

Easy Grilling Business Plan

Matthew C. Albritton

University of Florida

Capstone

MMC 6936

Dr. Amy Zerba

January 24, 2014

## **History**

Matt Albritton founded Easy Grilling in 2014 to share his simplistic food grilling techniques with the world. In 2009, Albritton received a charcoal grill as a housewarming gift. Since he had never used a grill before, Albritton went online to find simple information, such as how to light the coals, and grilling times for different foods. To his surprise, the information was scattered and inconsistent.

At first, Albritton tried the “pyramid” method of lighting coals. It just didn’t work. Then, he tried to use match-light charcoal. Albritton wasn’t pleased with the taste of the food using this method. Finally, he discovered the key to lighting charcoal: a chimney starter. This inexpensive device makes every charcoal griller’s life easier by lighting coals to perfection every time.

Albritton also struggled to find consistent information on how to grill certain types of food well. Every website he looked at seemed to say something different. Instead of trying to follow one site’s directions specifically, he decided to experiment and come up with his own methods of grilling. After years of trial-and-error, Albritton has come up with grilling times, tips, and recipes that are straightforward and delicious.

Matt Albritton is now a veteran griller with over five years of experience, yet his methods are easy enough for anyone to understand. With Easy Grilling, Albritton intends to share his passion for grilled food while helping users avoid the confusion he faced while learning. There’s nothing better than producing a perfect meal on the grill for friends and family. Easy Grilling will help users do just that.

## **Mission Statement**

The purpose of Easy Grilling is to provide users with a reliable resource for grilling food. Our goal is to become the go-to website for beginners while providing useful tips and recipes for

experienced grillers. We provide our users everything they need to become knowledgeable in the culinary art of grilling. This includes the basics of grilling, straightforward recipes, and the proper tools needed to become an avid griller.

Every section of the Easy Grilling website is easy to understand with optimal visual support. The website includes high quality photographs and video support so users can see exactly what they are aiming to accomplish. Easy Grilling also focuses on short form content, with most videos having duration of less than five minutes. We intend to make sure there are no misunderstandings so that grillers of all skill levels will have the opportunity to create delectable meals at their leisure.

Users of Easy Grilling can expect to start grilling their own food after spending minimal time on the website. The site helps beginners understand the grilling process while teaching them how to maintain a grill with proper maintenance. All users will appreciate the simple recipes, whether the food is for a last minute dinner idea, a neighborhood cookout, or anything in between. Learning how to prepare food with Easy Grilling will undoubtedly save customers money by avoiding obscure ingredients. People looking to save money by eating out less can also turn to Easy Grilling for great meal ideas at home.

The primary goal for Easy Grilling is to become the leading website for amateur grilling enthusiasts. We want people to visit our site first when they have any questions about grilling. Our easy-to-understand approach in providing consistent grilling advice with high quality visual support will provide all of the necessary resources to accomplish this goal. Easy Grilling also sells many grilling accessories that are mentioned throughout the site, such as utensils, rubs, marinades, and apparel. Sales are completed using an online shop, and by providing links within each tip and recipe whenever a product is mentioned. Once the company becomes established,

we would like the site to become a social network for amateur grillers to discuss their own grilling techniques. This is accomplished using a comments section in each tip and recipe, and through an open forum.

### **Target Audience**

Easy Grilling's target audience is 18- to 34-year-olds who are interested in making their own high quality food. A 2012 study by the NPD Group revealed that the 18- to 34-year-old demographic has consistently reduced their visits to restaurants year after year since 2010. The same study revealed that these young adults are grilling at home more often. These trends are expected to continue over the next decade (Millennials', 2012, p. 2). We believe these audience members are the most likely to fit into the beginner or amateur categories of grilling. This creates a perfect scenario for Easy Grilling to attract this target audience.

Easy Grilling reaches out further to the target audience by focusing on high quality, short form video content. A 2012 Nielsen study shows that 18- to 34-year-old Americans represent 27% of consumers watching online video (Introducing, 2012). A separate Nielsen study from 2012 states that 95% of all videos streamed online are short form, or under twenty four minutes. 83% of the total time spent streaming online video is dedicated to the short form variety (Comprehensive, 2012, p. 70). The videos on our website are all under five minutes, which will help capitalize on the statistics from these Nielsen studies.

Easy Grilling's website will be optimized for mobile devices to better suite the target audience as well. The smartphone market is dominated by 18- to 34-year-olds, who make up 39% of all users. This target audience also makes up 33% of all tablet users (Introducing, 2012). We expect Easy Grilling's audience to take advantage of the mobile site by using their mobile devices while outside on the grill.

## **Products and Services**

The primary service of Easy Grilling is to provide grilling tips and recipes to users. This starts with a 'Basics' section. Visitors of the site are able to learn how to start a grill, decide how much charcoal to use (if applicable), figure out the appropriate grilling method (direct or indirect), and choose the correct grilling time using a chart. The 'Basics' section also includes regular maintenance advice, such as the minimal cleaning involved with a grill brush after each use, and the more thorough cleaning after 15-20 uses. Users are encouraged to take safety precautions and use grill covers to protect themselves and their grills.

The Easy Grilling 'Recipes' section focuses on simplicity, with minimal ingredients that everyone can find in the kitchen or at the local grocery store. Each recipe has no more than six ingredients. Recipes are organized by type of food, such as Beef, Brats & Dogs, Pork, Poultry, Seafood, and Fruits & Vegetables. There is a 'Recipe of the Week' section as well, where the company picks a popular recipe to be featured. Special guests are invited to share their favorite recipes in this section. Users are encouraged to rate and comment on each recipe.

Easy Grilling sells many grilling accessories through an online shop. Categories include Utensils, Marinades & Rubs, and Apparel. All products are branded with the Easy Grilling name. Many products feature unique designs to better satisfy the taste of the target audience.

Starting with Utensils, all products are stainless steel with wooden handles for safety purposes. A set is offered for \$24.99, which includes an all purpose knife, grilling fork, spatula, set of tongs, basting brush, cleaning brush, four skewers, and eight corn holders. Individual pieces are sold as well. Heavy duty grilling forks, spatulas, tongs, and cleaning brushes sell for \$11.99 each. These individual items are larger and more durable than those offered in the set. A charcoal chimney starter is offered as a utensil as well, and sells for \$17.99.

Marinades & Rubs are offered for each food category of Beef, Brats & Dogs, Pork, Poultry, Seafood, and Fruits & Vegetables. Each rub comes in a 6.5-ounce plastic container and sells for \$9.99. Marinades come in a 16-ounce plastic bottle and sell for \$7.99. All Marinades & Rubs fit perfectly into the Easy Grilling theme, where users will only need to add the product to a certain type of food, let it sit in the refrigerator for a specified amount of time, then grill without any addition ingredients.

Apparel such as aprons, grilling mitts, and t-shirts are offered in the Easy Grilling online shop. All apparel features the Easy Grilling brand and a flashy design. Aprons sell for \$14.99-\$24.99. Grilling mitts sell for \$14.99 for a pair. T-shirts sell for \$14.99.

### **Competition**

Easy Grilling's primary competitor is a website called [grilling-made-easy.com](http://grilling-made-easy.com). This site has been in existence since 2010. The site offers grilling advice to amateurs, with sections including 'How To's of Grilling,' 'Easy Recipes,' and 'Hot Stuff!' The 'Hot Stuff!' section features a newsletter, a contact page, and a blog. The site does not have any products for sale. One of the site's strengths is the detailed information in the 'How-To's of Grilling' section. The site talks about many food types such as burgers, chicken/poultry, steak & beef, and dogs & sausage. Each one of these sections feature information about what to look for when buying specific types of meat, nutritional facts, and safety information. Another strength of the site is the [grilling time and temperature chart](#). This chart is straightforward and quite thorough.

The weaknesses of the [grilling-made-easy.com](http://grilling-made-easy.com) site starts with the visual content. It is not aesthetically pleasing. There are only two pictures on the entire site – one on the [home page](#) and one on the [tools/accessories](#) page. The site is extremely text heavy, and there is no video content at all. Another weakness is the lack of recipes. There are nine total recipes, and four of those are

for turkey burgers. A final weakness is the fact that the site has not been updated since 2011. The creators of the site seemed to want to rely on the site's users to add content, but that apparently did not happen.

Another competitor of Easy Grilling is [grilling.com](http://grilling.com), which is run by the Kingsford Company, best known for their charcoal. Kingsford was founded in the 1920s. Grilling.com has been in existence since 2011. This site includes many elements that will be featured on Easy Grilling's website, such as high quality visual content, a social community, and a responsive mobile design. The site is not dedicated to beginner and amateur grillers however. Much of the site's content would be overwhelming for a beginner. Surprisingly, [grilling.com](http://grilling.com) does not include an online shop for Kingsford products. The site mentions using the company's products frequently, but there are no links to make any purchases.

One of [grilling.com](http://grilling.com)'s strengths is the inclusion of [video](#). The site features many short form videos primarily dedicated to grilling tips. Another site strength is the social community. The site welcomes comments and ratings from users. There are also sections that feature blog posts, pictures and videos from members of the Q Crew, which is Kingsford's online grilling community.

The main weakness of [grilling.com](http://grilling.com) is the fact that it is not dedicated to beginners and amateurs and may actually turn those users away. Many of the recipes have an overwhelming amount of ingredients. The tips are often from professionals and would be difficult for an amateur to pull off. The content dedicated to beginners is buried deep in the site and is difficult to find. Another weakness of [grilling.com](http://grilling.com) is the fact that the site is sluggish. Too much animation on the desktop site causes slow load times. Errors are present when using the mobile

site as well. A usability test using the latest versions of iOS Chrome and Safari found that recipes would not load on the mobile site, giving the user a “504 Gateway Time-out” error.

### **Business Model**

In addition to selling products on the online store, Easy Grilling would like to generate revenue by entering the catering business. Catering services will be offered in the state of Florida for all types of events. Customers will be able to browse the Easy Grilling website to decide what recipes look appealing, then order those recipes. The customer will also be able to decide whether they want their food prepared ahead of time, or grilled live at the event. Matt Albritton, Easy Grilling’s founder, will be available to perform live food preparation. The catering venture will not only produce profits directly, but it will also help generate traffic to the website for those who are enjoying the food.

Food trucks have become popular with our target audience. In that regard, we plan on entering this aspect of the food business. Food trucks do well during lunch hours in urban areas with high concentrations of offices. They are also successful near popular bars and clubs. Our target audience also attends many sporting events, concerts, and music festivals. Easy Grilling’s food truck will target all of these highly populated areas to sell our food and services.

### **Marketing**

Easy Grilling will dedicate a good amount of time to marketing online. The target audience of 18- to 34-year-olds is very active on social media sites. Word of mouth is a powerful tool in the era of Social Customer Relationship Management, and social media is a great avenue to promote a new business. We will also spend time on cooking and grilling sites’ comment sections and blogs to get the word out.

Easy Grilling will dedicate marketing efforts to live demonstrations. Grilling is a popular activity at sporting event tailgate parties. Our target audience also has a large presence at these events. We plan on setting up a canopy tent at many major college and professional sports tailgates to perform live demonstrations promoting Easy Grilling. These live demonstrations will also be performed at the same locations mentioned for the food truck venture, such as at office parks, concerts, music festivals, and outside of bars and clubs. We will offer free food samples, products, and pass out promotional flyers to generate traffic to our website, catering service, and food truck meals.

## References

- A comprehensive picture of digital video and TV advertising: viewing, budget share shift and effectiveness. (2012). *The Nielsen Company*. Retrieved January 21, 2014, from <http://www.iab.net/media/file/Digital-Video-and-TV-Advertising-Viewing-Budget-Share-Shift-and-Effectiveness-FINAL.pdf>
- Introducing generation C: Americans 18-34 are the most connected. (2012). *The Nielsen Company*. Retrieved January 21, 2014, from <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/newswire/2012/introducing-generation-c.html>
- Millennials' surprises. (2012). *The NPD Group, Inc.* Retrieved January 21, 2014, from [https://www.npd.com/lps/pdf/Millennial\\_WP.pdf](https://www.npd.com/lps/pdf/Millennial_WP.pdf)