

Steve and Jamie Chen

Center for  
Innovation & Inquiry

# INTERNSHIP BUSINESS PROJECT FINAL REPORT

**Program:** Blabl

**Title:** *Client Research Manager*

**Name:** Quincy Mclaughlin-121125

**Date:** 22 April 2020

**Presenter(s):** Quincy Mclaughlin, Kayson Ijisesean, Mark Ying

**Business Mentor(s):** Ayan Agarwal

## Executive Summary

**Program:** Blabl

**Title:** *Client Research Manager*

**Presentor(s):** Quincy McLaughlin, Kayson IjiseSean, Mark Ying

**Business Mentor(s):** Ayan Agarwal

**Abstract/Project intention:**

Blabl is a small startup company based in London, England. The goal of this startup is to provide readily available, affordable, and high quality speech pathology lessons to youth in need through the use of a digital app. As a result will improve the teaching methods of Speech language pathologists around the world. The focus of this business project has changed throughout the internship. In the early stages of the project the main objective was to create a working prototype of the app. This included coding as well as finding and inputting as many data sets as possible into the algorithm in order to make the application as reliable as possible. Then the focus shifted towards advertising as the program became more and more efficient and reliable. While advertising it was important to find and discover new Speech language pathologists willing to test out the application and share information to clients if they would be interested in such a program. The target clients were at first only meant to be from the Chicagoland area but as this project progresses we would like for our area of influence to become greater. The company has hopes that one day Blabl will become the industry standard for software to help speech language pathologists.

## **Business Project Context**

Before going into the details about what tasks were performed at my work at Blabl it is important to understand some background knowledge about the field that I was working in. Blabl is a company about Speech Pathology so that is categorized as the industry that I was a part of. My internship has shown me that the Speech-Language Pathology industry is a particularly big one. Because of this, an important part of my internship was to be directed towards finding and researching other competing companies.

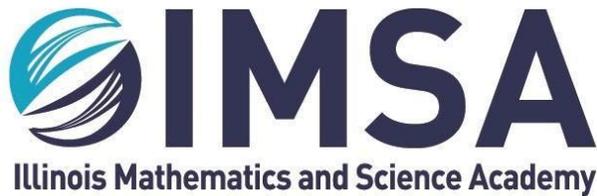
This could be very beneficial for a multitude of reasons. This helps Blabl get a sense of how other companies have been successful in the past and what strategies they used to do so. Knowing this information gives Blabl ideas on how to set up their place in the industry.

Researching other companies also gave information on how and why other companies similar to ours were failing as a business. This allows a company to adapt to their surroundings in order for Blabl to be as successful as possible. My research on the industry revealed that the future for Blabl was very promising. This can be said because others in the industry would not be taking away clients from Blabl.

Of the companies that I researched, the majority of them were a lot bigger and therefore a lot more aggressive in their pricing. Most of the companies had pricing that was a lot more than what Blabl had intended. This was done usually through a subscription service once a year or once a week. Since we found out that the majority of the industry had business models set up this way with a few exceptions, we knew that Blabl would have an edge in this regard with the pricing.

Most successful companies in this field were set up to be for profit. Meaning for Blabl to be successful as a not-for-profit we would not need to worry about competing for customers as much as other businesses in this category would have. We also found while researching other “smaller” companies that they would not be teaching children in the same way that we were planning to.

These smaller and less successful companies are usually run by only a handful of Speech-Language Pathologists. These companies are also mostly only working and teaching in one single area. This is where we found that Blabl would have an advantage over other programs. Blabl can do everything that a Speech-Language Pathologist can do but is not confined to a specific area.



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Blabl is an online program such as in an app where a Speech-Language Pathologist can teach a child without the need of a Blabl assistant being there. The Blabl app uses an AI to determine a proper diagnosis for a child. Then calculates proper activities for the child to improve the condition in the most effective way possible.

Due to this feature, Blabl's Ai will become faster and more accurate than an average Speech-Language Pathologist. As more customers and clients use the Ai the better it will get. In our subset in the Speech-Language Pathologist industry, we can operate without fear of many competitors.

Because of this research, we know our target audience better and understand more clearly what our benefits can be to the customer or client. Having this information in mind will result in Blabl being more successful.

## **Business Project Description**

Throughout the internship, my role was changing frequently. However, I found that the description of the Client Research Manager fits my role the best. Most of my internship focused on researching our clients as well as other competing businesses. However, this does not fully encapsulate what I did as an Intern for Blabl.

In the beginning of the internship as well as locating and researching potential clients I also helped with the growth of the Ai. The Ai's goal was to be able to diagnose a Speech disability. The more data sets that you get in an Ai the more reliable that it becomes. Because of this, my goal was to complete as much data as possible to be inputted into the Ai to make it stronger.

Along with this I also did other tasks during this internship as well. These would sometimes change week per week and were in the form of deliverables. What would happen is that each wednesday I would check my email to see a new message from my business mentor.

Although these deliverables might change day to day they were still important to the growth of the company. An example of a deliverable would be to create a compiled list of all the potential clients to Blabl. Then, next to their name include information about them such as their phone number, address and email. Then for instance the next deliverable would be to go online and find videos of Speech-Language Pathologists teaching their students.

Finding videos like this could be very beneficial because they could be chopped up and inputted into the Ai as an example of a specific diagnosis. For deliverables like this the more footage the better.

## **Business Project Research**

While doing this internship I have done a lot of research as well. This information can be very beneficial to another student who is also interested and curious about this subject. This is a good place to display my findings.

As talked about above I did a lot of market research during my internship. I believe that it is best to focus on this aspect of the internship here.

Market research is very important for all businesses but especially so for startups like the one that I was interning at. It gives insight that may not have been known about before in the industry. This crucial information can impact the direction that a company is heading in.

My research did indeed find a lot of useful information for the company as well. First I saw that out of the big Speech-Language Pathology market the people supping lessons at mass were charging a price that was a lot higher than what was expected. These businesses were once thought to be competition for Blabl but this information gave the insight that we were after two different target audiences. Resources would not be wasted to ensure that our clients would switch to paying more for a Speech-Language Pathology program.

Now that we understood the competitors we knew who we should focus on targeting with our program and that was the smaller businesses. My research also found that these smaller programs are usually run by a small team of Speech-Language Pathologists working out of a small area. This meant that they would be very local with their clients and so we would need to worry about small companies like these taking clients away from us.

With this information we knew best how to market ourselves to our potential clients and know Blabl better understood the value of its program more fully.

Information like this was obtained through online databases on Speech-Language Pathologists. Then, from there you can work backwards to fill in the rest of the information about a business. This would include things such as googling an address then finding the name of the company tied to the address. From there, looking the company up and finding a website to get even more information. This process was done many times to get a sufficient number of businesses in a catalog.

While researching like this you also notice some trends in the market to make it easier to understand the task given. An example of this would be if on a database you find a

Speech-Language Pathologist that has an address familiar you can look back at your built up database and see if it matches up with any other Speech-Language Pathologist already found. This would let you know that they work from the same building and that when pitching the idea to them don't do it separately. So learning tricks like this helps with how you can understand the market better.

While researching there are also many limitations to deal with as well. Something that limited the success of my business project would be having chats on various topics with the business mentor over the internet. Since my internship was a remote one.

Although I would classify this as a limitation I would not say that it was a huge one. Although this was a remote internship and there were sometimes communication issues through the internet. I would not say that it was a big problem. Since this was my first remote internship this could be accepted.

Overall though, I would say that the research portion of this internship went by smoothly.

## **Learnings and Recommendations**

Since I have worked in this internship I have a lot of knowledge that is beneficial to others who might also be looking for an internship as well. Especially internships that have to deal with business research. Whether that be on clients or competitors.

My key takeaway to this internship is to never be too scared or embarrassed to ask for help. Whether that be from your other interns or from your business mentor. I have found that it will do more good than bad to ask for help.

As well as asking for help I have also found that it is best to be as transparent as possible when working in an internship. This includes giving updates on how projects are going along and communicating with coworkers on what you think about a certain issue. Having this transparency helps a lot in a professional environment like in an internship.

I would also like to give out some recommendations to improve internships like this in the future.

Starting with Blabl the company itself I believe that it is best to focus more energy on clear marketing that more people can see. Right now it is extremely hard for an independent Speech-Language Pathologist to find this company. Although the app is not fully functioning the best that it will be I still think that value will come from letting Speech-Language Pathologists know of the app beforehand. This will help with marketing too if our potential clients know more about the process of this company.

For Ayan (my business mentor), there is not much that I would say that there is for improvement. I like how you were very transparent and honest with us throughout the internship. The updates were good. However, there were sometimes where some instructions were not immediately clear to me at first. This could be interpreted as a mistake on my end so I'm not sure that this could count as a criticism of you personally. Overall working with you was a lot of fun and it taught me a lot about how startups and internships work so thank you for that.

## Reference List

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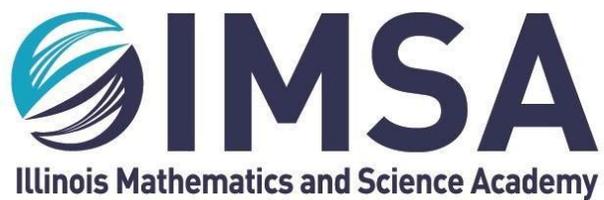
## Appendices

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cHaXYfzbJv4OSjcrKEj7HE3NCclxDF0cscQr6bFF8Gs/edit#gid>

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<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AajyN6pXfznP1Cvg5fRGoq9WZvFXVuN-eV7-gnk -NU/edit>

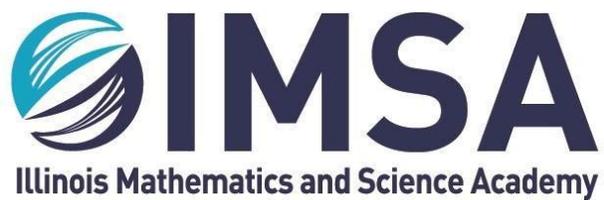
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**\*The rest of the dates and times are found on imblaze\***



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