

Creekside Kennels

Organizational Profile

P.1 Organizational Description

P.1.a Organizational Environment

- (1) Creekside Kennels is a family-owned business that provides pet boarding. Over 90% of the pets boarded are dogs; the rest consists of cats, and an occasional bird, hamster, rabbit, or other small pet. We do not board reptiles because of the sensitivity of these pets to changes in their environment.

We do not provide pick-up or delivery service. Pets are delivered to Creekside Kennels and picked up by the owners.

We are not qualified to provide veterinary services.

- (2) Creekside Kennels' culture is defined by our mission, vision, and values:

Mission: Provide quality pet care at a reasonable price

Vision: We strive to be the best, not the biggest

Values: Honesty and integrity in dealing with customers and suppliers

Focus on customer satisfaction and loyalty

- (3) The business is located on a 7.5 acre site that includes the owners' home and the owners perform all functions associated with operating the business. Prior to opening Creekside Kennels, the owners, through education and work experience, developed the expertise required to operate a pet care facility.

Creekside Kennels has no full or part-time employees. On those occasions when both owners must be absent overnight, temporary help, usually a college student, is hired to take care of essential functions (feeding, cleaning, etc.). Special arrangements concerning pet drop-off and pick-up are made with customers to minimize the responsibilities of the temporary help. Written instructions are prepared for the individual covering what must be done and how it is to be done. The individual is brought in a day early to review the instructions and walk through the process.

- (4) Creekside Kennels has 30 outside runs for dogs – sixteen 4 ft. x 10 ft. runs, ten 6 ft. x 10 ft. runs, and four 10 ft. x 10 ft. runs. All runs have a doghouse and are under a solid, carport style roof. A perimeter fence provides double fencing for the runs and the area is locked for additional security. We also have 24 stainless steel cages ranging from 24 in. x 24 in. x 22 in. to 48 in. x 30 in. x 28 in. for dogs that need to be kept inside for all or part of the time.

A room, separate from the dog boarding area, has been set up for cats. We have ten 24 in. x 24 in. x 32 in. stainless steel cages equipped with a resting shelf in this area. Space is available for other pets such as birds, hamsters, rabbits, etc. The owner is expected to provide cages and food for these pets.

We provide the food for dogs and cats as long as the pet is fed a standard food. The pet is fed the same food it is fed at home. We have the capability of storing a wide variety of food. The owner is expected to provide the food if the pet is on a special or prescription diet.

- (5) The only regulatory requirements affecting Creekside Kennels are the county requirements concerning zoning and business licensing. We are in compliance with these requirements.

P.1.b. Organizational Relationships

- (1) Since the owners perform all functions associated with operating the business, there is no formal organizational structure or governance system. Temporary employees are trained by whichever owner is available and, in effect, reports to both.
- (2) Creekside Kennels’ customers are pet owners who board their pets. We serve four market segments: Dog owners requiring short-term boarding, Dog owners requiring long-term boarding (a month or longer), Cat owners, and Owners of other pets. Dog owners requiring short-term boarding is, by far, the largest market segment. Individual customers may be part of multiple market segments.

Key customer requirements and expectations are: Adequate boarding facilities, A knowledgeable staff, Secure boarding facilities, Reasonable costs, and Convenient hours. These requirements are the same for all market segments. The order of importance varies from customer to customer.

- (3) Primary suppliers:

Midlothian Industries	Disinfectants, deodorizers, and other cleaning supplies
Jarvis Fencing and Landscaping	Customized runs and replacement fence panels
Manchester Quarry	Gravel
City Feed and Seed	Dog food
FastPrint	Business forms

- (4) Supplier communications are in person or by telephone. No formal supplier partnerships have been established. Midlothian Industries and Jarvis Fencing and Landscaping offer discounts and provide technical advice. Midlothian Industries, Jarvis Fencing and Landscaping, Manchester Quarry, and FastPrint are sole suppliers. Although not a sole supplier, City Feed and Seed provides discounts. Creekside Kennels feeds the same food that the pet receives at home. Since City Feed and Seed

does not stock all brands, we have to buy feed from multiple suppliers. We do, however, buy as much as possible from City Feed and Seed.

P.2 Organizational Challenges

P.2.a Competitive Environment

(1) Nine other boarding kennels operate within the immediate area – a radius of approximately 15 miles. Another nine boarding kennels would be included if the radius were expanded to approximately 30 miles. Some of these kennels offer services that are not provided by Creekside Kennels. These additional services include indoor or indoor/outdoor runs, play areas, and day care. We have decided that the cost/benefit of offering these services is not in the best interest of Creekside Kennels.

Many of the veterinarians in the area also offer boarding services. In most cases, this is a secondary or support service. Their facilities usually consist of cages similar to Creekside Kennels' indoor facility. A few veterinarians have built runs and place greater emphasis on boarding.

- (2) Customer satisfaction is the principle factor that determines Creekside Kennels' success. Customer satisfaction results in repeat business and favorable recommendations which are essential for ongoing success. Factors affecting customer satisfaction are: Adequate and secure boarding facilities, Cost control leading to reasonable rates, and Flexible hours enabling customers to drop off and pick up their pets when convenient.
- (3) Benchmark data are not readily available. Local kennels are reluctant to share information. Some information can be obtained from customers who have previously boarded at other kennels.

Some additional information is available through the publications of national boarding associations. Most of this information, however, is directed toward luxury kennels in large urban areas, and is, therefore, not applicable to Creekside Kennels or its direct competitors.

P.2.b. Strategic Context

The key strategic challenges Creekside Kennels must meet to insure organizational sustainability are to ensure customer satisfaction and increase profits. Customer satisfaction is essential for increasing repeat business and word-of-mouth recommendations. Creekside Kennels holds a competitive advantage in two of the factors affecting customer satisfaction. Its lean organization enables the kennel to operate with reasonable rates and the home business environment allows us to provide flexible hours that accommodate customers' schedules. Creekside Kennels' home business environment also provides a competitive advantage in terms of customer

confidence. Many customers feel more comfortable leaving their pets when they know someone will be present at night and throughout the weekend.

P.2.c. Performance Improvement System

There is no formal performance improvement system. Improvement opportunities are identified by a variety of methods (customer comment, owner dissatisfaction with process or results, supplier suggestion, etc.). The owners discuss potential improvements and decide to evaluate or implement. Results are reviewed by the owners who determine if the change should be made permanent.