

Case Study: MamaCollective

About MamaCollective

MamaCollective was founded in 2014 by then Manhattan-based first time mom, Tiera Hessert, as a way to connect with other mothers on a deeper, more personal level than what was typically experienced on the playground or at the park.

Hundreds of MamaCollective Discussions later, the mission remains the same: to connect mothers in deep and meaningful ways to sustain them through multiple stages of motherhood. By creating purposeful gatherings, MamaCollective seeks to build community by making space for mothers to be vulnerable, trust each other, be validated, and supported.

The heart of MamaCollective lies in its two hour small group, in person, discussions. Groups of 6-8 moms come together to discuss a topic pertinent to the emotional, physical or spiritual journey of motherhood. Each discussion follows a format that allows for moments of self-reflection, validation and time for everyone to share and be heard.

MamaCollective believes that by placing a priority on strengthening in-person relationships, we can strengthen families and communities, one mama at a time.

The Challenge: Scale MamaCollective to Reach More Moms

Over 6 years and hundreds of Discussions later, the concept is proven, but it relies on the Founder, Tiera, to host each and every MamaCollective Discussion. As a mom of four active children, she can only host, and therefore help, so many moms in this way. Tiera, as the sole host, facilitator and grassroots administrator of this growing network was not sustainable, so she sought my help to ultimately bring MamaCollective Discussion Groups to moms everywhere. The questions and challenges have been vast - basically creating a national or global organization from grassroots beginnings. Through strategic analysis and organizational conceptualizing, we addressed myriad issues to resolve: business model, financial management, corporate and nonprofit partnerships, re-branding, website re-design, storytelling, community engagement, contact management, strategic communications, and more.

Action: One Step at a Time, Thoughtfully

The ultimate challenge has also been a wonderful opportunity: address all of the decisions that go into basically starting an organization from scratch so as to scale MamaCollective beyond Tiera's personal capabilities. We had a proven concept and format, and we have a local following - but how to bring MamaCollective Discussions to communities everywhere?

Step 1: Detailed analysis

I listened, thoughtfully, to Tiera's history, to that of MamaCollective, and her vision. We talked about what worked and what didn't. We discussed the various business or organizational structures in which MamaCollective could take shape. We tried on the various options - which felt most comfortable, resonating with the goals and visions of its Founder.

We have completed this process a few times since we began working together in the Fall of 2019.

Step 2: Prioritize and Build

Regardless of what form a business or organization takes, there are some basic systems that need to be implemented for things to run smoothly - I started with those.

- Built an operating budget with multi-year projections to help make strategic and fiscally sound decisions
- Created a CMS
- Built out current website
- Advised on positioning of MamaCollective mission, vision and values
- Interviewed, selected and directing graphic designing on a re-branding package
- Created an online registration system to save administrative hassle
- Created various tracking and reporting tools to aid in prioritizing and task completion

Step 3: Iterate and Reiterate

While I created and implemented various organizational systems, I have also acted as strategic counsel, helping Tiera workshop the future of MamaCollective - both of us deeply passionate about the value that MamaCollective provides and the opportunity to bring this type of peer support to moms everywhere.

With each iteration, I created and updated a 'business plan' - thoughtfully outlining the concept, systems, needs and resources required to see the plan through.

Results: Almost There!

At our very first meeting, Tiera said it was her goal that MamaCollective discussions be available to moms everywhere, regardless of cultural or socio-economic backgrounds, and that it was important that a monetary contribution not be a deterrent for a mom to participate. We have repeatedly come back to this core belief and settled on a peer-led, local chapter-based model - like an organized network of book clubs. To support this plan, I am building out a powerful membership-based website using a unique platform called CauseMachine which will facilitate and streamline communications and community management. We are working hard to update the MamaCollective brand to appeal to moms in all stages of motherhood while staying true to the organic, warm and welcoming aesthetic that Tiera has established. We are telling the MamaCollective story in a thoughtful, accessible and impactful way through words, images, video, online tools and ultimately how we present ourselves as an organization. Together, we are transitioning Tiera from the sole host and facilitator, to the Curator, Thought Leader and Founder; and soon, the validating, healing, comforting power of MamaCollective will be available to moms everywhere.

Though COVID-19 and the Pandemic has temporarily eliminated our ability to host in-person discussions, it has allowed us time to work behind the scenes to emerge anew - well-organized, aspirational and appealing. MamaCollective will embark on a three phase expansion beginning in the Fall of 2021, with nation or world-wide capabilities in Spring 2022.

About Bridget Mariner Consulting

I combine a background in administration, operations, community building and strategic planning to help entrepreneurs, small businesses and nonprofits amplify their impact for good. I've worked for some amazing brands, people and change-makers, and love to see ideas become reality through careful planning and organized, thoughtful execution. By analyzing the challenge, and the resources and systems in place, I am able to create a sustainable, strategic path to operating more productively and efficiently, and achieving your goals and objectives with greater ease. Personally, I chase two boys (ages 5 and 1.5), bake bread, dig in the dirt and dream about streamlined processes and social and environmental impact.