

## **Slightly Obsessed Business Plan**

### **1. Summary**

**Name:** Slightly Obsessed Studio, also known as Slightly Obsessed.

**Business Location and Plan Description:** Slightly Obsessed Studio is the sole-proprietor-owned business of Sigrid Ellis, located at [deleted].

**Product, Market, and Competition:** Slightly Obsessed Studio produces comic books and webcomics for profit.

**Management:** Sigrid Ellis is the sole manager and employee of Slightly Obsessed Studio and makes all management decisions.

**Summary of Financial Projections:** It is likely that the first three years revenue will not result in net profit, due to expected expenditures exceeding expected gains. Subsequently, Slightly Obsessed will earn page rates or profits from publication by others as the individual contracts stipulate, and will share profits on self-published work with the artists.

**Business Goals:** During 2009, Slightly Obsessed will publish one original graphic novel and six mini-comics. By 2011 Slightly Obsessed will have published an additional three original graphic novels and two full-length limited series, as well as a projected fourteen-to-twenty-four mini-comics. Slightly Obsessed Studio will continue publishing original work while adding work-for-hire.

### **2. Product, Market, and Competition**

Slightly Obsessed works with independent artists to produce high-quality comics written by Sigrid Ellis and either published by others or published by Slightly Obsessed. The stories are in a variety of genres, including but not limited to superhero stories, science fiction, fantasy, horror, and romance.

These original comics will be produced in four forms; graphic novels, ongoing serial, mini-comics, and webcomics.

Graphic novels are complete stories, general 72-200 pages in length. They can be hardcover or softcover and are usually glue-bound. Graphic novels have an ISBN and are shelved with hardcover or other over-sized books.

An ongoing serial is a story told in chapters or parts, each part being sold as a separate issue of the comic. A single issue is softcover (paper or cardstock,) 6 5/8 " by 10 1/4 " (U.S.), staple bound, between 18 and 24 pages in length. Each issue in a story ends with a cliffhanger or hook to encourage readers to buy the next issue. A story is between two and six issues long, generally, though some may run longer. A comic title may consist of only one story and then end; a limited series. Or the title may have story after story published in consecutive issues, depending on the demand and strength of sales.

A mini-comic is a small creator-published comic. Mini-comics are frequently photocopied and hand-stapled, usually four to sixteen pages in length. They are usually self-contained short stories.

Webcomics are ongoing serials published on a website. There is no set standard yet for what a webcomic looks like, how often it is updated, or what its story structure needs to be. Slightly Obsessed Studio will publish 48-112 page stories in blocks of four or six pages a week. If customer feedback indicates a particular title is well-received, Ms. Ellis will write a sequel.

The comics industry is dominated by the "Big Two," Marvel Comics and DC Comics. But these companies publish comic books about superheroes almost exclusively. Slightly Obsessed Studio produces a variety of genres, filling the niches not addressed by the Big Two. In the independent market, many comics are by a single writer-artist or a pair of one writer and one artist. This limits the scope and style of work produced. Slightly Obsessed Studio pairs high-quality black-and-white art by a variety of talented artists with crisp writing and original characters. While many other businesses publish comics for a short while, they fold quickly due to an inability to produce work in a timely fashion. Slightly Obsessed provides reliable product by producing finished works well in advance of publication goals and deadlines. External publishers have scripts and pages on schedule. The audience for webcomics and self-published works has product when they expect it. This reliability is key to building Slightly Obsessed Studio's audience and market share.

Slightly Obsessed Studio sends submissions to current, active small presses that accept unsolicited submissions. This is a rapidly changing situation, as many small presses surface for a short while and then disappear. At the time of this business plan, Slightly Obsessed submits comics to:

Dark Horse Comics  
10956 SE Main Street  
Milwaukie, OR 97222

SLG Publishing  
P.O. Box 26427

San Jose, CA 95159-6427

AiT/Planet Lar  
2034 47th Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94116

Penny-Farthing Press, Inc.  
2000 West Sam Houston Parkway South, Suite 550  
Houston, Texas 77042

After Hours Press  
buddy@buddyscalera.com  
(No physical address provided for submissions)

Avatar Press  
515 N. Century Blvd.  
Rantoul, IL 61866

Image Comics  
1942 University Ave.  
Suite 305  
Berkeley, CA 94704

Antarctic Press  
7272 Wurzbach #204  
San Antonio, TX 78240

Additional publishers will be contacted as opportunities present.

Slightly Obsessed's market consists of independent-thinking young adults with an interest in art, in novelty, in niche entertainment, or in comics. In terms of the Claritas Prizm segmentation system, Slightly Obsessed Studio will sell products to Young Digerati, Bohemian Mix, Movers & Shakers, Up & Comers, Boomtown Singles, Young Influentials, and American Dreams.

### **3. Management**

Sigrid Ellis will write all the comics produced by Slightly Obsessed Studio.

In addition to writing, Ms. Ellis finds and hires the artists with whom she collaborates. Artists are found primarily through searching online portfolio sites such as DeviantArt ([www.deviantart.com](http://www.deviantart.com)), Panel and Pixel ([www.panelandpixel.com](http://www.panelandpixel.com)), ComicSpace ([www.comicspace.com](http://www.comicspace.com)), and Whitechapel ([www.freakangels.com/whitechapel](http://www.freakangels.com/whitechapel)). Ms. Ellis also finds artists through face-to-face networking at comic conventions and science fiction conventions.

The artists' contracts typically share the creator rights evenly, with equal rights to royalties (other than profits from sales) and merchandising. Additional payment in the form of upfront page rates or a larger percentage of profits from sales for the artist may be negotiated on an individual basis. These negotiations take into account the artist's experience, professional standing, and the type of art they will provide.

Ms. Ellis owns and manages the Slightly Obsessed Studio website, [www.slightlyobsessedstudio.com](http://www.slightlyobsessedstudio.com). The website advertises Slightly Obsessed Studio's work. It also promotes the artists with whom Slightly Obsessed contracts. Webcomics will be hosted at [www.slightlyobsessedstudio.com](http://www.slightlyobsessedstudio.com). The website will, in the future, offer means to buy titles, art, and other merchandise from Slightly Obsessed. The web presence is a vital part of Slightly Obsessed's marketing and promotion. Should the website component expand significantly, Ms. Ellis will contract with a website manager. Such a contractor will be paid out of money earned by Slightly Obsessed and will count as an expense, reducing profits paid to the artists and Ms. Ellis.

Slightly Obsessed Studio finds its market through diligent promotion. Ms. Ellis advertises Slightly Obsessed's titles and merchandise on internet social networking sites such as Twitter, LiveJournal, and ComicSpace, as well as forums devoted to the discussion of comics such as iFanboy, Fantastic Fangirl, CBR, Alert Nerd, Whitechapel, and The Beat. The specific sites will change over time as new websites appear and old ones lose readership.

Ms. Ellis attends comic conventions to network with creators, publishers, and to promote the titles to readers. This is done through renting a table in Artists' Alley and using eye-catching visuals such as banners, posters, and promotional flyers to attract foot traffic. Once the reader is at the table, Ms. Ellis promotes the products with flyers, takeaways, and recommendations from respected names in the field as well as the comics themselves.

As Slightly Obsessed Studio makes greater profits, some portion of the income will be spent on buying advertising space at high-traffic comic book review websites.

Ms. Ellis markets titles through Diamond Comics Distributors, whose *Previews* Catalog is the premiere venue for advertising comics to comic retailers. To support the *Previews* entries, Ms. Ellis sends additional advertising materials in the form of posters and flyers to key retailers across the country. These key retailers include, but are not limited to:

Mile High Comics  
2151 W. 56th Ave.  
Denver, CO 80221

Comix Experience  
305 Divisadero Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117

Isotope  
326 Fell St  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Midtown Comics Times Square  
200 W 40th Street  
New York, NY 10018

Forbidden Planet  
840 Broadway  
New York, NY 1003

Dreamhaven Books  
912 W Lake Street  
Minneapolis MN 55408

#### **4. Financial Projections**

Slightly Obsessed Studio earns income six ways:

1. Page rates paid to Slightly Obsessed by outside publishers. These vary wildly, from \$10.00 / page up to \$35.00 / page. Smaller publishers pay less than larger; unknown writers earn less than established names.
2. Royalties from works published by others. A percentage of profits from sales, after the publishing company has recouped their expense and taken their profits.
3. Sales of self-published works.
4. Sales of webcomics.
5. Merchandise sales.
6. Sale of original scripts.

Slightly Obsessed will pay expenses out of any income accrued. Expenses include but are not limited to: page rates to artists, purchase of promotional materials, support of websites and internet presence, attendance at conventions, printing and publishing, marketing via Previews, advertising on websites, and postal expenses.

Slightly Obsessed negotiates profit sharing after expenses with each artist as stipulated by contract. Typically the artist will receive 50%-65% of any profit, depending on the artist's experience, professional standing, and the type of art they will provide.

Expenses for the first three years are projected to exceed income. Expenses beyond income are paid for out of Ms. Ellis's capital and out of any artistic grants, loans, or prizes she acquires for Slightly Obsessed.

#### **5. Business Goals**

2009: Publish or have published by others one or more original graphic novels. Establish a webcomic. Self-publish at least four mini-comics.

2010: Continue webcomics. Self-publish at least six mini-comics. Publish or have published one original graphic novel and one limited series.

2011: Continue webcomics and investigate then-current market for publishing on the web for profit. Self-publish four or more mini-comics. Publish or have published one original graphic novel and at least one limited series.

2012: Continue webcomics. Publish or have published one original graphic novel and at least one limited series. Have an ongoing title published by one of the successful mid-size publishers such as Image or Dark Horse or their equivalent at the time.

2013: Evaluate webcomics for profitability vs. expense and time. Continue webcomics if they are profitable. Continue ongoing title. Have published one original graphic novel and one limited series. Do work-for-hire on a proprietary title at Marvel, DC, or their competitors.