

**Written report for the SWOT analysis of Avondje Uit**

Course name: Development of Personal Relationships 500190-B-6

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**Who is our client?**

Avondje Uit 013 is an organization that believes that participating in meaningful leisure activities is needed for a happy existence. Avondje Uit supports and helps in the development of skills and personality of people who are socially challenged. They also help in providing a place for young people to develop a sense of belonging. Through the activities that they organize, the participants are helped in developing their social skills and therefore making them socially independent individuals. They also ask their participants what their needs are so that they can provide events to focus on their needs. Their target audience are the people of Central Brabant, right now Tilburg between the ages of 18-35.

The founder, Jeroen Hellemons started this company in 2015. When he was buddying an autistic boy for 2 years he realized that the main problem that the boy had was that he did not have a social life and people to connect and do fun activities with. Jeroen recognized himself in this boy's situation and hence led to him developing Avondje Uit.

**Assessment description**

The project that was given to us was to perform a SWOT analysis and to understand if the participants recognize what the goal of their organization is. They also expected us to do research on their USPs (Unique Selling Points) which is perceived by the participants and the stakeholders (employees). We were also given the task to gain insight into their competitors such as Join Us and R-Newt. They also wanted possible ideas for opportunities for further development of their organization.

**Your scientific approach**

We wanted to get multiple points of views on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Avondje Uit. Therefore, we sent out questionnaires to the employees and we conducted interviews with some of the participants (of whom some also filled out questionnaires targeted towards the participants' experience). For the company's weaknesses we could hardly provide an evidence based solution as their problems stem from financial and/or personnel shortage.

However, we found support for the weakness that they lack social media exposure. Many researchers have studied the benefits of the usage of social media. Mohadhussen and Abdulnasir (2019) reviewed literature about how social media can improve performance of a business. It was found that increased use does increase the capabilities and performance of an organization.

Also, an opportunity that was identified by employees was that an improvement in communication could benefit the organization. We therefore, examined ways this would be done in literature. One way according to Lehmann-Willenbrock et al. (2013) is to encourage procedural

communication which is behavior aimed at structuring the meeting and achieving goals. This should also be evenly distributed amongst employees.

The strengths can also be supported by scientific research (since clients reported a great improvement in social skills, even outside the organization). The natural settings of the events, the group format and the guidance of a group leader are all characteristics of Avondje Uit's events that seem to promote ideal improvement (Gresham et al., 2001, as cited in Tse et al., 2007).

## **Strengths**

### **Employees**

According to the employees of Avondje Uit, the biggest strength of the organization is that they work to fulfill the needs and demands of their clients. They also give a lot of personal attention in organizing activities based on their needs. They also personally spend time with their clients. Their events are fun and not only aim at reducing loneliness amongst people but also improving social skills which is a secondary method to reduce loneliness. They organize a wide range of events for the participants like a pub crawl to a trip to the zoo. They also organize events for Christmas and New Years as they know it is the time people feel the most lonely. Avondje Uit also focuses on enhancing the strengths of the employees along with working with their weaknesses. Another strength is that the participants trust them. The employees are very patient with the clients as well and they work in collaboration with them. Avondje Uit also has a multidisciplinary team.

### **Clients**

According to the participants of Avondje Uit, they said the diversity in events is a big strength for the company. They said that these events provide a safe environment for them to be their true selves and they are accepted with no judgment. Autism spectrum individuals are also accepted here. The clients said that both the employees and participants are very understanding of each other and give each other space if needed and no one feels offended when this happens. The participants do agree that the events of Avondje Uit have improved their social skills as they interact with people outside their group in Avondje Uit. They also said that now because of Avondje Uit they have figured out their own way of overcoming their loneliness.

### **Our view**

Our group has noticed that the personalizing of activities to the needs of the participants is a very big advantage. They allow participants to make their own goals and then have a feedback session to see if their events have helped them fulfill these goals. Though they have lesser activities compared to their

competitors, they have well-designed and different activities every time they organize an event. They also make sure their clients get to celebrate festivals like Christmas, Sinterklaas and New years with each other to reduce the loneliness felt by them during this time of the year. In comparison to their competitors, whose focus in general is on reducing loneliness, Avondje Uit focuses on improving social skills as well as the clients.

## **Weaknesses**

### **Employees**

The employees of Avondje Uit have their own perception of the organization's weaknesses. One of which is that they are a small team and the continuity is based on the founder. A big amount of their revenue comes from just 1 municipality, thus not having sufficient funding to organize more events in a larger scale. Furthermore, the employees feel that there is a need for clearer communication within the organization, especially among the colleagues as a team. This further extends to their expectations and goals that are not clearly communicated. The employees also feel that there should be mobility for participants. Some tools for projects are missing, and the methodology used to help participants can be improved. In order to successfully progress and improve these qualities, they require more time and more people which also leads to needing more money. Another drawback is that the concentration span of some employees is a bit short. Their insight is that they should plan events more clearly and ahead of time to be able to improve.

### **Clients**

The clients have their own perception of the organization's drawbacks. Firstly, they feel that the participants joining should be filtered as there have been conflicts whereby some have said hurtful things, although the organization resolved it quite well. About a year ago, some participants did not have clarity on how one can join the organized events and sometimes not all information is provided in time neither is there much structure on event timings. Another drawback is that there wasn't enough exposure about the existence of the organization until it was known by word of mouth and some referred by schools/help centers. Some participants felt that the events' locations are not easily accessible, especially for those residing outside of Tilburg. Lastly, the age group between 30 and 40 is neglected as events are only catered to children from the ages 12 to 18 and old people from the ages 40.

### **Our view**

We have our own views on what the organization's weaknesses are and one of which is that their marketing strategy, specifically through social media, needs to be worked on as they have a much smaller

following than their competitors. Another weakness in comparison to their competitors is that their team is much smaller. Moreover, their focus is on the Dutch population in Tilburg and not so much on the international people. The organization is yet to plan activities for university students, which is another weakness. Multiple of their activities are organized in different places, so there is no consistency for participants in meeting each other and some of the chosen locations are hardly accessible as some socially challenged individuals have difficulties in reaching there.

## **Opportunities**

### **Employees**

The two main opportunities identified by the employees that would benefit the organization are to hire more employees and to enter new cities. They believe that by working on these, it would help the company grow. By hiring more volunteers could help solve the first problem. A larger social media presence and doing more events in other cities could help tackle the other problem. Another weakness identified was communication and planning issues. To improve these issues, weekly meetings, preferably during the day, with the different teams together could improve communication and planning.

### **Clients**

The clients have said that there have been few situations over their WhatsApp group and in events where some participants have been hurtful. In order to reduce this and stop this from happening, we thought that clear instructions should be given to the new participants about what these events are for and that there are no judgments towards anyone. If this happens even after that, the employees could work with these participants and help them understand why what they are doing is wrong.

### **Our view**

Our group realized that the lack of social media presence is a huge opportunity for them to work on as the age group they want to attract spends much of their time on social media. In order to form a more emotional bond with their potential clients on social media, more personalized videos and pictures could be added to their Instagram. To start off with, an introduction video of what Avondje Uit is and how they came to be could be very helpful. Starting a TikTok account could also be very helpful for them in the future. The lack of awareness about the company with people is a weakness and social media provides them with an opportunity to tackle this. In order to create more awareness in Tilburg and other cities, planning events in other cities would be helpful. Working with schools outside Tilburg is also an opportunity to increase the awareness of Avondje Uit. This could help them get better recognition and also help with funding. An untapped opportunity for Avondje Uit is working with and planning events for

international students. International students sometimes do suffer from loneliness and have a hard time meeting new people, planning English events for them will not only help the students but also help Avondje Uit to expand, get better recognition and get new clients. Working alongside with Tilburg University could help with this and maybe also provide them with some funding. Another weakness found was sometimes the locations of the events are hard to reach and could discourage people from joining an event. To tackle this, we came up with a solution by providing a common meeting point for the clients to come like Tilburg central station and having one employee there to bring everyone to the location. Another solution, with Jeroen Hellemons also thought about, was having a bus that goes around and picks clients up. This could also be very helpful for those who have a hard time using public transportation and also those who are secluded.

### **Threats**

The employees are concerned about Join us and R-newt as a threat because they are their biggest competition. They are bigger organizations with more money and staff that also operate in Tilburg. The government is therefore more likely to fund organizations such as these because they may trust them more. This could mean that the funding for Avondje Uit is more likely to be removed. There is a dependence on this funding, without it, they can no longer operate. A threat in our view was COVID. Participants can set goals to improve their social skills. COVID may have had a bad impact on participants' social skills impacting the extent to which participants could achieve their goals. Another threat in our view is that Avondje Uit hosts activities in multiple locations at the same time. This means that participants may not be able to go to all the events they want to and event attendance may decrease because instead they are at the other event. Also, they have low online exposure which is a threat because it may place Avondje Uit behind its competitors in terms of growth in line with the rapidly changing world.

### **More on the competitors of Avondje Uit**

From the research done on the competitors, this is the information we got on how they differ from Avondje Uit. Join Us, a company that shares knowledge about loneliness amongst youth, has an online platform that allows participants to keep in touch with each other between events. R-Newt is a company that has a talent based approach which is aimed at helping participants reach their full potential. They have over 300 employees and many of them are volunteers. Brabant Maatjes has a bigger online presence. The international center Tilburg, is aimed at planning events for international students. They have a higher social media presence and they work with the university. They also have a standardized café just for their

company where events are held and they have weekly potluck dinners happening there. For more information, refer to figure 2 and figure 3 in the appendix.

### **Unique selling point (USPs) of Avondje Uit**

#### **Employees**

The employees stated several USPs of Avondje Uit. Firstly, the warm atmosphere from the coaches that is in a safe environment involving activities based on interest. There is fun, connection, equality, and safety for both the employees and the participants of the organization. Moreover, attention and respect is always given to each other. Overall, they have an open and welcoming atmosphere which they feel makes them stand out.

#### **Clients**

When the clients were asked what made them come back to events organized by Avondje Uit and what makes the organization stand out or special, one of their answers was that the group is always very cozy (*gezellig*). They also recognized the respect that everyone had for each other. There is also a lot of trust amongst each other. Lastly and most importantly, people of different backgrounds and disabilities are always welcome. Individuals of the autism spectrum are accepted and welcome to join the events organized by the organization.

#### **Our view**

From looking at the website and social media of Avondje Uit's competitors, it is clear that they do similar things. They all plan events and activities to connect people. One thing that sets Avondje Uit apart is that they have a focus on social skills. For a lot of people lacking social skills is in particular an issue so it is good that they focus on this. We think that it would be beneficial to come up with more USP. They can tackle this by implementing the improvements we have suggested and making the most out of the opportunities we found.

### References

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## Appendix

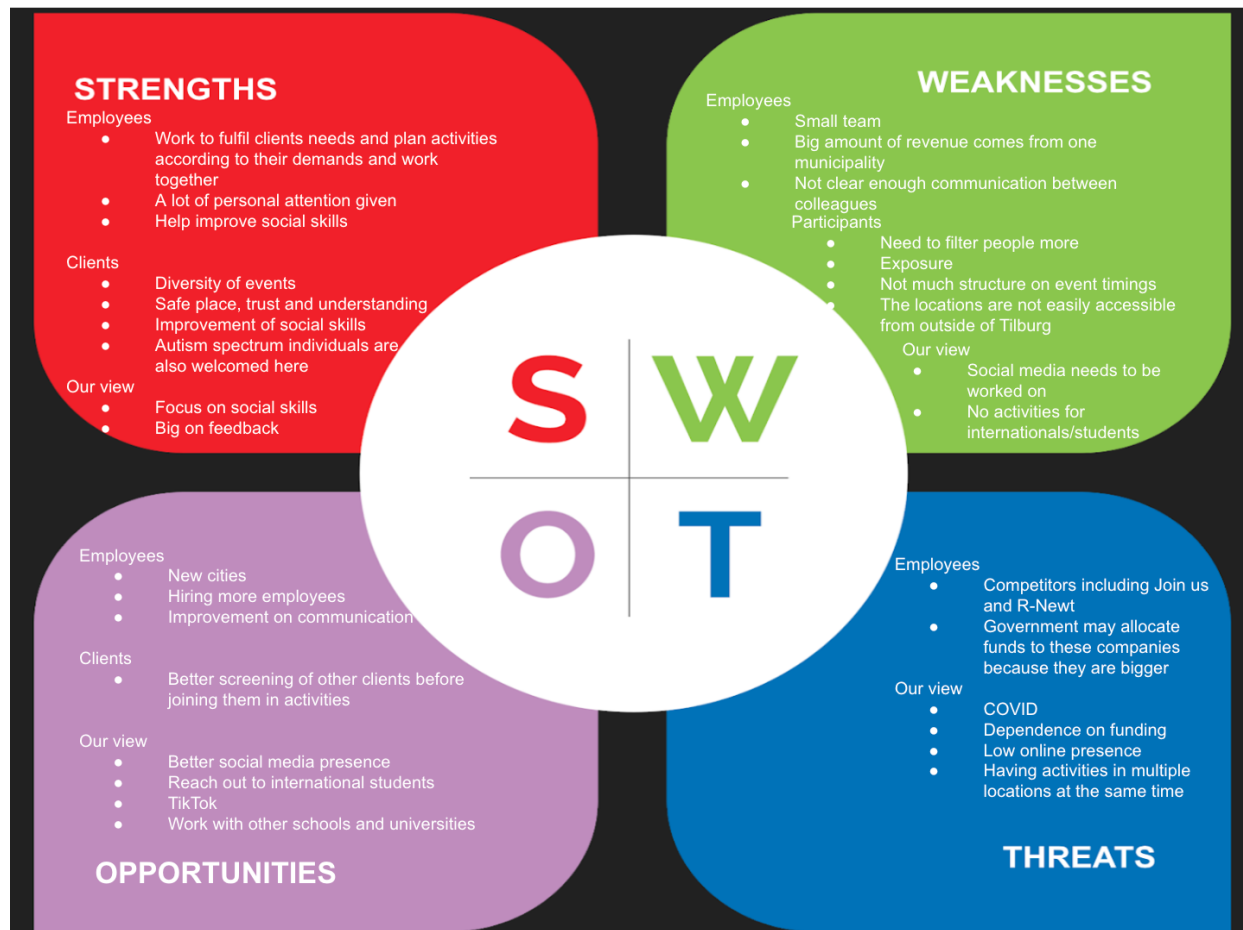


Figure 1: SWOT analysis summary

Competitor	Number of employees	Description	What are they doing better?	How is Avondje Uit better?
Join us	15 employees and over 100n volunteers	<p>Work with youth</p> <p>Share knowledge about loneliness amongst youth</p> <p>JoinUs online - discord and app</p> <p>Run a program for this - Every 2 weeks and do an activity together (which Participants can choose)</p> <p>Counselors working for See what underlies loneliness for each individual to help them grow</p>	<p>In general seem like they are bigger - in multiple municipalities</p> <p>More social media presence - They have TikTok, 2156 followers on Instagram</p> <p>Online platform</p>	<p>Their focus on improved social skills</p>
Brabant maatjes	3 employees	<p>Facebook group to meet new friends</p>	<p>They have more social media presence - active on Instagram and Facebook</p> <p>Organizes a lot of walks and helps you find a buddy</p> <p>Can participate in events online</p>	<p>Although Brabant maatjes helps you make new friends it appears that Avondje Uit assists more in improving social skills</p> <p>Participants involvement with events</p>
R-newt	Over 300 employees Split into	<p>Work in the same building as them</p> <p>More aimed at youth</p> <p>Organize activities and support people if they want to plan an event</p>	<p>Much bigger organization in multiple municipalities</p> <p>More staff and training - internships</p>	<p>More focus on social skills</p>

		Youth work training Support parents R-Newt kids and R-Newt youngsters Focus on developing the talent of young people		
International center Tilburg		Organize leisure events for internationals to try and help them make friends. Help and advice about settling in - can be online or in person appointment Dutch courses	They are more involved with the university, e.g. they are present at registration days Their café - place to come - Tuesday -Thursday to meet people	Participants more involved in the planning of the event.

**Summary:**

- Their focus on particular social skills and setting individual goals sets them aside because the other organizations seem just to assist in making new friends
- A lot smaller than some of the other organizations - go to more locations, increase team
- Their social media seems to be behind competitors
- Other organizations have online communities - could introduce this, so people can keep in touch between events
- Join us seems to be the main competition because they are also very oriented to to each person to help them grow
- How can they gain a competitive advantage (USP):
  - Options for in English - websites in English, English activity option, all websites for other organizations apart from the ICT were only available in Dutch

Figure 2: Research analysis of Avondje Uit's competitors