

CHAPTER 3

A critical-thinking game center

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Business Highlights

Type of business: *Entertainment service business*

Start-up cost (range of capitalization): *\$450000 to \$471500**

Projected annual range of net profit: *(\$95886.90) - \$229028.43*

Payback period: *1 year and 11 months*

Selling/Service price range: *starts at \$4.1*

Marketing strategy: *Social media page, membership card*

Suggested form of ownership: *Partnership or corporation*

Required assets: *construction of the rooms, building equipment, decorative items and materials*

Required number of staff: *maximum 13*

Competitive advantage: *This business encourages physical activity and brings online game concepts to the real world.*

** All calculations are based on US dollars.*

Business Background

Games and entertainment have always been essential needs in human life. Entertainment contributes significantly to human happiness because it helps improve people's psychological conditions through mood management. In addition, it helps maintain mental health and bring people together (Belecen, n.d.). According to research by Iacovides and Mekler (2019), playing relaxing games helps people connect and better control emotions.

Besides the benefits for human life, the game and entertainment industry contribute significantly to the country's economy. For instance, compared to 2019, the mobile game market in Vietnam saw a 40% growth in revenue through downloads and the number of game launches (Thuy Dieu, 2021). According to Newzoo reports, the total revenue of the global game industry in 2022 was nearly \$184 billion, of which 50% was mobile games. Although this figure is down 4.3% compared to 2021, it is predicted that the revenue of the global game market will stabilize and recover in the future, reaching over \$200 billion by 2024.

For such an intense game industry development, it is a great opportunity to take advantage of the development from online to offline games. According to a survey by Oracle Food and Beverage and Merlin

Entertainment, the operator of nine Legoland parks worldwide, 68% of respondents said they would return to their favorite attractions as soon as possible (Merlin Entertainment, 2021). Similarly, as some young people said when talking to Zingnews, everyone wants to go out after the pandemic to compensate for the time spent at home (Phuong Thao & My Trinh, 2022).

According to the survey data of a research group with 308 young people about choosing their favorite activities when traveling, 88.6% chose activities to visit scenic spots; 72.1% chose entertainment, playing games; and 67.4% chose activities such as checking in, taking pictures, etc. (Thao Anh, 2022). As can be seen, amusement parks and entertainment complexes are very popular with young people when traveling. Hence, there is opportunity to create games like online games that customers can play directly, bringing a more unique and fresh experience.

According to InApps statistics about future trends in the gaming industry, being in the top 3 of game development trends means watching gamers compete in cyberspace rather than watching regular sports programs. In 2021, the game's viewership skyrocketed, and the viewership will likely surpass the number of players in the future. Many market research reports show that the number of video games will increase by 9%,

but there will be a tremendous growth of 90% in the audience viewing games played on their screens (Chi Lam, 2022).

In Vietnam, the number of mobile phone users accounts for 76% (British Council, 2020),

and Internet users increased by 7.3%

compared to 2022

(VNetWork, 2023). At

the same time, according

to a report by UNICEF in

2022, up to 82% of Vietnamese children aged 12–13 use the Internet, which

increases to 93% for those aged 14–28 (Nhat Nguyen, 2023). This shows

that the level of participation in online activities among people of those ages

is very high. This led to the robust development of online and video games.

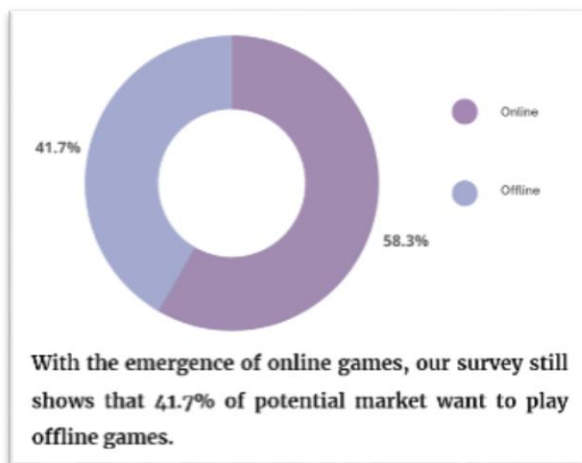
Revenue in 2022 of the online game industry increased by 17.39%

compared to 2021, most notably in the team and strategy games segment

(Statista, 2022). Therefore, the demand for playing these game genres

among young people is very high. However, these team games are popular

online; few offline playgrounds exist.



This type of business provides critical thinking but entertaining games for customers from 12 to 28 years old looking for new and unique games. The games are designed in accordance with the requirements to aid players in improving their capacity for uptake, observation, and strategy-making, as well as helping them improve their health and flexibility through playing games of a motor nature. Using phones or other electronics is restricted to all games according to their rules. Each game last at least forty-five minutes and no longer than an hour, depending on the difficulty level. Customers can choose any game to play without starting at the first level. They are only required to engage in some games at a time. Moreover, customers have to make reservations before arriving to avoid lines.

The game center also contains a food court. Customers can use food service when playing any game in the center. The attractiveness of the food court will draw customers in.

Potential Products/Services

Derived from the idea of establishing a play area for young people, this business requires a spacious game center with diverse game genres under different themes. Unlike other types of relaxation, such as playing online games on electronic devices or offline games in entertainment centers, this business requires many movements and challenges on each

journey. There are different game genres with different rules, divided into three large rooms: Escape Room, War Room, and Sneak Room. There is another area for eating and chatting.

Escape Room. The players are confined in a room, and to escape, they must deduce hints from any object or feature in the room. Although it seems easy, not all of the room's hints can be used. Players must use patience, careful observation, attentive listening, and memory of the indications since there are traps. Because each room has a time limit, they must be skilled time managers above all else. The Escape Room game has five rooms split into five levels of difficulty. The theme of the escape room should be history. This game requires at least a group of two players and a maximum of six players, depending on the game room.

War Room. It is in two different rooms. This game's theme continues the theme of the previous two floors in "Escape Room," which is historical. The scene and architecture are vividly replicated, and two rooms furnished differently, providing gamers with a more exciting experience. Players receive army uniforms and other equipment before entering the gaming area. Players are separated into two teams, and the side that can finish the task wins. The challenges in the room are the game's unique element. To win the game, players must adequately coordinate with

partners, move between two floors with expertise, and know how to employ found items and random things in the area cleverly. This game requires at least a group of 4 players and a maximum of 8 players.

Sneak Room. This is a particular room where players play the role of thieves. There must be interesting background. There is a famous picture, and players are tasked of stealing that painting. However, they must search and decipher the hints in the room to steal the picture. More specifically, some sneaks monopolize the picture in the playing group. Therefore, besides observation, search, and decoding skills, players must be careful and have a reasonable playing strategy. This game requires at least a group of six players and a maximum of eight players.

Organizational Analysis

The business is more appropriate to be in a partnership or corporation type due to its capitalization requirement. The business is in the service industry. This type of business requires ample space. For design, the four main tasks include:

Finding a suitable location. The first task is to find a building that fits the nature and orientation of the company.

Creating detailed drawings for each game room. The next step is to create detailed drawings for each game room. Here, drawings to fit the concept of each game room must be created. In addition, calculate how to decorate and discreetly hide clues so that customers are clear and do not easily detect the clues.

Table 1
Required equipment and materials

Construction of the cost-saving finishing package	
Taicera tiles	Electrical system
Outdoor gypsum board	Air conditioning system
Indoor gypsum board	Painting
Entrance door + melanin frame	Recessed lighting
Stairs	Glass doors
	Canopy
Decorative items	
Plants, flowers, grass	Boats
Tables and chairs	TV
Locks	Refrigerator
Straw	Beds
Moss	Fake buffaloes and storks
Plastic wood stakes	Model weapons, ancient slingshots,
Bow and arrow	handcuffs
Paintings	Tents
Bronze drums	Model airplane wrecks
Artificial stones	Model toilets
Altars, fruits, incense burners, flower	Iron chains
vases	Chests
Small study desks	Fake pearls
Books, pens, ink	Fences
Bamboo baskets, woven baskets	Bamboo screens
Toy guns, fake bullets	Dowsing rods
Fake blood bags	
Sandbags	

Building equipment	
Reception desk and chairs	Induction stove
Cameras	Refrigerator, freezer
First aid kit	Coffee table, chairs
Fire extinguisher	Trash bin
Desktop computer	Napkins, toilet paper
Walkie-talkies	Pots and pans
Flashlights	Hand washing sink

Building the play area. On to the construction phase of the play area, regularly monitor the progress of the construction work and adjust the proportions of the game rooms on the drawings and in reality.

Service Process

Reservation Process. Booking a game room ticket is carried out sequentially, including scheduling, arranging the game room, confirmation, and deposit. Each game room has 10 to 13 slots daily, depending on the game's rules. The scheduling is done through the website. After completing the reservation process, receive the game room booking schedule and arrange the game room for the customers. The scheduling is done for easy control and calculation, to avoid customers waiting too long, and to calculate the cleaning time between two playing slots. The next step is confirmation, which is double-confirm in two forms: email and phone number. When customers make a reservation for a game room, a confirmation email is sent immediately. After checking and arranging, confirm the game room and the playing time the customer registered for.

Finally, customers make a 50% deposit of the ticket price to avoid canceling the room close to the playing time.

Game Instructions. The following instructions are posted in each game room.

Escape Room

1. You will get locked in a closed room with your team of 2-6 players.
2. In each game room, there will be a task. Your group must do the task and find ways to escape the room.
3. To escape the room, you must find hidden clues scattered throughout the room.
4. Decrypt and escape the room within 45-60 minutes.
5. You have three chances to receive support from staff by looking at the camera and giving an X sign.

War Room

1. You have 60 minutes in this game room. The number of players ranges from 4 to 8 people. Players will be divided into two teams, each with at most four people.

2. This is a team-based puzzle-solving game combined with shooting. Each team's mission is to strategize to collect clues, decipher codes quickly, and help their team win.
 3. Clues will be hidden in many places, scattered throughout the playing area.
 4. When the code is found, all members of the same team must escape from the room together for the team to be declared the winner.
 5. In addition, other items will be in the game room to help the players win. These items are randomly arranged in many places in the room.
- Gun: This item helps team members defeat opponents. Note: The gun has only one bullet and can only be fired at close range (1 meter).
 - Blood bottle: All soldiers on the battlefield have only one life. This blood bottle helps players have an extra inning. If a soldier gets shot before finding it, they must leave the game immediately.
 - Additional bullet

Sneak Room

1. The minimum size of a group is six members. There are 2 to 3 members with malicious purposes, called "sneaks."
2. Your team must complete the mission of retrieving the requested painting. In addition, you must be careful of sneaks.

3. Searching for clues within the playing area to find the painting would be best.
4. The clues will include information about the painting, the door's key, and the number of sneakers.
5. You will win within 60 minutes if you find the actual painting and ring the bell at the door. They will win if the "sneaks" can obtain the painting and ring the doorbell.

Game Rules:

1. Players must arrive at least 15 minutes early to be briefed on the game tutorial and rules in detail.
2. Older people, pregnant women, people with claustrophobia, intoxicated individuals, those using stimulants, and children under 12 without adult supervision are not allowed to participate in the game.
3. Bringing any technological devices, such as cell phones, computers, smartwatches, smart earphones, recording or filming equipment, etc., into the game room is strictly prohibited. Staff carefully store these items at the reception desk and retrieve them after the game is finished.
4. Refrain from bringing food or drinks into the game room.
5. No smoking or use of stimulants is allowed in the game room.

6. The clues are all within reach, so you cannot climb, stand on, or touch any objects, such as cabinets, desks, or beds.
7. For objects labeled with a logo, you are not allowed to move or shift them. Moreover, you cannot use force to pry open, damage, or murk any objects in the game room. If any objects are damaged, you are responsible for compensating for the object's value.
8. The business will have security cameras in all game rooms to ensure security during the game.
9. You can request to stop the game anytime, but the room booking fee will not be refunded.
10. Participation in the game is entirely voluntary. The company will not be responsible for any health-related issues that may arise during the game.
11. After playing, please keep all room arrangements, clues, hints, and solutions confidential from others so that new players can fully experience the game rooms.
12. Any copying of the room design, puzzles, clues, and other details in the room violates copyright. You will be responsible for any legal consequences if you violate this.

13. You will be immediately asked to leave the room without a refund or compensation if you violate the above rules.

Handling unexpected accident

Accidents are something that businesses do not want to happen. Before operating, employees must be trained to prepare for these situations. If any players are injured, quickly provide first aid on site, and then immediately take the injured person to the nearest hospital. At the same time, take full responsibility for the incident, apologize, and compensate customers. In addition, the company's fire prevention and fighting procedures are given top priority. Every month, train employees on effective fire prevention procedures and how to handle unexpected situations quickly. Equipment is regularly inspected to prevent worst-case scenarios.

Handling customer complaints

To ensure that customers have a good experience after using the services, the staff is responsible for calling or emailing customers to find out their level of satisfaction with the amusement park. In addition, staff also addresses any complaints or inquiries from customers to improve the service.

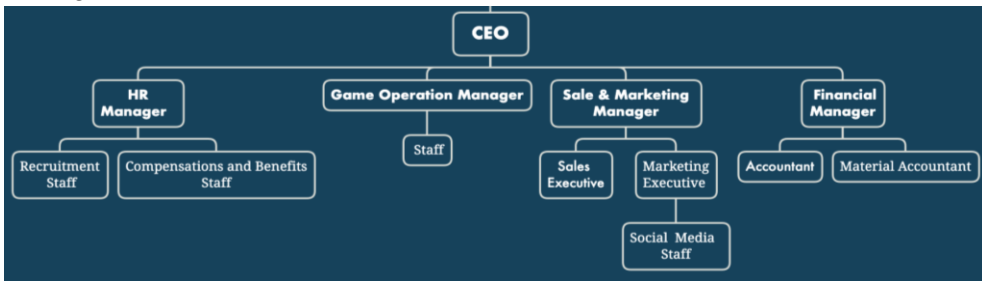
Payment

Accept payments in two forms: online and offline. Customers can pay with cash or use bank cards (ATM, Visa, and MasterCard). In addition, customers can use available e-wallets for convenient ticket booking.

Company Structure

Figure 1

The organizational chart



This type of business requires maximum 13 employees distributed as CEO (1), HR Manager (1), Recruitment Staff (1), Compensations and Benefits Staff (1), Game Operation Manager (1), Operation Staff (1), Sale and Marketing Manager (1), Sales Executive (1), Marketing Executive (1), Social Media Staff (1), Financial Manager (1), Accountant (1), Material Accountant (1).

Market potential

Customer segment

This type of business provides critical thinking but entertaining games for customers from 12 to 28 years old looking for new and unique games. The games are designed in accordance with the requirements to aid players in improving their capacity for uptake, observation, and strategy-making, as well as helping them improve their health and flexibility through playing games of a motor nature.

Channels

The main channels are primarily three official social media channels: Facebook, Tiktok, and Instagram.

Marketing Mix

Product

One of the essential factors in this type of business is the nature of the games provided not only entertain customers but also require thinking and intelligence and can connect with friends. These games include escape room, war room, and sneak room. In addition to the puzzle-solving entertainment service, there is also a food court designed to be airy, like an outdoor cafe.

Price

The business uses psychological pricing strategy wherein each different number of players has a different price segment; groups with more players have a lower price per person. This taps into the psychology of customers, who want more benefits by playing more.

Table 2

Price of escape room

Level	Game Duration	Number of players in a group	Price per player
Level 1 – 2 – 3	45 minutes	Group of 2 to 3 people	\$6.15
		Group of 4 to 6 people	\$5.33
Level 4 – 5	60 minutes	Group of 2 to 3 people	\$7.79
		Group of 4 to 6 people	\$6.97

Escape room levels 1 to 3 are at an easy and medium difficulty level, and the game duration is only 45 minutes. The price is \$5.33 per person for groups of 2-3 people and \$4.92 per person for groups of 4-6 people.

Escape room levels 4 and 5 are at two levels: difficult and very difficult, and the game duration is 60 minutes. The price is \$6.97 per person for groups of 2-3 players and \$6.56 per person for groups of 4-6 players.

Table 3*Price of war room*

Number of players in a group	Game Duration	Price per team	Price per player
Group of 4 people	60 minutes	\$41	\$10.25
Group of 6 people	60 minutes	\$57.81	\$9.64
Group of 8 people	60 minutes	\$72.16	\$9.10

War room requires dividing into two teams, so the number of players must be even. Therefore, ticket prices are for three players in this room: A group of four players has a ticket price of \$36.9 per team, which is \$9.23 per person. A group of six players has a ticket price of \$51.66 per team, which is \$8.61 per person. Finally, a group of eight players has a ticket price of \$65.6 per team, which is \$8.2 per person.

Table 4*Price of sneak room*

Number of players in a group	Game Duration	Price per team	Price per one
Group of 6 people	60 minutes	\$61.5	\$10.25
Group of 7 people	60 minutes	\$68.88	\$9.84
Group of 8 people	60 minutes	\$75.44	\$9.43

Sneak Room requires 6 to 8 people, regardless of even or odd numbers, there are three different price offers: a group of 6 people with a

ticket price of \$55.35 per team, which is \$9.23 per person. A group of 7 people has a ticket price of \$61.70 per team, which is \$8.82 per person. A group of 8 people has a ticket price of \$67.24 per team, which is \$8.40 per person.

The price of the War Room and Sneak Room are slightly higher than the Escape Room because these two games require more physical activity and movement in ample space, including two floors, and each person has some personal equipment to accompany them.

In addition, the food court provides a snack and milk tea counter for customers to enjoy after playing with their friends using a penetration pricing strategy with a flat rate of \$1.23 for all snacks and a flat rate of \$1 for milk tea and other drinks.

Place

This type of business requires that the location is within the city proper. It must be located with potential customers, including tourists and locals. In addition, consider the location that has many activities for entertainment.

Promotion

Membership card policies. Offer two types of membership cards: the regular card and the loyalty card. The regular card is a regular

membership card issued to new members. It can be upgraded to the loyalty card once they have accumulated 30 reward points earned by playing any game. Each game played earns one point, regardless of the type of game. As for the benefits of this type of card, all cardholders receive a 10% discount on their birthday and could participate in special events exclusively for members.

The loyalty card is an exclusive card for members who have accumulated 30 points with their regular card. As for the benefits of this card, members receive a 20% discount on their birthday and a 5% discount every two times they play any game. Additionally, they have a guaranteed spot to participate in events exclusively for members.

Social media promotion. The main channels are the three official channels: Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram. The goals set are 15,000 new reach per post, 10,000 page views per post, and at least 300 new page likes per post with advertising. The ERR (engagement rate by reach) should be between 3 and 5% for all posts. The number of members in the Community should exceed 200. Tourist customers should account for 10% of total customers.

Financial Feasibility

Capitalization

The estimated initial capital is \$471500 due to heavy investment on equipment and renovation of the place.

The initial capital per owner was 1.8 billion VND. In addition, Mind Trekker plans to borrow from Tien Phong Bank at an interest rate of 6.4% for business operations. Therefore, the total capital we have is up to 11.5 billion VND.

Revenue Stream

The revenue consists of two main areas: gaming services and dining services. These services account for 80% and 20% of the company's revenue. As an entertainment venue, the offline model is operated from the first year on to provide a unique experience for customers.

Customers can visit the website to select games and make reservations, then visit the gaming area to experience them. Among the three main games, Escape Room generates 28% of the revenue, while War Room and Seake Room each account for 26% of the business's total revenue.

In the first year of operation, customers book a game room directly on the website before coming. In the second year, expand the potential

customer segmentation by partnering with different channels to attract more domestic and international tourists, thereby increasing the revenue stream for the business. Because games have different levels of difficulty and different durations, the prices for each game are also different. However, all games require a certain amount of time to find and decipher codes, so the minimum required time is 45 minutes. Based on that, the calculated minimum price for each game must be more than \$4.1.

All three games require teamwork, so customers must play in groups. Therefore, groups with more people have lower price per person, resulting in a difference between groups. Furthermore, there are differences in the playing space and tasks to be performed during the games, resulting in price differences between the games.

Besides the gaming zone, there is a food and beverage service area. The food and beverage area accounts for 20% of the company's revenue, so in the first five months, there are estimated 267 daily orders. The cost per order during this period is relatively high, precisely \$0.57 per order. It is expected to increase but still limited to 334 daily orders. The average cost per meal is \$0.57 per order, and it can decrease as the number of orders sold increases.

Table 5*Revenue for 2 years*

Sources of revenue	Year 1		Year 2	
	<i>In units</i>	<i>In USD</i>	<i>In units</i>	<i>In USD</i>
Revenue from game rooms	35000	296327.5	56850	481321
Third-party revenues	0	0	24150	204466
Revenue from food court	52500	58117.5	157500	174353
Total	87500	354445	238500	860139

The total investment cost remains the same in the following year, but gradually increases the number of orders sold. In the first and third quarters, the number of orders per day increase to 400, and the cost per order will be \$0.56. In the second quarter, the number of orders decrease to 334 per day; in the fourth quarter, it increases to 467. The cost per order in the two quarters will be \$0.57 per order and \$0.55 per order, respectively.

Operating expenses

The typical business operations fall below the planned and set targets, and revenue only reaches 67% of the expected level, so expenses need to be adjusted to boost business performance. In the first month of operation, construction costs will not change much. However, expenses such as gas, electricity, and water bills are adjusted as there are not many visitors coming to play. In addition, marketing expenses are intensified to promote the business and to attract and create interest from customers.

Table 6*Projected expenses for 2 years*

	Year 1	Year 2
Employee costs		
Social insurance & other benefits (21.5%)	10930.60	17762.23
Salary and wages	56006.00	85034.00
Total Employee Costs	66936.60	102796.23
Office costs		
Building rent	123000.00	123000.00
Interest expense (6.4% per annum)	4373.33	6560.00
Deposit (building)	30750.00	0.00
Electric	3030.72	4546.08
Water	80.36	120.54
Telephone	32.80	49.20
Internet	230.91	346.37
Office supply	3046.29	119.56
Building supply	4619.37	373.43
Building construction	164000.00	0.00
Total Office Costs	333163.78	135115.17
Marketing costs		
Website	100.08	137.97
Facebook & Instagram Ads	61.50	102.50
Tiktok Ads	90.20	127.10
Google Ads	131.20	147.60
Campaigns	196.39	1359.21
KOLs	61.50	32.80
Flyer + Standee	66.42	88.56
Voucher	18.45	73.80

Total Marketing Cost	811.84	2069.54
Operation costs		
Equipment	11050.72	0.00
Business license	416.15	41.00
Decor	0.00	410.00
Repair & Maintenance	287.00	492.00
Total Operation Cost	11753.87	943.00
Third-Party		
Traveloka	0.00	12077.46
Agoda	0.00	9791.51
Klook	0.00	8953.32
Total third-party Cost	0.00	30822.29

Initial Cost. The initial operation of the business focuses on renovating the building and purchasing equipment, machinery, and decorations. In addition, the initial period invests heavily in marketing to reach the desired number of customers, so the cost for this period is relatively high, leading to the average ticket price also being high.

Projected Financial Performance

It is only one-third of the expected target in the first year of business operations. In the first year, the revenue achieved is \$354445, and the net profit of the first year is still maintained because the net profit margin is negative. To improve and develop the company, continue to expand in the second year by cooperating with third-party partners. The revenue achieved

in the second year is \$860139, and after deducting taxes and depreciation, the net profit is \$229028.43, and the net profit margin has become positive. However, the revenue is only one-third of the company's expected target, so there is a need to develop a plan and strategy to attract a certain number of customers.

Table 7

Income statement for 2 years

	Year 1	Year 2
Revenue	354445	860139
Operating expenses	450331.90	348938.48
Depreciation	224063.20	224914.98
Profit before Taxes	-95886.90	286285.54
Taxes (20%)	0	57257.11
Net profit	-95886.90	229028.43

Based on the calculations, if maintained, the project will break even in about one year and 11 months.

Keys to success

Business objectives are one of the important factors determining the exact direction of the company. However, setting reasonable goals takes work. To be able to see the goals and how to implement them more clearly, chose the SMART model to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the goals in the plan based on the following five criteria:

First Quarter:

- **Specific:** Reach the main target customers aged 12–28 years old.
- **Measurement:** Reach our main target customers by at least 70% compared to our target.
- **Achievable:** Promote advertising on social media and launch the first campaign. Focus investment on content and images to attract accounts.
- **Realistic:** This is the right season, so the demand for entertainment is high.
- **Time-bound:** Stick to this plan for five months, evaluate, and then plan for the next phase.

Second Quarter:

- **S:** Build up the Community in the area.
- **M:** Aim to get 80% of players who have played to join the group.
- **A:** Continue to run ads on social platforms and improve content that is both interactive and calls to join the group. Design images with stimulating elements that hit the eyes of the viewer and send email marketing with an attached Facebook group link to invite them to join. Start interactive posting in the group.

- R: There are prominent holidays; young people must find a place to play and entertain.
- T: Stick to this plan for three months, evaluate, and then plan for the next quarter.

Third Quarter:

- S: Reach potential customers (tourists).
- M: Aim to get 20% of new players to be tourists.
- A: Promote cooperation with OTAs to expand sales channels and create campaigns when customers book tickets to receive many incentives. Promote blogging to help tourists learn more about the business.
- R: Domestic and foreign tourists tend to travel more.
- T: Stick to this plan for three months, evaluate, and then plan for the next phase.

Fourth Quarter:

- S: Increase brand awareness.
- M: Increase main target customers' awareness by at least 70% and customers from other cities by at least 30% compared to the target.

- A: There is a one-year review campaign; this helps to increase awareness with customers who have never visited. Maintain advertising blogging.
- R: There is a big holiday with domestic guests going out a lot, facilitating the ability to attract customers within the area and from other cities.
- T: Stick to this plan for three months, evaluate, and then plan for the next phase.

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