

## Team Overviews 2010

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### **Perfect Patch**

Nico Verhoef, Marty Verhey  
Brock University

Perfect Patch is a producer of organic strawberries. Using an exclusive raised-platform system to grow strawberries above the ground in a tray type structure, fruit is produced in an ideal growing medium within a controlled environment that provides optimized heat retention and pest control while using less water. The result is high quality, locally grown and organically certified berries produced at lower cost. Working with specialty grocery retailers, Perfect Patch intends to leverage government programs to champion local produce, and to market these berries as a premium product to individuals who will value their higher quality and reduced environmental impact.

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### **Mesh Canada**

Eric Warnke, Mark Fossen  
University of Alberta

Mesh Canada is building a network for delivering location-specific targeted advertising. The key target market for this service will be small businesses, such as independent coffee shops, who wish to provide their patrons with wireless internet access but lack the necessary in-house technical expertise and financial resources. Mesh Canada provides business owners with free wireless hotspots that let them offer secure and branded internet access to their customers, with all costs covered through the sale of carefully targeted advertising. The company has successfully implemented a pilot project network with over 20 hotspots supporting over 1,200 unique users each month.

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### **The Shelf.ca**

Chad Heron, Kyle Seaman  
University of Prince Edward Island

The Shelf.ca intends to develop products for university student unions that enable them to develop better student body engagement by helping students connect, share, and collaborate. The initial product is an online textbook exchange designed to eliminate the “Books for Sale” notes that have cluttered university bulletin boards forever. This exchange simplifies the process of listing and finding books for sale and integrates Amazon.ca to source books not available second-hand. Revenue is generated through Amazon affiliate sales and licensing to student unions, so that the Shelf.ca provides the book exchange to students at no cost to buyer or seller.

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**Empire Fences and Decking**

Siavosh Noruziaan  
University of Ottawa

Empire intends to establish a franchise for the building of fences and decks for residential customers across Canada. Recognizing that trades people with the skills and aptitudes required to build quality decks and fences rarely also make good sales people, Empire will separate these functions into two distinctly separate business functions, each “sub-contracted” to appropriate partners. Commissioned sales staff will use a 3-D design tool to document customer design requirements and confirm pricing, and the job will then be scheduled for the construction partner. Empire will monitor the entire end-to-end process to ensure on-time project completion and customer satisfaction.

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**Second Nature Aquatics**

Ashley Roulston, Robert Roulston  
University of Victoria

Second Nature Aquatics plans to captive-breed salt-water aquarium fish, specializing in species which have not to date been successfully commercially bred. The company is developing a novel waste filtration/recycling system which removes fish waste without harming the microscopic organisms in the water. This process reduces both feeding and handling costs to a level that is competitive with wild-caught fish. By eliminating the price premium that fish dealers have traditionally had to charge for captive bred fish, Second Nature Aquatics believes they can not only penetrate new markets, but also significantly reduce the environmental impact on these often at-risk species.

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**ConnectAd**

Simon Choy  
University of Western Ontario

ConnectAd is a social enterprise that connects non-profit organizations with donors through internet pay-per-click advertising. Leveraging the existing Google Grants program, which offers \$10,000 per month in free advertising to qualifying non-profits, ConnectAd will manage technically complex and time-consuming pay-per-click campaigns on behalf of their clients. The company’s target market is small-to-medium non profits in the social science, health, and environmental sectors, who have a compelling value proposition but limited resources to build awareness among their prospective donors. Since ConnectAd only receives a commission on funds raised, their clients can initiate such a campaign with no downside risk.