

Project Mars: Delivering Education to Provincial Vietnam

Benjamin Funk¹, Olivia Kruyt¹, Francisca Maier¹, Jacob Vineberg¹
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1.0 Project Mars Team



Left to right: Tony Ngo (co-CEO, Everest), Benjamin Funk, Francisca Maier, Jacob Vineberg, Olivia Kruyt, Leo Nguyen (Special Projects Manager, Everest)

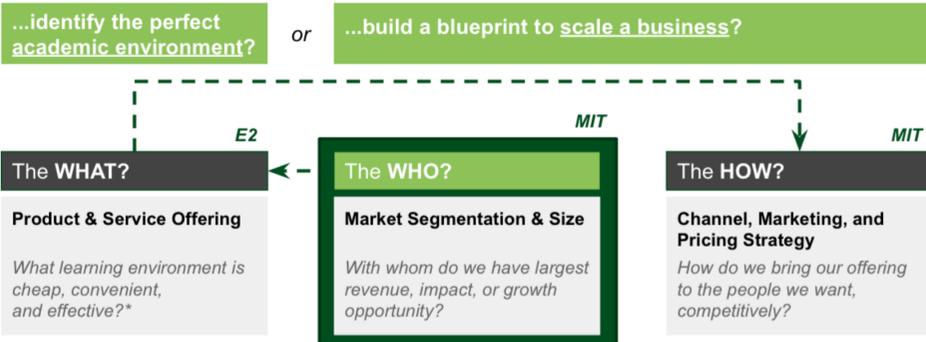
2.0 Everest Education and Project Mars

Everest Education was founded by Don Le and Tony Ngo in 2011 to transform education in Vietnam by personalizing learning through Math and English enrichment classes as well as private tutoring to students K-12. Everest also offer English, STEAM, and design thinking camps through its partner schools. It currently operates in the highly urban setting of Ho Chi Minh City (8.4 million).

Project Mars is a business initiative taken by Everest Education to deliver quality, impactful, and scalable education to students outside of Ho Chi Minh City in nearby provinces. The Project Mars team selected Bien Hoa (1.1 million) as a potential target for expansion with the goal of running a pilot partnering up with a local international school.

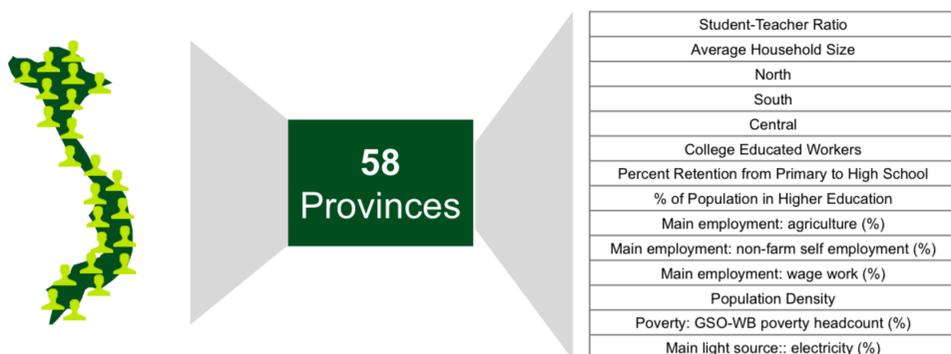
3.0 Approach

From Project Mars, do we want to...



3.1 Market Sizing and Customer Archetypes

Our team employed a data-driven approach to sizing the market and creating customer archetypes. We obtained provincial data from Vietnam Census, WHO, World Bank, etc., and performed advanced data analytics to define and understand eight unique parent archetypes.



We identified the **Southern urban middle class** as the customer segment with the highest impact in terms of reach, revenue, scalability, and impact.

3.2 Understanding the Customer

From our eight data-driven archetypes, we created a target customer persona for the urban middle class archetype in Bien Hoa based on:

- Client interviews
- Parent interviews
- Parent surveys
- Primary and secondary research

Linh Nguyen

DAY IN THE LIFE

Linh wakes at 5:30am to make breakfast and pack lunches for the family. She wakes the family, gets the kids ready for school and leaves for work on her scooter. She works from 7-11am and 1-5pm. During her lunch break, she catches up with other moms at work. After work, she commutes home and cooks dinner for the family with her husband. The family has dinner together, then she checks that the kids are doing their homework and sends everyone to bed by 10pm. She stays in touch with friends over social media (Facebook/Zing) and gathers information through referrals and online forums/blogs.

SNAPSHOT

- Linh is 40 years old
- She lives with her husband Hai and two kids (son Duc, aged 11 and daughter Trang, aged 8) in a small house in Bien Hoa
- She stems from rural Đồng Nai Province, where her retired parents continue to live. Her retired in-laws live in the house with her
- Linh completed high-school and earned a secondary degree on the side while working full-time
- She works in an administrative role in the public sector, earning an income of ~\$85M/year
- She manages the family's finances and decides how the combined HH budget of ~\$165M/year is allocated

GOALS

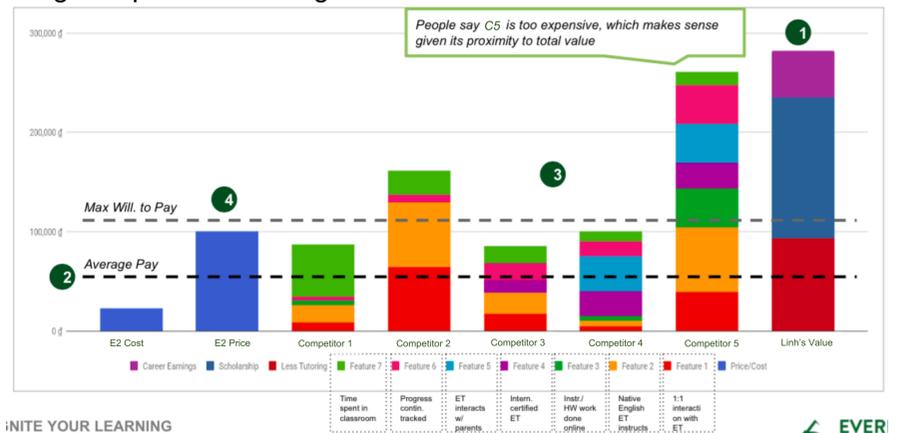
- Linh's #1 priority is to set her kids up for success by enabling them to have access to the best education possible.
- Attending international school is part of her plan for her kids (though this might change depending on their performance in middle-/high-school)
- Her goal is for her kids to have a prestigious career, for example by attending medical school
- As she doesn't speak English herself, Linh has little control over kids' learning progress (though she might try to gauge this through grades/watching English TV)
- She feels somewhat powerless in influencing which schools her kids will get into

FEARS/NEEDS

- Linh's biggest fear is that her kids might fall behind in school
- Her kids' success in life reflects on her qualities as a mom and the reputation and sense of pride of the family. That's why she looks up to moms with successful kids in her circle of friends
- She looks for stability. She fears her husband's potential infidelity and how this would affect her/his kids, and worries that he might spend money on other things outside of the family
- She does not feel performance pressures in her job

3.3 Translating Value Proposition into Pricing

The Project Mars team created and delivered a survey to parents in Bien Hoa, designed to quantify differentiation value using baseline projections and desired projected outcomes for their children. The value of English language learning was quantified in 3 ways: **Output, Outcome, and Impact**. The team also visited 5 local competitors to benchmark their pricing and product offering.



4.0 Design Thinking Towards Pilot Prototype

The team led and participated in three design think sessions towards identifying key design features to be included in the learning model for a pilot to be run in Bien Hoa starting in February 2018.

The team also shadowed Everest's current English and Math classes and developed an evaluation framework for assessing the effectiveness of the pilot moving forward.



5.0 Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express our gratitude to the entire Project Mars team, including Tony Ngo, Leo Nguyen, and Long Quach. We also would like to thank Sharmila Chatterjee for her support as our G-Lab mentor. It was a pleasure working with you all.