

Company name:

PsychLine

Is this an LLC?:

No

What is the purpose of the venture (150 words):

According to the CDC, 40% of adults struggled with their mental health in June 2020. That said, we came together to develop a way to combat poor mental health. We began creating a free, anonymous platform for people with mental health issues to come together and connect. Members will connect with one another on our platform and engage in judgement-free conversation. This will help ease the anxiety of people afraid to take the first step towards healing. Unlike conventional social media platforms, PsychLine will foster a positive community of help, advice, and assistance between members.

New members of PsychLine will be able to create a profile where they can provide information such as the mental health issue(s) they are experiencing and their interests. Our algorithm will then match them with people from all walks of life. They can chat one-on-one and options for 'group chats' will be available as well.

To date, what have you done to better understand the problem/need of your customer and the industry into which you are selling? (150 words):

Two of the Founders were diagnosed with depression in high school. That said, this has cultivated an understanding of the wants and needs of a person struggling with mental health.

We have also conducted an extensive amount of research into what is already offered to our target customer, particularly social services. According to research on NCBI, positive experiences are common results from the use of online mental health services. NCBI reports that 90% of users were satisfied with the service, 86% said they would continue to use the service, and 72% would recommend the service to a peer.

Our biggest rival is a website called The Tribe, which also connects people with fellow mental health strugglers. However, we identified that their system was complex and noisy. Their customers must choose which mental health 'tribe' they want to join. This is yet another 'first step' that our target customer must take.

What is your competitive advantage (i.e., what skills, understanding, or intellectual property do you have that others don't) (200 words)?

PsychLine is primed for competition with carefully designed features based on a genuine understanding of its customers and simplicity. As a part of the age group affected by poor mental health, PsychLine's Founders have a crystal-clear vision of what college students need to overcome such obstacles: social support. While the platform is open to all ages, the flow of the website will specifically be designed to make Gen Z, who are known to be active on social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, feel at home.

We also have targeted the flaws of platforms such as The Tribe and have opted to create a simpler system, one that will be a humbler experience. It will also connect the customer to a community automatically instead of making them choose, effectively decreasing the number of steps between the customer and healing.

In addition, every one of PsychLine's Founders is an incredibly dedicated and hard-working individual. Collectively, we have experience in programming across several languages, web development skills, advanced design skills, real-world business experience, and social networking and marketing skills. This collective whole is tailored and dedicated to make sure PsychLine's roots are strong and is designed with the customer in mind.

What is the biggest challenge that you are facing or anticipate facing (100 words)?

PsychLine's system gathers information about each user and will have to systematically decide who to connect with each member while juggling several factors. While several members of our team are experienced in programming, they have not yet designed something that has such capabilities. In addition, being open about mental illness is a taboo and sensitive subject in our society. That said, spreading awareness and getting initial customers will be difficult. Social media and beta testers will be the cornerstone of getting the word out. The more members PsychLine has, the more comfortable potential customers will feel when joining.

What does your team expect to accomplish by the end of the summer (100 words)?

We are coding the website by hand presently. Once we have a beta version ready, we will seek a hosting platform to publish the website. We plan to have this complete by May 2021. Between May and August 2021, we plan on releasing an alpha version of the website, getting it a good amount of attention through social media, begin and complete the development of a mobile app, and to gain a user count of 1000.

Please share any materials you feel will be helpful for us to understand the progress you have made to date (e.g., link to website, revenue to date, videos, etc.).

Who are the founder(s) of the venture (200 words)?

Noah Muthler
Penn State Electrical Engineering undergraduate

Kade Carlson
Penn State Aerospace Engineering undergraduate

Quintin Nelson
Penn State Aerospace Engineering undergraduate

Kevin Dong
Penn State Computer Engineering undergraduate

Micah DeLattre
Penn State Mechanical Engineering undergraduate