Appendix XX: Extended version of interview competitors
1. Friends of Design

- Can you describe Friends of Design in a few sentences?
  “Friends of Design is a digital design academy situated in the heart of Cape Town. We focus on teaching industry aligned software mostly from Adobe about also Apple and some general design courses.”

- Can you mention a few words that characterize Friends of Design?
  Hands-on training, very industry aligned, flexible with individual courses, latest soft- and hardware for the best training experience and highly skilled trainers.

- How many employees do you have?
  “We have got 7 full employed staff members and a whole load of 12 freelance lectors for different course modules.”

- Do your lectors go for skill enhancement?
  “Yes, our full-time and part-time lectors update their skills regularly whenever new software comes out.”

- Who are your customers? And are their different target groups for different categories?
  “We have different target groups. They are divided into high school graduates for our full-time courses and working professionals for the part-time courses. We can even separate our corporate clients from the other groups by counting them as business corporate clients.”

- What is important to your customers? Do you respond on that with your strategy?
  “All of our part-time clients share the same need: quick and comprehensive training. Lots of knowledge in the less possible time. Full-timers rather get intense training that covers even the darkest hidden corner of every subject.”

- Why is Friends of Design unique to any other design school?
  “I would not say we are totally unique, but we are trying to give our best at what we are good at which separates us from a lot of our competitors.”

- Who is your biggest competitor and why?
  “Competitors where we could definitely learn from are AAA School for Advertising, CityVarsity and Vega School. They offer almost the same courses and they are in the game for a bit longer.”

- What are your success factors?
  “Being cheaper than the rest by offering at least equal if not better quality training on by far better soft- and hardware standards.”

- Which marketing tools do you use?
  “Friends of Design uses social media, an own website, word of mouth, brochures, search engine marketing (like Google Ads) and trade fairs (like the Design Indaba). The use of TV, magazines and radio is not able, because it is too expensive.”

- Are there some things you did about marketing that you consider to be (not) successful?
  “Not successful, I think, is advertising in forums since this set ups contain individuals that do not like to be disturbed by advertising while talking about exact one topic. You have to be very careful if you want to approach this terrain. The most powerful marketing tools are social media and word of mouth. Probably these two marketing tools run very close to each other, since people interact with us in private time and might be sharing this moment with friends anyway.”
How much money do you spend on marketing annually? What is your marketing budget?
“We try to get as much free marketing as possible. We have a very low budget of approx R12,000 – R15,000 to spent on various online ads. The budget is very low if you compare it to all the response that we receive from it.”

Do you change the prices of the courses annually? Yes, how do you change the prices (percentage/competitors)?
“Yes, we adjust our course prices in comparative to our competitors and other factors like increase in rent, electricity, etc.”

Do you change the content of your courses, according to the developments in the branch?
“Yes, the course content gets updated by our lecturers when they update their skills and to teach the new software.”

Are there plans to change your method? (Strategy, corporate goals, etc.)
“There are no plans to change the strategy, but to improve it by adding more ideas that come up as we are rocking Cape Town.”

How do you plan to grow in the upcoming years?
“Getting more students on board by showing them how awesome we are. Using Facebook as a powerful tool to realize these plans. We probably won’t do more with it than we already do, because we are using it a lot already. This method, we definitely keep up as this works very well for us. Negative side effect at the moment is that not that many people use this platform to look for courses and enroll. With Facebook getting more and more famous this will change in the near future and we will be there, waiting and ready for the masses to experience our full social strengths and long year expertise.”

Do you see upcoming trends in the market? How do you react on trends in the market?
“The need for a degree is absolutely an upcoming trend in the market. I totally agree that it adds a big value for everyone who is looking to study with us. Even though I personally think it is unnecessary since nobody in the design industry will get hired with a fancy diploma and a crappy portfolio. People seem to forget this and therefore we need to be able to offer proper accredited certificates that are internationally recognized.”
2. AAA School of Advertising

- Can you describe AAA School of Advertising in a few sentences?

“AAA School of Advertising is a school for advertising and marketing. It is specialized in three different categories, namely ‘Creative’, ‘Marketing’ and ‘Copywriting’. The Creative and Marketing courses offers a BA degree, a diploma and short courses. The Copywriting courses offers a diploma and short courses. There are one year post-graduating options as well, for example students from the University of Cape Town who wants to do an additional fourth year.”

- Can you mention a few words that characterize AAA School of Advertising?

“The slogan of AAA School of Advertising is ‘Where the ad industry shops’. We use it because we have the most students than any other design school who are working in the industry.”

- How many employees do you have?

“AAA School of Advertising has two schools, one in Cape Town and one in Johannesburg. In total the schools have about 40 employees divided equally over the two schools. Probably Johannesburg have more employees because there is the head office. Also the amount of students is divided equally over the two schools.”

- Do your lecturers go for skill enhancement?

“The lecturers go for skill enhancement, because they have to keep their skills one level up than the skills that they teach for the students.”

- Who are your customers? And are their different target groups for different categories?

“The most important group are school leavers from high school who finished their Matric. The most customers are South Africans, but there is a small number of foreign students.”

- Which category provides the biggest revenue?

“If we look at the number of students, then the Creative and Marketing categories provides the biggest number of students. If we look at the biggest revenue, it is the Creative category. The reason is that the fees for these courses are much higher, because of the equipment that AAA School of Advertising has to buy (think about Apple and Adobe software).”

- What is important to your customers? Do you respond on that with your strategy?

“For the customers it is important to get into the industry and they like it that the fees are a little lower than the competitors.”

- Why is AAA School of Advertising unique to any other design school?

“The school is older than other design schools and has more experience. It is more focused, because AAA School of Advertising is not offering a wide range like for example Cityvarsity. The school is the only school in Cape Town that is owned by the advertising industry, namely Association of Communication and Advertising, and all their courses are accredited by the International Advanced Accrediting, New York USA. This means that the graduates also receive an IAA Diploma.”

- Who is your biggest competitor and why?

“The two biggest competitors are Red & Yellow and Vega school. Stellenbosch Academy, Technicon and CityVarsity are also competitors, but smaller.”

- What are your success factors?

“AAA School of Advertising has a lot of students in the industry and is linked to the industry and people like creative directors. We have an excellent reputation of being the best in the business, this is based on all our experience.”

- Which marketing tools do you use?

“We use our website, word of mouth, brochures, flyers and stands on exhibitions. We are starting to use
social media. TV, radio and magazines are not able to use because it is too expensive.”

- **Are there some things you did about marketing that you consider to be (not) successful?**
  “Word of mouth and stands on exhibitions are the most important marketing tools for us.”

- **How much money do you spend on marketing annually? What is your marketing budget?**
  “There is no concrete marketing budget because AAA School of Advertising in Cape Town can do their own thing and the head of finance in Johannesburg pays for it. But AAA School of Advertising do not spend much money on marketing, because their PR is very good.”

- **Do you change the prices of the courses annually? Yes, how do you change the prices (percentage/competitors)?**
  “The fees increase with 8% every year, but we keep an eye on the competitors so they are always slightly below them.”

- **Do you change the content of your courses, according to the developments in the branch?**
  “The content of the courses are given by SAQA, only the content of the second and third year changes a little bit, because it is a lot of work to get it approved.”

- **Are there plans to change your method? (Strategy, corporate goals, etc.)**
  “We are good as we are right now. They are not longing for learning distance system besides the teaching in our schools. The only thing that will change is that our two year Copywriting diploma will be convert into a three year Copywriting degree.”

- **How do you plan to grow in the upcoming years?**
  “Because of the space we have, the schools is not longing for more courses because it is already a struggle. We neither want to increase the number of students because we would have to buy hardware and as well we are worried about the students getting a job afterwards then. Every year 100 students graduate from AAA School of Advertising and it is hard for all 100 students to get a job in the industry.”

- **Do you see upcoming trends in the market? How do you react on trends in the market?**
  “People believe that degrees become more and more important. As well social media, web design and e-marketing in general plays a bigger role these days.”
3. CityVarsity

- **Can you describe CityVarsity in a few sentences?**  
  “CityVarsity is a creative school with seven different faculties who runs itself. The faculties are categorized by courses. The lectors are part-time employees and work also in the industry with for example their own business or studio.”

- **Can you mention a few words that characterize CityVarsity?**  
  “CityVarsity is a creative dynamic hub with a multitude of different courses. We have a wide range of courses in different areas of the design industry. A good thing about that is that the different faculties interact with each other and learn from each other’s skills.”

- **How many employees do you have?**  
  “The school in Johannesburg was launched in 2006 and has about 30 employees. The school in Cape Town was launched in 1996 and is bigger than Johannesburg with 50 employees.”

- **Do your lectors go for skill enhancement?**  
  “Lectors are welcome to go for skill enhancement, but CityVarsity is not going to pay for that. The reason is that it costs too much money and CityVarsity does not have that money. But the lectors are actively involved in the industry because of their own work experience which makes upgrading happen naturally.”

- **Who are your customers? And are there different target groups for different categories?**  
  “Fulltime courses, 95% of all the students are school leavers who finished their Matric and they choose to go to CityVarsity instead of going to for example to University of Cape Town. The reason why students choose for CityVarsity is the point that they cannot find similar courses at universities. Another reason is that these students come from wealthy families and do not want to go with the mainstream. Short courses, this target group are the working professionals who are already involved in the industry and want to upgrade their skills.”

- **Which category provides the biggest revenue?**  
  “In general the full-time courses provide the biggest revenue compared to short courses. More specific, the ‘Film, Sound and Animation’ faculty provides the biggest revenue. This may be because it is kind of a niche, which other competitors do not offer.”

- **What is important to your customers? Do you respond on that with your strategy?**  
  “The customers come to CityVarsity because they like the practical experience that they do not get at for example the University of Cape Town. CityVarsity cannot respond on that for 100%, because if they want to keep the courses accredited, there still has to be a theoretical part. The customers also like the “arty” vibe and that it is more unusual. CityVarsity respond on that with the fact that their course fees are higher than other schools.”

- **Why is CityVarsity unique to any other design school?**  
  “CityVarsity is a creative school with seven different faculties. The spread of different courses who run separately and how the students interact between each other to develop their skills makes us unique. Also the fact that we offer a Multimedia Design course is unique to any other design school. The magic of the seven different faculties is the reason why CityVarsity is doing so well in the market.”

- **Who is your biggest competitor and why?**  
  “The biggest competitors for CityVarsity are Vega school, AAA School of Advertising, Red & Yellow, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, University of Cape Town, Concept Interactive and Stellenbosch Academy. These competitors offering partly the same courses and these are competitors because they have lower fees and some schools are older than CityVarsity which means that parents tend to know them and send their children to schools they are familiar with.”
What are your success factors?
“The biggest success factor is the practical part of the courses, that makes the course almost like an apprenticeship. The students can go out and work right away with plenty of exposure which is necessary in these times.”

Which marketing tools do you use?
“An website, magazines (editorial and ads), word of mouth, brochures and flyers they hand out at schools and stands on exhibitions, like career exhibitions and the Design Indaba expo. We use social media, like Facebook and Twitter, but we do not use it often. TV and radio are too expensive.”

Are there some things you did about marketing that you consider to be (not) successful?
Word of mouth is the most successful marketing tool for CityVarsity, because it is free, successful and it is something people believe in. The better the students are and the more they like it, the more they will tell other people about us.”

How much money do you spend on marketing annually? What is your marketing budget?
“This is a matter that cannot be discussed.”

Do you change the prices of the courses annually? Yes, how do you change the prices (percentage/competitors)?
“Normally there is a rise of 8% per year, but this year (2010 – 2011) there is a price freeze because of the economy.”

Do you change the content of your courses, according to the developments in the branch?
“According to the South African Qualifications Authority, the school is not allowed to change more than 30% of the course, otherwise the courses will no longer be accredited. They continually change the projects to keep up to date to changes in the industry, but they still serve the same course outcome. We have to reapply all our courses every five years for the SAQA accreditation.”

Are there plans to change your method? (Strategy, corporate goals, etc.)
“The goal is always to gain more students in the already existing courses, but also to set up more different courses. But there is a physical problem with space for that.”

How do you plan to grow in the upcoming years?
“The plan is to have more students and as well more short courses. At the moment, we are in the process to develop a new one year course about New Media, including web development. Another thing that we are working on is to use real companies during the practical side of the course.”

Do you see upcoming trends in the market? How do you react on trends in the market?
“The trend in the market is that degrees are more important. We still offer diplomas and turning those diplomas into degrees is very important for us to keep the customers coming. We offer a two year diploma for every full-time course and students are able to join a third additional year where they also get a diploma for.”
4. Vega School

- Can you describe Vega School in a few sentences?
  “Vega School is a branding and marketing school that goes with design, but it is not all about design. As well advertising is only one component. Vega School is about identity, positioning of the brand, PR work and the change of advertising.”

- Can you mention a few words that characterize Vega School?
  “The slogan of Vega school is ‘wisdom with magic’. Wisdom stands for the strategic sense and magic for the creative side. As well the words brand essence characterize Vega School.”

- How many employees do you have?
  “The total amount is 100 employees divided over four schools in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria and Durban. Johannesburg has the biggest school and Cape Town counts 18 full-time employees.”

- Do your lectors go for skill enhancement?
  “We do offer workshops for our lectors for skill enhancement and the lectors are able to upgrade their skills in their own time. Most of the lectors have an own business which keeps them up to date.”

- Who are your customers? And are their different target groups for different categories?
  “Almost all are school leavers who finished their Matric. For the bachelors Honours degree, the most students come from the University of Cape Town. Most of the customers for part-time courses are working professionals who want to upgrade their skills.”

- Which category provides the biggest revenue?
  “The BA Creative Brand Communication course is a flagship because of various different awards in the creative industry. This is why it provides the biggest revenue.”

- What is important to your customers? Do you respond on that with your strategy?
  “The most important thing for the customers are real-life projects with real companies. Also the practical side of the project challenges is important. Vega School tries to offer what the students want and tries to follow the interests, which is more and more of the practical side.”

- Why is Vega School unique to any other design school?
  “Vega School is not just an advertising school, but a brand communication school. It is all about thinking differently and innovative which encourage students.”

- Who is your biggest competitor and why?
  “The biggest competitors are Red & Yellow and AAA School of Advertising. The reason is that both of the schools have a longer history than Vega School. The people who established Vega School came from the competitors, but they made it to something different. The reputation that AAA School of Advertising has, is enormous. Our reputation is good, but less than them.”

- What are your success factors?
  “The biggest success factor is the real life projects that we have. We use real companies during these projects, so the students will work professional on it. For these projects, they set up different groups of students from the different courses, so they work with each other and learn from each other.”

- Which marketing tools do you use?
  “Brochures, stand on exhibitions, our website, word of mouth and social media. We also use school magazines as advertisement.”
Are there some things you did about marketing that you consider to be (not) successful?

“The word of mouth and stands on exhibition are the most successful marketing tools that we using. The most unsuccessful marketing tool was a discount for combined courses, the response was too little.”

How much money do you spend on marketing annually? What is your marketing budget?

“The budget is handled on national level, so there is not much consciousness about it. Hopefully we are able to handle our own budget in the future. But the marketing budget does increase. This is because we are trying to expand and have more students. The main reason although is that Vega School was bought by another big company, where it is all about profit and numbers. For Vega School this is no good thing, but the reality.”

Do you change the prices of the courses annually? Yes, how do you change the prices (percentage/competitors)?

“The prices increase with 8,5% in the year 2010 – 2011. This is not a regular number, because the price changes every year after a review.”

Do you change the content of your courses, according to the developments in the branch?

“Changing the content of the courses is very important, because it gives us an advantage that we try to keep up more with the industry than the competitors do. Vega School lectors meet every month with councils from the design branch to talk about the current changes in the industry.”

Are there plans to change your method? (Strategy, corporate goals, etc.)

“We wants to grow in total, more campuses and more students. The new goals are all about expanding”

How do you plan to grow in the upcoming years?

“We want to expend with specific courses instead of a wider supply.”

Do you see upcoming trends in the market? How do you react on trends in the market?

“An upcoming trend in the market are Apple products. Especially Mac computers become more and more important and we want every student to work on an own Mac computer during the course. Also the business is going more and more for a degree, so we are planning to make changes. People follow this trend, all they want is a degree where design actually should be about the work you do. There are new courses in concept, like shorter courses that offers the same content as the big ones we already offer, but in shorter time.”