



# **Business Plan**

“With every end, starts a new beginning...”

Ethan Clift  
33 North Harwinton Avenue  
Terryville, CT 06786  
(860)314-2777  
(860)314-2785  
[ecefamilytree@gmail.com](mailto:ecefamilytree@gmail.com)

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>General Company Description</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Mission Statement.....	3
Business Description.....	3-4
Products.....	3-4
<b>Marketing Plan</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Advertising.....	5
Market Industry.....	5
Target Customer.....	6
PEST Analysis.....	7
Swot Analysis.....	8
<b>Operational Plan</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Production.....	9
Location.....	9
Legal Environment.....	10
<b>Management and Organization</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Financial Plan</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Start-up Expenses.....	13
<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Works Cited</b> .....	<b>18</b>



# Executive Summary

Kazoku Tree is an innovative e-commerce company whose goal is to aid grieving family members by giving them a way to breath new life with the passing of a beloved person. Taking the ashes from cremation, we add an environmentally friendly amount to a specific soil in order to grow a potted bonsai plant. We focus on maintaining the spirituality of the Japanese culture of cremation and bonsai trees. Working as an LLC, Kazoku Tree produces a unique product that provides support, along with spiritual comfort to its consumers. This product will be available at an online location, due to its highly customized manufacturing.

The price per unit to manufacture the Kazoku Tree is estimated to be \$5.00. Including shipping costs, it is planned to be sold for \$75 per unit. Acknowledging that the cost of cremation, burial, funeral and memorial services for a lost loved one can be costly and life insurance is often scarce, Kazoku Tree has determined to sell the product at a competitive price in order to not only be more attractive to consumers, but also to be empathetic to the fact that a grieving family already has a lot to worry about, and financials should not be another worry they need to be concerned with.

Our target audience includes those who are conscious about their impact on the environment and want a safe way to memorialize the loved ones they have lost.



# General Company Description

## Mission Statement-

The goal of Kazoku Tree is to help families on their path to recovery, following the death of a loved one, while helping the ever depleting environment.

## Business Description-

The word “Bon-sai” is a Japanese term, which, literally translated, means “planted in a container”. This art form is derived from an ancient Chinese horticultural practice, part of which was then redeveloped under the influence of Japanese Zen Buddhism. It has been around for well over a thousand years. The ultimate goal of growing a Bonsai is to create a miniaturized but realistic representation of nature in the form of a tree. According to its culture, Bonsai is enlightenment and brings peace. Connecting its spiritual history, recently popular living memorials, and environmental well-being, Kazoku Tree has developed a mixture of soil and cremation ashes for potted plants that will be sold to help bonsai trees thrive. Customers will be able to see the bonsai grow and will forever have living memory of their loved one. Through intensive research, it has been found that adding cremation ashes to the environment, such as planting them or spreading them, makes the soil around it more alkaline (higher pH level). This is harmful to surrounding plant life as most plants need soil that is neutral to slightly acidic. The soil that is produced by Kazoku Tree insures a neutral to slightly acidic atmosphere for surrounding plant life, but specifically the right level of pH to grow a flourishing bonsai tree.



## Company Goals-

- Product expansion to include custom trees and shapes
- Expand in partnerships with other manufacturers to offer compatibility with a larger market
- Expand to offer bonsai care products and services

## Company Objectives-

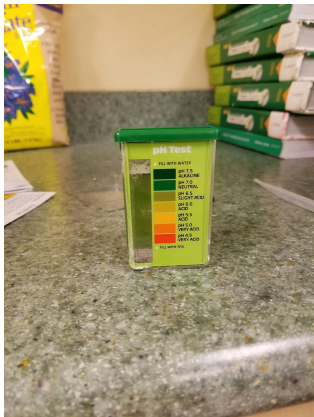
- Achievement of 95% customer satisfaction with minimal product returns
- To expand beyond an ecommerce business within the first year by securing partnerships with the florist departments of large stores such as Stop and Shop and Whole Foods



# Product

## Kazoku Tree Soil

Made through various testing, an organic mixture has been achieved using different eco friendly additives. Reference the pictures below to see the transformation of the soil we manufacture.



Components: Bonsai Soil

pH Level: 5.5

Neutral to slightly acidic



Components: Bonsai Soil and Ashes

pH Level: 7.5

Alkaline

# Marketing Plan

## Advertising

Through the use of social media and networking, we will explore Twitter and Instagram with the use of hashtags such as #nature, #family, #environment so that users will find our company when searching related topics. Our Facebook company page will be available when people search words or phrases that may relate to our business. This page will also have links to access our webpage and purchasing locations of our product. Ads will also be added to this Facebook page as another low budget advertising idea to increase knowledge about our product and induce sales. Google ads will also be explored as an additional low budget advertising option.

Due to the customer oriented nature of our business, advertising within local businesses and restaurants would be beneficial in spreading the company name. Placing poster up in stores or getting small ads on menus will not cost the company a lot and will reach many people in the area.

Advertising with local funeral homes could be a possibility as well because of

## Competition

Through research, it has be found that some companies offer a similar service at online locations. It was discovered that a company that offers plantable cremation urns and another one that sells soil to be mixed with ashes, very similar to our company's plan. Although, Kazoku



Tree differs from these other company as it offers a way to grow potted plants, as the other company specializes in outdoor plants and trees, in memorial of a lost loved one, specifically the growth of the spiritually healing bonsai tree. The soil produced by Kazoku tree has been manufactured specifically for the well-being and growth of bonsai trees.

## Target Customer

Kazoku Tree worked to market their product around people who have lost a loved one and are looking to memorialize them in a environmentally friendly way. Our target market includes those who are conscious about their impact on the environment, but also understand and respect the spiritual connection of the bonsai tree with life and regrowth. Our product will be available online, and through multiple advertising campaigns on social media platforms we will be able to reach a large market of potential customers.





## Pest Analysis

Political	Economical
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Environmentally friendly manufacturing</li> <li>-Not harmful to ecosystems or environment</li> <li>-No wars or laws conflicting with product</li> <li>-Do not need government funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-certain countries will be able to use this more than others based on seasonality</li> <li>-Kazoku Tree could potentially create new jobs</li> <li>-Room for expansion</li> <li>-Cost will be competitive with regular plants</li> <li>-Requires work to maintain</li> <li>-Trees last a long time</li> </ul>
Social	Technological
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Helps families get through the mourning process</li> <li>-People want a special way to remember their loved ones</li> <li>-Accessible to a large variety of people</li> <li>-People want to help the environment</li> <li>-Kid friendly</li> <li>- Can help teach kids how to deal with death</li> <li>-A variety of products</li> <li>-Living memorials becoming more popular</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A lot of other competitors in a larger market</li> <li>-An environmental business</li> <li>-Ability to grow and enter larger market</li> <li>- Can survive almost anywhere</li> <li>-No electricity or technology needed</li> </ul>



## SWOT Analysis

Strength	Weakness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Helps people deal with death</li> <li>- A modern company that can easily utilize social media</li> <li>- Has potential to be trendy- bonsai trees, relaxation, etc.</li> <li>-Helps the environment</li> <li>-Provides an alternative means for memorializing passed family members</li> <li>-Bonsai trees live hundreds of years.</li> <li>-Growth in public interest of living memorials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Starting with little to no funding</li> <li>- Lack of experience with starting a new business</li> <li>- Inability to mass produce</li> <li>-Complicated process to grow. I.e. needs a very specific type of soil,need rocks in soil, drainage, roots need extensive cutting.</li> <li>-High maintenance for customers, a lot of trimming, pruning, and bending/shaping of branches.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opportunity to be customizable</li> <li>-Opportunity to</li> <li>- Opportunity to expand advertising through social media</li> <li>- Opportunity to be popular among many different people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Other tree-related companies</li> <li>-Small market</li> <li>-Risk of people killing the plants</li> <li>-Product is only a one time purchase</li> <li>-Product requires maintenance on the customer's part</li> <li>-Cost to produce may be high</li> </ul>



# Operational Plan

## Production

The most important part of our company is the production of the Kazoku Trees. In our building, there will be stations for receiving, packaging, and a place for distribution trucks to pick-up the product. As the company expands past an e-commerce company and into a larger corporation, machines will be purchased to produce the Kazoku Tree in larger quantities for quicker return to the customers.

## Location

Kazoku Tree intends to lease industrial space in Norfolk, Connecticut, which will allow the company to run the e-commerce functions and manufacturing needs of the company in one building. This location is convenient to major retailers and transportation routes for distribution.

## Legal Environment

Kazoku Tree has been organized as a Limited Liability Corporation and intends to operate under all zoning and building code requirements of the city of Norfolk. Insurance policies will be purchased to protect the company from theft, damage, natural disasters, and liability risk. At this time, the company has not pursued trademarks, copyrights, or patents, but will be looking into it in the future.



## Management and Organization



**Maria Cesare**

CEO



**Ethan Clift**

Creative Director

Owner

Social Media/Booth



**Doug Thorne**

Product Development

Marketing



**Alex Beaulieu**

Product Development

Packaging



**Kaitlyn Levesque**

Finances

Supervisor



**Brian Turner**

Website Development



**Zack Johnson**

Marketing Director



Social Media/Booth



# Financial Plan

## Startup Expenses

### *Sources of Capital*

#### **Owner's' Investment (Name and personal ownership)**

Ethan Clift 100%

#### **Total Investment**

#### **Investors**

Investor 1 Kaitlyn Levesque

Investor 2 Jim DiStasio

**Total Bank Loans \$250**

### *Startup Expenses*

#### **Capital Equipment List**

Furniture \$50

Other

**Total Capital Equipment \$50**



**Opening Inventory**

Material	\$73.80
Packaging	\$17.02
<b>Total Inventory</b>	<b>\$90.82</b>

**Advertising and Promotional Expenses**

Advertising	\$50
Printing	
<b>Total Advertising/Promotional Expenses</b>	<b>\$50</b>

**Reserve for Contingencies** **\$100**

**Sources of Capital**

Owners' and other investments	\$250
Revenue	
<b>Total Source of Funds</b>	<b>\$250</b>



**Startup Expenses**

Capital equipment	\$50
Opening inventory	\$90.82
Advertising/promotional expenses	\$50
Contingency fund	<i>\$100</i>
<b>Total Startup Expenses</b>	<b>\$290.82</b>

**Owners**

Ethan Clift





# Appendices

- Graveyard overcrowding

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-32165261>

- Pictures of graveyard crowding

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/ap/article-2796774/PICTURED-Cemetery-overcrowding-world.html>

- Statistics on population growth and death rate

<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jan/21/death-in-the-city-what-happens-cemeteries-full-cost-dying> (stats on population and death growth)

- Environmental impacts of burials

<http://www.sevenponds.com/after-death/environmental-impact-of-death>

- Lowering sodium levels in soil

<http://basicknowledge101.com/pdf/Sodium%20Affected%20Soils.pdf>

- Environmental factors of ashes

<http://www.letyourlovegrow.com/about/our-organic-mixture-eco-friendly-solution/>

- Study showing the environmental impact of scattering ashes

<http://www.stlmag.com/Life-After-Death/>

## **Launch Pad questions and answers:**

What is the problem or opportunity you have identified?

Unfortunately, the passing of a loved one is something that every person has to deal with eventually in their life and some living memorials can be harmful to the environment.

Provide a description of your proposed solution or innovation (product or service) and how it is both innovation and effective

Our solution to aiding people with the passing of their loved ones is to provide them with an eco-friendly, long lasting living memorial. Kazoku Tree offers a special soil mixture that contains a loved one's ashes and a seed to grow a potted bonsai tree. Caring for and watching a bonsai tree grow allows the customer to see that as one life ends another one can begin in its memory.

How does your project address the overall Expo Fest theme of Empathy by Design?

The loss of a loved one is a painful, emotional event for people and they often need healthy ways to grieve. Kazoku Tree was developed with these mourning people in mind and provides a



peaceful way for everyone to remember their loved one. They can care for their personal bonsai tree and watch it grow, knowing that it contains a little part of their family. It provides solace in a time of sorrow.

Describe how you plan to collect and apply data to support the need for and relevance of your proposed solution.

We plan to research cremation statistics and information to prove that there is a large market for Kazoku Tree. We are also working on finding data that shows grave-overcrowding is an issue and cremation is the solution. Specifically, we are trying to see if there are trends related to what people do with cremation ashes. We will show how the popular trend of scattering ashes is harmful to the environment. Our product is in place of scattering them, and aims to protect the environment. Kazoku Tree intends to offer an eco-friendly solution to cremation ashes harming ecosystems. We plan to show the science behind the harmful effects of ashes and how our soil combats that.

Is there any particular aspect of the project with which your team would like assistance or feedback?

Our team was having a little trouble with the financial part of our company; a little feedback on that would be helpful.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your project?

We believe the name of our company is an important aspect. "Kazoku" in Japanese means "Family." So our company name translates to "Family Tree." Our original name was just "Family Tree," and we decided to change it to align with the calming, Japanese culture of bonsai trees.



## Works Cited

"22 Marketing Ideas For Small Businesses With Limited Budgets." 22 Low-Budget Marketing Ideas For Small Businesses. Web. 12 Jan. 2016.

"Bonsai 101 | Make: DIY Projects, How-Tos, Electronics, Craft." Make DIY Projects and Ideas for Makers. Web. 24 Mar. 2016.

"The Spirit & Philosophy of Bonsai and Saburo Kato." The Spirit & Philosophy of Bonsai and Saburo Kato. Web. 23 Mar. 2016.

"Types of Business Structures." Types of Business Structures. Web. 24 Mar. 2016.

"Trees." Quality Bonsai & Supplies. Web. 24 Mar. 2016.

Regan, Tom. "All About Bonsai." *All About Bonsai*. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Mar. 2016. <<http://www.bonsaiboy.com/catalog/allaboutbonsai.html>>.

<http://www.kaizenbonsai.com/bonsai-tree-care-information/choosing-soil-for-bonsai-trees>  
"Choosing Soil for Bonsai Trees." *Kaizen Bonsai*. Kaizen Bonsai Ltd, Jan. 2011. Web. 26 Apr. 2016.

<<http://www.kaizenbonsai.com/bonsai-tree-care-information/choosing-soil-for-bonsai-trees#SOIL-pH>>.

