

LEPIDOPTERA



BITS AND PIECES

Business Proposal

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1. Executive Summary

Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces (name tentative) is a business that operates on a predominately digital storefront with ambitions to open brick and mortar stores in various places around the globe, but first, we must acquire the necessary funds in order to achieve our goals.

Our long term goals consist of both the occupation of a singular niche within the hobbyist modeling community, and then, occupy said niche for many years, or until a suitable amount of capital has been achieved in order to move on to the next step in my plan.

The business itself is only a stepping stone for my future goals. Indeed, what I am most interested in is the reviving of old hatchback cars from the 80's, because I particularly like their styles. If I could accrue enough success, I will personally pivot away from it, having been satisfied with creating something that was appreciated by a few, and reaping the rewards in a moderate, reasonable manner. I have no vain ambitions of becoming a Wal-Mart style international conglomeration or some kind of world famous 'one store' business. I only wish to make enough to support my interests, and, if possible, make enough money to support a simple livelihood.

To this end, there is indeed an audience for this niche, which is, for the most part, nearly completely unfilled. With the advent of the 3d printer and the easy access of filament for purchase, a new age has dawned upon designing and creation, and all that is needed is for someone to step up and occupy the space newly presented. That is where we come in.

The audience, as it is, is wide reaching, small, yet still, quite lucrative indeed. The fact of the matter is, modeling, though socially accepted, is still an uncommon, and truly, very small niche. Nonetheless, fans and enthusiasts tend to be lifelong customers, spending upwards of hundreds of dollars in mere months on acquiring kits that are valued at nearly ten times the price of the cost of production. This of course, is related to the fine details of these kits and models, but so too, will we have our own style and variance within our pieces to allow our customers to create that which is envisioned in the minds eye.

Modelers care about small, minute details, and that is a large part of Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces; allowing for enough generic pieces to exist that people might be able to accurately portray something hyper-specific, as they like. In time, we hope to breach into a stable point into the market where we will introduce our own tools for modeling, producing not only the pieces necessary, but the tools for shaping them as well, whether it be through the humble hobby knife or plastic carving circular saws. From there, we'll introduce our own line of paints, but, as will all things, everyone has a plan until the fight happens. Only the pieces are promised; nothing else is.

The business, in the event of success, will pivot into becoming a public traded business, where I will sell most of my shares immediately.

2. Business Description

Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces functions on the principle that no piece is too obscure or unnecessary to warrant construction. If you find that you are building a model, it is our pleasure- no, our **PRIVILEGE**, to be a conduit by which you might be able to create the kit that exists within your minds eye.

Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces works on a simple system of providing specialized pieces for modelers and enthusiasts alike. By creating a wide selection of miscellaneous pieces in all shapes, sizes, and styles, we ensure that even the most obscure object might be able to exist in physical reality, brought into existence by your careful hand. Trying to model your home, but you can't seem to find a model that looks like yours? We'll give you all the shapes and accessories you could ask for. Can't find a Tsar Tank model that supposes what a hypothetical flamethrower attachment would look like? We've got all sorts of different canister shapes for you, whether you are looking for something practical, or something straight out of Warhammer 40,000.

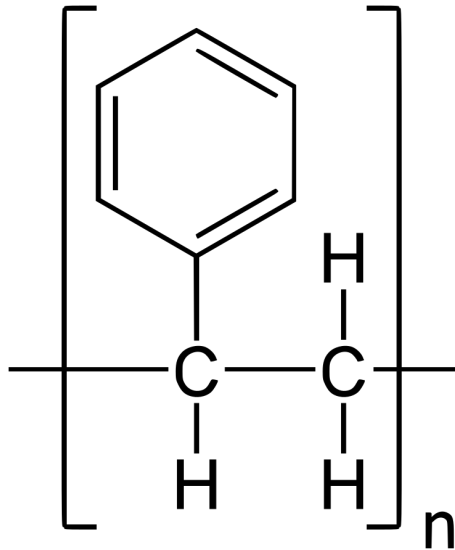


Fig. [1]



Fig. [8]

Pictured above, is the chemical makeup of Polystyrene, alongside a model tank constructed of the very same material. Polystyrene is very nearly the lifeblood of our business, it being the necessary material needed to make many of the core shapes needed for modeling. In time, we would like to expand to allow for die-casters and other materials to accentuate the capabilities of the business, but you will be unsurprised to know that metal casting requires more sophisticated technology, and much more effort required on the quality assurance side.

In the interest of making sure that every possible angle and conceivable shape is utilized, we offer assistance in selecting the necessary pieces or bits that one might require when constructing your model, with all of the appropriate scaling taken into account. Our catalog consisting of over several thousand shapes is sure to have exactly the angles and oddities needed to properly express that which you are working on.

3. Organization and Management

As a business, Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces operates largely on the digital storefront, due to the convenience of the medium for both the provider and the consumer. There is a desire to establish a brick and mortar location in parts of the world where there is an abnormally large draw for hobby modeling and professional modeling. At present moment, it is undecided where these key locations will be, but in time, we hope to glean prime locations based on repeat orders from certain locations around the world.

The structure of the business is simple; a small warehouse located in the outskirts of Charlotte, North Caroline (the city is developing, and the land is still cheap) will be the base of operations by which storage of all of our large scale casting machines will be based, as well as the smaller, less intensive 3d printers. By this metric, shipping and distribution begins at a singular point, allowing for simpler logistical routes and planning. The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, they say.

In the beginning, there will not be a need for an incredible amount of employees whatsoever. I envision it to be myself, and, perhaps, one other, someone to sort through the orders and the e-mails. Maintenance on the machines will surely become a necessity at some point, but, as with many things, can be dealt with once it actually becomes an issue. There is no business sense in keeping a maintenance man on standby for machines that may never have a fatal flaw, or break down in any major capacity.

Logistically speaking, as the business itself begins, so too, do we not require any sort of specialized division for delivery and pickup. Polystyrene pieces will be rather small, for the most part, and it is hard to envision a scenario where someone is going to order an incredibly large amount that would warrant the filling of an eighteen wheeled freight truck. In the future, should the brands popularity warrant the necessitation of a brick and mortar store, or for a line of our products to appear within the shelves of another business, then perhaps it would be pertinent to look into hiring an independent driver to make our deliveries, for a time. For the most part, it will be a simple trip down to the postal store for us.

Assuming a great success in the business, I envision a division within. The online storefront will have its own management section, as will the physical location, and the actual manufacturing division will be its very own third category. As a point of honesty, things become easier to manage when you have people who guide others, and I find that it is very easy to delegate my tasks to others so that I might work on the more challenging things myself, only because I do not trust that others will carry out my vision as nicely as I might like it. As it goes, if you want something done right, you must do it yourself. But this also being said, there are also tasks that acceptable to be completed at the baseline 'acceptable' level. Customer service and proper relations with the public at large is important, but what is most important to me is the quality of the product.

4. Business Goals

Our business goals are simple; first and foremost, we have an overarching desire to accrue an incredible amount of wealth from our consumers. LBP must secure a niche by which it is allowed to flourish, beginning with webspace, which should soon turn to entire rows within hobby shops, eventually, coalescing into a massive chain of storefronts that reside in many of the major cities of the United States, Great Britain, and Germany (those guys LOVE modeling). The initial goal, of course, is providing a service to modelers; we give them the tools they need to create their worlds. But there is another, more important goal behind all of this. One reason that transcends all the others. Lepidoptera Bits and Pieces was designed with a rather abstract purpose in mind; the purchasing of the necessary machinery in order to bring back the Nissan Silvia S12.

Now that you've taken a moment to consider what I have written, I offer you this; do you remember when cars were cool? Do you remember when they were analogue? For some, this was never the case, and for me, it is true, too. Nonetheless, I yearn for a return to cool hatchback street cars.



Fig [2]

Pictured above is the entire reason for the existence of this business; bringing the dead back to life, and bringing the fun back from the 80's. In the event of continued, sustained success of LB&P, the business will pivot into purchasing the machinery necessary to recreate these wonderful cars, and then I will retire, and pursue my true passion; driving and drifting.

This of course, might seem erratic, and perhaps, senseless to give up a successful business. On the other hand, I consider this to be one of the most sensible things in the world. Getting the money you need in order to pursue your true passions is, in fact, one of the most morally pure things you can actually do in this world. And if you aren't doing things to make yourself happy, then why are you doing anything at all? Establishing a niche business to cater to people who need a service, and then allowing the business to go public so it can be **run** by the public, so that I can be happy with my own successes, I can think of nothing better.

5. Products & Services

LB&P offers a wide variety of goods and services, so long as these goods and services are limited to that which can be created with polystyrene, for the most part. Shapes, for the most part, are incredibly versatile, and it lies only in the mind of the maker to discover how they might utilize what we provide.

For the sake of demonstration, we have prepared a graphic down below, to demonstrate the inherent versatility of simple shapes.

L-Joint Beveled Tip #13

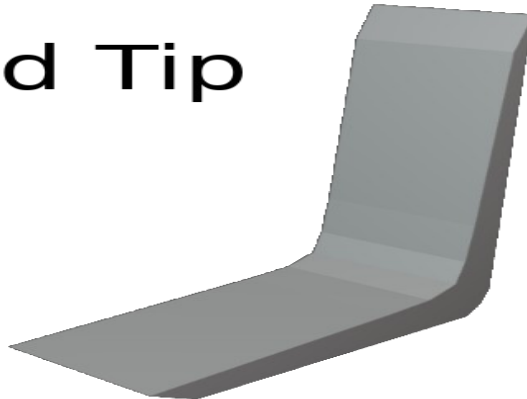


Fig [3]



Fig [4]

From something as simple as the L-Joint, you could easily replicate the skirt armor and structural supports of many World War 2 tanks, aircraft winglets, architectural bends and supports, or something as simple as a bucket seat, if you are willing to break out the carving knife for those finer details.



Fig [5]



Fig [6]

6. Market Analysis

Let's get into the terrible, horrible, awful, nitty gritty details of business. To **whom** are we selling to, and to what end can we expand the business? We must first begin to understand the psyche of the elusive creature that we are hoping to capture in our web of capitalism. They are esoteric. They are intellectual. Their focuses are hyper-specific, and their income is disposable. We are targeting advanced level nerd culture enthusiast. Now, the next question; how profitable is this?

The answer is infinitely profitable. Modeling, as hobbies go, is one that you rarely ever 'complete', as it were. In the same way that someone shoots guns on the weekends at clay pigeons, or someone adds another car to his collection, or you take a boat out to sail to the islands for the weekend, there isn't really an end in passion, which means that there is always a market for this business. In a world that is constantly innovating, constantly growing, and more than that, constantly generating wealth, so too, does the potential for market success constantly grow.

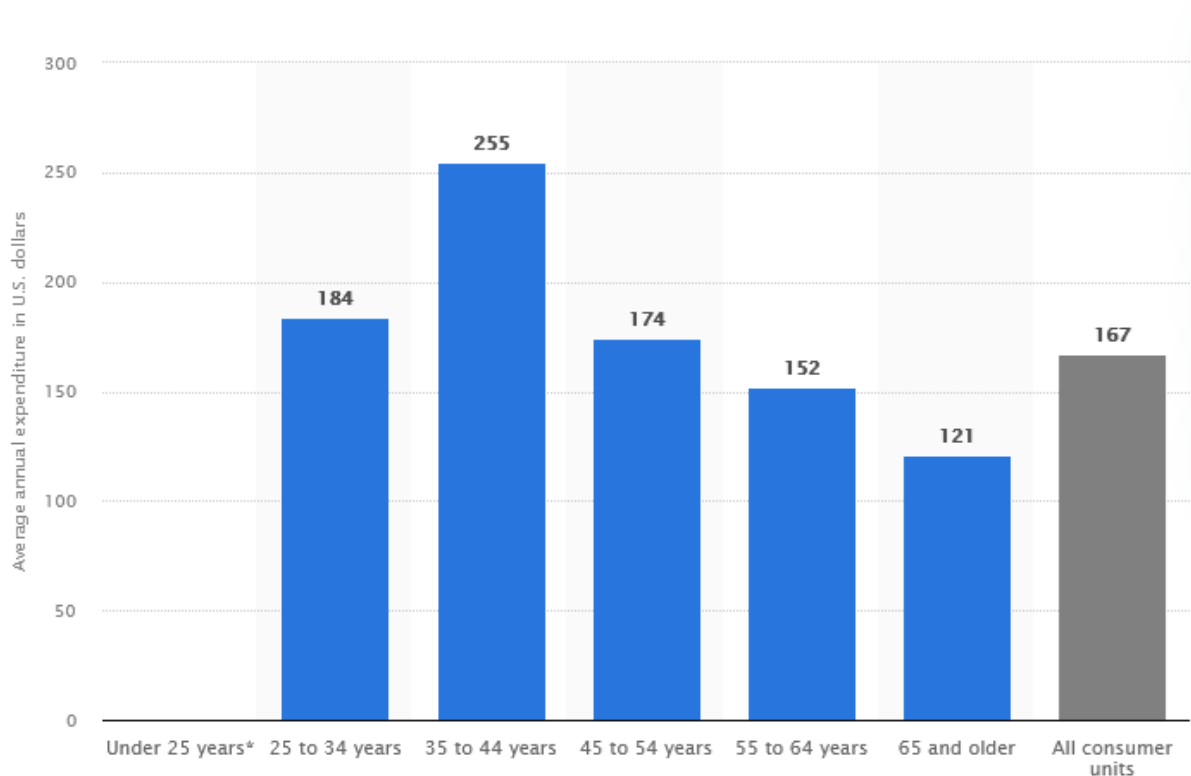


Fig [7]

A small bar graph of the mean annual expenditure on toys, hobbies, and playground equipment in the United States is listed above. Demographics range predominately to males of all ages, but the biggest spenders belong to those aged forty and up. I presume that this is because this is around the age that parents no longer must take care of their children, or they begin to move out of their parents homes, in which case, more money is sequestered into personal hobbies than they used to be. Whatever the true reasons may be, the point is clear; there is more focus in appealing to the, what I will tentatively call the 'middle aged' demographic.

7. Marketing and Sales Strategy

Marketing for LB&P will take place extensively within hobby shops and on internet modeling enthusiast forums. While these places may seem to be a series of small, and perhaps niche locations, one must understand that the products and services we provide really only appeal to these people. Advertising through television and radio airwaves would do little to reach our core audience, and the appeal would be lost on the general populace. Effectively, conventional advertising would at most result in a small fad that would last anywhere from a week to two weeks time, but would do little beyond this. Hobbyists know what they want, and they will know where to find what they desire; we must alert these people in spaces that they frequent.

Another method by which we are looking into is the establishment of booths at several conventions centers around the continental United States, ensuring that our name is out there in the general public. Key conventions include Strategicon, the convention for strategic tabletop game players, the Origins game fair, and the International Plastic Modellers' Society. As the saying goes: fish where the fish are.

Future zones of commercial interest include the country of Germany, Japan, China, Belgium (surprisingly), and Great Britain, countries that are known to harbor a selective population with an interest in modeling.

Sales are, as with many things, still being ironed out. An unfortunate truth is that these people who we are catering to are an already exploited group of enthusiasts. It would be very simple for us to create what amounts to being a panel with .05 cents worth of raw material and charge them two dollars for it, and these people might consider it to be a steal, truly. But, is that the kind of world that we **should** live in? Me, being the sort of person that I am (gormless, shapeless, formless) would not sleep well at night knowing that I have introduced yet another predatory business practice into the world. As with most of my dealings, I have personally determined that rather than charging through the nose for products, it would be better if we charged a more respectable price of 160% of the raw material goods. This will comfortably cover business expenses and, as like most businesses, it is an appropriate markup. If you find that you cannot believe that plastic can sell for upwards of 4000% of its raw materials, then I implore you, take a moment to look at the pricing of any Games Workshop model price. Granted, there is indeed a lot of quality assurance and marketing costs that are factored into this, but then again, we will not be utilizing such tactics.

From this point, after the initial waves of interest settle in, there will be a series of pitches thrown to hobby shops all around the United States, in the interest of getting our product onto more shelves. Rather than the peddling of individually packaged products within bags, it would be more pertinent to install shelves and displays with a more 'grab bag' mentality for the pieces; seeing as how our plan is to create upwards of thousands of differently shaped shapes for modeling and additional modeling as a sort of aftermarket enhancement, there will be very little way of knowing for sure what regions will require what pieces, and so therein, rather than try to create a system by which things are equally distributed, we can revel in the chaos of delivering one of everything at the same time, for the customer themselves to sort out and discover the necessary components that they require.

8. Funding Request

The capital necessary to break into this field will by no means be a small amount. Through the convenience of modern technology, we can save a large amount by having the business be located primarily online, being hosted by a consistent server rather than requiring a physical location. To this end, website hosting by a third party runs anywhere from \$30 to \$100 a month. Of course, this varies from host to host, and by which, I would be very interested in owning the means of the hosted website, but these things are expensive, as well. Each thing in its own time, I suppose.

In a tinge of convenience, Polystyrene comes in two rather convenient forms; as a sort of solid plastic, and a foam packaging sort of material. The convenience of this, allows for shipping costs to be easily covered by the simple manufacturing of polystyrene packaging alongside the model pieces. More than this, it is not uncommon to create casts out of polystyrene itself; the different densities and finality of products means that if we chose to do so, we could very well manufacture products within the very material it is made from. It's like breaching chicken, if you'll accept the metaphor; you use the egg to affix the crumbs to the chicken itself.

Here is my formal request for funding; I am asking for \$70,000.

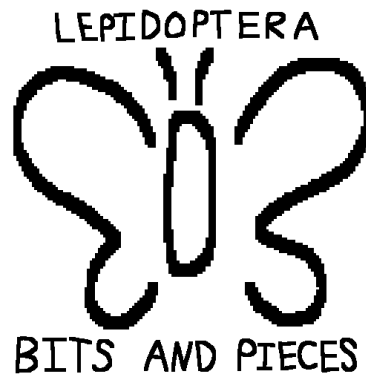
The average business startup generally ranges from the \$30,000's to the \$50,000's. Incorporating long term costs for the business, as well as initial labor costs, small time advertising, and potential unexpected costs, I think that this is not an unreasonable price to begin with. Of course, in the beginning, I will have to supplement the costs with my day job, but this too, is acceptable.

Please take the necessary time desired to think about my proposal. I am very much interested in going into this business, and I understand that anything that is important will take an appropriate amount of time to think about. Please, do get back to me after you have reached a conclusion of some sort, at the above email address, and thank you very much for reading my business proposal. I do hope that I have made it interesting enough to maintain your interest, and, at least, made you smile once or twice during the course of it.

Appendix

Did you know the appendix is an organ within your body? They did not know what it was for many years, and some are still uncertain. The appendix may sometimes become inflamed and rupture, which is a dangerous condition. I have heard that it is a refuge for gut flora when you catch a sickness that kills them within your stomach and intestines.

The appendix is also a place for extra content, as well. Below, is a logo that I have drawn for the business, which was also put on the front of the paper. I drew it using the Gnu Image Manipulator Program, or GIMP, as it is more colloquially known as. I was initially going to draw something more rigid and solid to showcase angles and bits, but I drew this to remind myself what a butterfly looked like and I liked it more than what I was working on creating.



Below, links to associated images that were not created by me.

[1] *File:Polystyrene.svg - Wikimedia Commons*. (2008, May 21).

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Polystyrene.svg>

(This is technically public domain, however, I care that people receive the proper credit nonetheless.)

[2] *File:JS12 Nissan SILVIA R-X HB.jpg - Wikimedia Commons*. (1989).

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JS12_Nissan_SILVIA_R-X_HB.jpg

[3] *File:PZ-IVG-Latrun-4.jpg - Wikimedia Commons*. (2006, May 3).

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pz-IVG-latrun-4.jpg>

[4] *Maciej Bledowski/shutterstock.com, Stock Photo ID: 137487974, Wing of the plane on blue sky, mountains in background.*

[5] Limited, A. (n.d.). *Expansion joint in concrete overhead roadway in Southern California*. Alamy Images. <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-expansion-joint-in-concrete-overhead-roadway-in-southern-california-24843520.html>

[6] *GT*. (n.d.). Sparco. <https://www.sparcousa.com/gt>, Sparco GT Bucket Seat

[7] Statista. (2024, April 25). *U.S. household spend on toys, hobbies, and playground equipment in 2022, by age*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/947271/average-annual-expenditure-on-toys-hobbies-and-playground-equipment-by-age-us/>

(Curiously, this one had redacted the initial age bracket, because it was difficult to determine what amount of money was actually spent.)

[8] *ROCHM®MODEL AF35181 TIGER I Initial Production for Dragon Kit*. (n.d.).
<http://www.rochmmodel.com/product/PE/AF35181.html>

[9] Again, thank you for taking the time to read the paper. It took a long time to write, and I greatly appreciated your time. It may sound odd to say, but I feel that you may be one of the few teachers I have ever had that **really** read the things that I wrote. There are a few more things I would like to thank you for, so I will take the time now to do so. Thank you for extending the date for this assignment, and thank you for taking the time to read the comments that I leave on my assignments as I submit them.