ASL for Family
Venture Summary - January 26, 2019

The Story

Imagine not being able to communicate with your child, something no parent should have to endure. Take the story of Rachel, who was the star singer in a band. Rachel started taking her newborn daughter, Sara, to the concerts with her dad. The concerts were sometimes in the day and Sara would fall asleep listening to it. After several instances of this the couple took Sara to the doctor and found out she was deaf. Upon learning this, they started learning ASL (American Sign Language). It wasn't until Sara was four years old that she understood basic words and conversation in ASL. ASL for Family aims to minimize the amount of time needed to study ASL, making it an interactive experience between both parents and children.

The Problem

Over 2 million people are deaf in the United States, with 200,000 being born deaf. Although this number is small compared to the total population, it is a large enough number to be able to create a new market around. Parents are unable to communicate with their children, which should never happen. The value of family is very important and the bond between parent and child is shattered when they are unable to communicate with each other. In the US, 9 out of 10 children who are born deaf are born to parents who can hear; this means 180,000 kids have parents that do not know how to communicate with their own children.

The Solution and Product

At the core, **we believe in helping everyone have a voice**. We want to help rebuild the bridge between parent and child so that the bond is repaired and communication is restored. ASL for Families helps the deaf community by changing how families learn sign language. Our solution provides content that will allow people to learn sign language in a couple of months to mend the bond between families. We are giving our customers the tools they would need to learn ASL thoroughly. We accomplish this through teaching them how to hold everyday conversations in ASL with their own family members. We will give our customers what they will need to restore family communication. **We believe no family should live without being able to communicate with each other.**

We have created an app for parents to learn sign language in their own time and at their own pace. Our product is mainly for desperate parents that want to communicate with their recently-deaf child ASAP and also for relatives with distant family members that are deaf. Our product will incorporate ASL with games to help our customers learn sign language as fast as possible to restore the communication.

Competitive Analysis

Our competition should be divided into two different categories: technology solutions requiring additional hardware and basic technology solutions. In the first category, we identified the product SignAll and Motionsavvy's Uni product as our main competitors. In the second category, the ASL app and Youtube are our main competition. The ASL app and Youtube provide plenty of ASL content, but they are not very convenient, especially compared to SignAll and Motionsavvy. Therefore, here is a more detailed look at both SignAll and Motionsavvy's Uni in regards to the products, price, and limitations:

1. SignAll
   Product
   SignAll uses a series of cameras, lighting, and special gloves to record a person signing to a computer and translate that to English speech. This system can be building into an existing workstation or be installed in a full privacy booth.

   Price
   Because SignAll is newer to the market and is marketed more towards government offices, education, health care, and banks, the product is only available with a consultation.

   Limitations
   The use of this product requires specific limitations on user attire, including no extremely colorful clothing, excessive clothing, oversized jewelry, or hats that obscure the face. Using this product also requires that there be less people and noises around the system depending on whether the user is using an existing workstation or a privacy booth. Both hearing and deaf users must also have an intermediate understanding of written English.

2. Motionsavvy's Uni

   Product
   Uni uses Leap motion capture to track a person signing, before translating those signs into English speech, and vice versa. They also have an option of building signs into the software, along with building a sign dictionary and sharing with other users.

   Price
   Uni costs $399 with a 2-year paid subscription included

   Limitations

Reviews showed that people did not like how Uni does not use facial expressions. ASL encompasses, not just hands, but facial expressions and body language as well, components that Uni is lacking.

The table below illustrates specific characteristics including the use of animated hands, the use of 3D facial expressions, whether the product is in-home Alexa accessible, whether it is marketed towards kids, and whether it includes tests and an achievement system, along which characteristic each product includes:

	Our Product	Technology Solutions Requiring Hardware		Basic Technology Solutions	
Company	ASL for Family	SignAll — We translate sign language. Automatically.	MotionSavvy	the ASL app	YouTube
Animated Hands	✔	✔	✔	✔	✘
3D Facial Expressions	✔	✔	✘	✔	✔
In-home Alexa Accessible	✔	✘	✘	✘	✔
Marketed towards Kids	✔	✘	✘	✘	✘
Tests and Achievement System	✔	✘	✘	✘	✘
Cost	Free and Subscription versions ($10 per month)	Depends on consultation	$399 with 2-year paid subscription	Free sample, $0.99 per bundle, $10 per bundle	Free

Industry

Our hope for our product is that it will help to address three different industries: language services, motion capture technology, and voice technology. Our product will use a combination of Leap Motion and Alexa voice technology to present basic American Sign Language words and sentences to help parents of deaf children learn to communicate with their kids.

The language services industry employs interpreters and translators of American Sign Language through associations such as the Translators Association (ATA) and the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters, in connection with governments, business, schools, and many other fields, making this one of the fastest-growing fields in the current job market. We hope to market our product partly as a new sign language translation tool, one that is faster and more accessible to everyday people.

Voice technology has revolutionized our daily lives within recent years. At a voice command to Alexa, the lights or TV can be turned on, the news or a weather report can be given, and music can be streamed, along with several other functions that help make our daily lives a little bit easier. Our product uses the Amazon Alexa Skill platform to bring accessibility and flexibility to parents of deaf children and their kids, helping them learn American Sign Language in their own time and at their own pace. The Amazon Skill platform is also where we will be marketing the most since Amazon Skills are become more and more popular.

Motion capture technology has come in higher demand throughout the last few years as a next step in the technology industry. The technology we are using for our product uses technology that is the next step in the motion capture sector: Leap Motion. Leap Motion technology uses cameras and infrared LEDs to track light and form 3D animations of what is being captured. Our product will use the Alexa voice command option to open the app and present a hands and face animation of the word or sentence the user chooses. While this technology is still in its early stages, we believe it will provide a better animation as compared to regular motion capture technology.

There are already a few other American Sign Language products on the market that are trying to address the same problem of making interpreting sign language easier and more accessible. Our hope is that our product can provide translation functions in a different capacity compared to other tools, a way that gives everyday people accessibility using tools already easily accessible.

Financial Analysis

Our assumptions:

Input Variables

Average Monthly Payment	$ 10
Gross Margin %	75%
CAC (Cost to Acquire a Customer)	$ 20
Monthly Churn Rate	5.00%

Month 1 - no of new customers	25
Monthly growth rate for new custs (X)	10%

We are charging $10 a month for access to our entire app. Most of the companies that do similar work as ours charge around $20 a month ($250 annually). With 25% of our revenue going towards variable costs to keep customers satisfied with our app, we gross $7.50 per month per subscription.

We plan on hiring a developer to create the app to its Beta version and to make constant updates. Here is the break down for the first five years:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Payroll	$25,000.00	$ 50,000.00	$ 115,000.00	$ 130,000.00	$ 140,000.00
Marketing	$ 8,000.00	$ 9,000.00	$ 10,000.00	$ 10,000.00	$ 20,000.00
Insurance	$ 600.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 2,000.00	$ 2,000.00	$ 3,000.00
Professional	$ 5,000.00	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 100.00	$ 100.00
Rent	$ -	$ -	$ 1,250.00	$ 1,250.00	$ 1,250.00
Utilities	$ -	$ -	$ 120.00	$ 120.00	$ 120.00
Other Costs	$ 500.00	$ 500.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,000.00	$ 1,500.00
Total	$39,100.00	$ 60,600.00	$ 129,470.00	$ 144,470.00	$ 165,970.00
Monthly	$ (3,258.33)	$ (5,050.00)	$ (10,789.17)	$ (12,039.17)	$ (13,830.83)

The rest of the financials can be seen in the 3 year plan.

Entry and Target Market

At the start of our business, we will be targeting parents with recent news that their child is deaf. To be more specific, we would target the parents of families that have a deaf member because the parents will be the decision makers about which platform to learn ASL from. Our product offers flexibility and convenience, allowing parents to learn in their own time and at their own pace. Our target market as a whole is family members and distant relatives of family members that are deaf.

Sales Model

We have a three point sales plan:
1. Continue to connect with people from the deaf community groups we are currently a part of.
2. Market our website that features our product on Google AdWords and Facebook Ads.
3. Reach out to Deaf community (Nationally known organization) leaders for publicity.

3 Year Plan

Our Break even point is 4,831 customers

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Total Customers	434	1,591	5,125
Total Gross Margin	$18,508	$86,281	$286,313

Fixed cost per Period	$39,100	$60,600	$129, 470
CAC	$8,680	$31,820	$102,500
Net Profit (Loss)	($29,272)	($6,139)	$54,343

Team

At ASL for families, we understand the importance of a team and we have made sure to surround ourselves with worthy partners and employees.

Caleb Truax III - CEO

The developer and creator of the platform. From a young age of 12, Caleb has been developing businesses with the customer in mind. The idea of a ASL learning application for the Amazon Alexa came over Christmas break when no product existed on the market.

Parker Rosario- CMO

The marketing coordinator and financial analyst. He has over 3 years of professional experience marketing for 2 different companies and organizations. The most important factor in the business to Parker is giving the employees a great place to work so that the customers are treated well.

Lauren Lile- COO

The customer relations and competitive analyst. She took 2 years of ASL in high school and is working towards her undergraduate degree in psychology. Her hope for this product is that it will help improve the lives of deaf kids.

Appendix of Survey Information

The following questions have been sent to the seven healthcare professionals currently participating in the prototyping phase. We are in the process of gathering answers to these Questions.

1) Is Closed Captioning successful in the way you understand what is going on on the screen?
2) Would you prefer seeing animated hands sign what is being said on the screen?
3) Would you prefer to see a person sign what is being said on the screen?
4) How does sign language differ from closed captioning on TV shows or movies?
5) How did you learn sign language?

6) Who did you learn sign language for? (Child, Parent, etc)
7) How long did it take to fully understand sign language?
8) If we were creating an app that would help parents/ children learn how to communicate with their recently deaf family member, what would you like to see incorporated in it?
9) Would an achievement system be helpful?(Getting a reward after learning a certain task, if you pass so many levels you get a reward)
10) Which would be better: tests or small games in learning ASL?
11) Please include your email if you would like to be kept up to date on the project.

A follow-up survey will be sent to the individuals who participated in this prototyping phase. Those questions will determine the effectiveness of ASL for Family, if they solved the individual's problems, what changes need to be made to the design, and if the technology and learning problem is significant enough for the individual to consider subscribing to ASL for Family..