



## PROJECT PROPOSAL

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1. **Title of venture** (e.g., product name or brand name if new brand): The Identity Wiper

2. **This project involves (please put an “X” in one box below):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New product/service that is not currently available.
<input type="checkbox"/>	An existing product/service targeted at an underserved segment.
<input type="checkbox"/>	An existing product distributed through a different channel (that is, a new way or place to sell a product to better serve potential customers).
<input type="checkbox"/>	A product adapted from one country to another.

3. **This is a (please put an “X” in one box below):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	For-profit venture
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-profit program or venture
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program to support an existing brand

4. **This venture is intended as a (please put an “X” in one box below):**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New firm/organization that would be set up with its own financing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	New venture for an existing firm. <b>Please specify firm:</b>

5. **The main *realistic* revenue/profit sources of this venture are intended to come from** (please check all *significant* sources, but NOT sources that are likely to be minor or are, realistically speaking, unlikely to materialize) **(please put an “X” in one or more boxes below):**

X	Direct sale of the product or service to end users
X	Sale of the product to consumers through wholesalers, retailers, and/or other distributors
	Sale of the product as a component to manufacturers of an end product
	Franchising of service operation
	Licensing of technology to manufacturers/developers
	Advertising revenue
	Other --> Please specify:

**If you checked more than one of the above, which source of revenue/profit is likely to be the *most significant* one?** Sales through retailers and distributors.

6. **Do you have a rough idea of what this product or service might cost the end customer?** If not, that is acceptable for this stage of the project. Please try to suggest an estimated price range, even if it is large. If applicable, please consider cost both to distributors, manufacturers if this is a component, and the end customer. Please discuss your reasoning as applicable.

Software and online services often involve considerable development costs but modest marginal costs of production. With a sufficient volume of sales, the program could probably be sold for less than \$100, with a year’s subscription to the associated services. Continued service, possibly with regular upgrades, could probably be offered for less than \$50.

7. **Please specify any existing firms, brands, product categories, services, and/or distributors that are likely to be “close” or direct competitors against the proposed venture.** That is, are there any other products, services, or distribution channels that offer very close substitutes? For example, Coca Cola and Pepsi are direct competitors, producing much the same thing.

Currently, two main systems are available to protect families against the inadvertent disclosure by children of information that could be used by predators and/or identity thieves. Monitoring software alerts parents to behavior children that could make them vulnerable (e.g., giving out names or going to areas that are inappropriate). Filtering software denies access to all Internet software and/or URLs not explicitly approved, or, in less extreme versions, blocks only sites that have been rated as objectionable. Some software developers offer combinations. Some examples of monitoring programs and services include SafeEyes (\$49.95), eBlaster (\$99.95), ContentProtect (\$39.99), IM Einstein (\$40), CyberSieve (\$39.99), Zephyr(a component of MySpace). Some examples of filtering programs/services include Internet Explorer 7.0 (no separate charge), CyberPatrol, CYBERSitter, SafeKeeper Plus, WebWatcherKids (\$99.00), and BeNetSafe.

8. **Please specify any existing firms, brands, product categories, services, and/or distributors that are likely to be intermediate level competitors against the proposed venture.** That is, are there any existing offerings that are likely to serve a function somewhat similar to what you are proposing? For example, airlines and firms providing teleconferencing services both assist individuals and businesses in "getting together" for meetings, but the two industries provide services that differ greatly in form.

Baby sitting services where humans monitor the activities of children, including their computer communication.

9. **Please specify some existing firms, brands, product categories, services, and/or distributors that are likely to be remote substitutes for, or "budget level" competitors against the proposed venture.** That is, at a more abstract level, what other offerings are intended to satisfy the same areas of broad needs? Alternatively, what are likely to be the biggest competitors for the customer's money, time, or other resources. **ALL PRODUCTS, SERVICES, AND DISTRIBUTION METHODS FACE REMOTE/INDIRECT COMPETITION.**

Products and services that provide for children's safety--e.g., immunizations; light reflecting clothing that makes the child visible in the dark; books on child safety.

10. **Please discuss your tentative assessment of the technological feasibility of this venture if applicable.** This is not a course in engineering, and you are *not* expected to supply the "nuts and bolts" of the actual functioning of the product so long as you have a good faith belief that the product may be feasible. However, you must have some general idea of how the technology would work. You cannot, for example, propose "negative calorie" snacks unless you have some broad idea of how these would work. You may want to look into the basic science if possible. For example, it is unlikely that it will be possible to produce a purely solar power driven car.

This software appears to be feasible with current technology. Other programs exist that process information put in. For example, Microsoft Word features the "auto correct" option that automatically corrects selected commonly misspelled or mistyped words. Other programs detect inconsistencies between data, automatically changing one variable to make it consistent with information entered elsewhere.

11. **Do you see any significant actual or potential ethical issues and/or concerns with this venture? You do NOT need to "invent" ethical concerns if none are apparent.** However, products or services that represent a significant risk to the user, pollute excessively, or whose use may have consequences that a user may later regret (e.g., gambling ventures) are likely to raise ethical questions. Products that are deceptive in nature--e.g., vitamin supplements that really do no harm but do not provide any significant benefits, either, are troublesome. NOTE: Even when a venture may raise ethical questions, benefits to the customer may under some circumstances outweigh the ethical problems. Thus, ethical concerns do not necessarily invalidate a venture, but they should be acknowledged if significant.

Any software that limits the free exchange of information inherently raises images of "1984" or "big brother." Thus, the proposed software and service, to some extent, raise some of the same concerns as existing Internet restriction schemes do. Due to the ease of use and clear benefits of Internet restriction programs, some parents might be tempted to continue to use the program

beyond an age where greater personal autonomy becomes more essential and appropriate. In addition to these concerns, however, this program goes beyond current offerings by actually deliberately spreading false information. In some situations, this could result in actual misrepresentation. It could also cause confusion if the child is communicating with a legitimate party such as a teacher or school counselor who might be given an incorrect telephone number or e-mail address for the parents. To the extent that the Internet could be used in case of emergency, emergency, the obfuscation of important information could lead to very serious consequences.

12. **Do you see any “chicken-and-egg” problems with this venture?** If so, do you have any ideas at this point to address these? (It is OK if you do not have a solution at this point.)

Since use of this product by one individual is not affected by whether other people use it, there do not appear to be any chicken-and-egg problems.

13. **Please describe the product/service, the new targeted market, the new distribution channel, or product adapted from one country to another.** Please be sure that you clearly identify significant differences from what is currently available.

The Identity Wiper would consist of software that would change personal information—such as the names of a child and family member, birthdays, city of residence, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses—to bogus values in order to prevent children from giving out information that might be abused by online predators or others who might abuse this information.

A possible alternative to the current online child protection programs and services available is a software and service program whose emphasis is on preventing the disclosure of personal information rather than on limitations on resources that can be used or sites that can be visited. This idea is not incompatible with the idea of some filtering. It would be possible, at the same time, to use a somewhat more “generous” filter which would allow access to a larger assortment of sites. The software would recognize certain sensitive information—such as the names of family members, birthdays, phone numbers, school names, and addresses—an automatically substitute “decoy” information. For example, if the child’s sister’s name is Jennifer, the computer would substitute another name such as Stephanie. The decoy information could either be selected by the parents or could be generated by the software. In receiving return emails or exchanges, the decoy name would be translated back to the original name so that the child would not be confused about what is going on.

An important feature of the program is that if the user attempted to transmit “forbidden” information, a message would go to the “administrator” of the system (usually a parent). Thus, it would be possible to have talk with the child and emphasize the dangers of giving out this information. Even if the individual who had communicated with the child could not be definitively traced, useful information about the “intruder” might be found in the incident log.

14. **What does the current venture offer to the end customer and, if applicable, manufacturers that is not readily and/or conveniently available in the current market?** Please discuss the value provided.

Many of the current offerings either block children from accessing a large number of sites or only notify parents of inappropriate behavior after the damage has been done through

inappropriate disclosure of information. The Identity Wiper is not incompatible with filtering programs. Children should, for example, not be able to access pornographic sites or various other types of sites that the family would consider objectionable. Such sites could be blocked. There are, however, other sites that would offer the children important educational and personal growth opportunities. For such sites, where the danger to the children is more likely to come from the threat of disclosure of personal information, the children can be allowed to access the sites while they are protected (to the extent that the program cannot be circumvented) from inappropriate disclosures. the danger to the children is more likely to come from the threat of disclosure of personal information, the children can be allowed to access the sites while they are protected (to the extent that the program cannot be circumvented) from inappropriate disclosures.

The Identity Wiper is also fully compatible with parental notification features of other programs. These programs, however, generally only notify the parents after the damage as been done. The Identity Wiper can both prevent the disclosure of information and notify parents of attempts to give out this information that the parents can have a discussion with the child about the dangers of what he or she had attempted to do.

**15. Optional:** Any additional comments that you may want to make.

In addition to families with young children, this program could be used to protect certain other vulnerable individuals. For example, many teenagers or adults who suffer from certain cognitive limitations (e.g., autism, schizophrenia, or mental retardation) may face vulnerabilities similar to those faced by children. The program might also be used to allow some Internet access for individuals who are not allowed full access (e.g., prisoners). These latter markets, however, may raise more serious ethical concerns since these interfere with the communication of individuals who may have a greater right to communicate information of their choice.

16. Please confirm that the following apply (please put an “X” by the conditions that are met):

X	The proposal does NOT involve "stipulated excellence"—an idea that merely promises a better product than what is currently available <i>without offering any idea of how this would be accomplished in practice</i> .
X	Some good faith basis exists that this product may be technically feasible (e.g., a pill to offer the same protection as conventional sunscreen lotion is not realistic unless you have a specific idea of what physiological agents would be involved). (You do not have to have a detailed idea of how the product would work, but merely a good faith belief that the product <i>could</i> reasonably be feasible given a general approach).
X	The product is NOT illegal—or likely to be illegal—in the jurisdiction(s) in which it would be offered (e.g., insurance against traffic tickets would probably be considered a subversion of the law).

Once completed, please upload this proposal to Turnitin through Blackboard. Instructions can be found at [http://www.buad307.com/PDF/Turnitin\\_Instructions.pdf](http://www.buad307.com/PDF/Turnitin_Instructions.pdf) . You do NOT need to worry if the formatting becomes distorted since the original word processing file is preserved.

Note that Turnitin will probably indicate a high percentage of “non-original” content. This is usually not a problem since the text in this form will be counted as non-original.

Please be sure that you have scheduled an appointment to discuss your proposal during the sixth or seventh weeks of class. Instructions for signing up can be found at [http://www.buad307.com/PDF/Appointment\\_Instructions.pdf](http://www.buad307.com/PDF/Appointment_Instructions.pdf) .

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