looking for ways to feel safe.

While there are a couple of products similar to the Merakhi bracelet that are already out there, none of them are fully established and selling in the market yet. The Merakhi bracelet stands out among the few smart jewelry ideas out there because these products rely on the bluetooth of the user's cell phone to work. The Merakhi bracelet will be a stand alone product to ensure peace of mind even if the user's phone is lost or dead. The Merakhi bracelet also has the audio recording component that competitors do not.

For more information or to request to see the full business plan, please contact the Merakhi team at merakhi.us@gmail.com

Sources:

<http://www.southernct.edu/sexual-misconduct/facts.html>

<https://www.rainn.org/statistics/campus-sexual-violence>