COMPANY BRIEF

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YOUTH CENTRE, 5TH STREET,
MARHIL SUBDIVISION
BAGO CITY, 6101 PHILIPPINES

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MISSION

BagoSphere is a vocational training company for rural youths to gain quick access to gainful employment.

BagoSphere provides a unique combination of communications, critical thinking and life skills training in just 2 months to rural youths.

With those skills, rural youths become skilled communicators and they become highly desired by the call center industry in the Philippines.

With a success rate of over 90%, BagoSphere’s program enables rural youths to experience a *seamless transition* from training to working in a multi-national company.

Rural youths form a large base of untapped talents in the Philippines. BagoSphere aims to unlock these talents to boost the manpower supply of call centers and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies in Bacolod City, hence fueling the growth of the industry. In turn, the call center job provides youths with an income 4x higher than unskilled work, enabling them to save for pursuing professional and personal development goals.

BagoSphere is the recipient of Singapore International Foundation’s Young Social Entrepreneurs Grant Program and an award winner of Start-up@Singapore’s Social Enterprise competition in 2012. BagoSphere is incubated by Grameen Creative Labs at the National University of Singapore (NUS). BagoSphere is also supported by Kickstart Ventures (a subsidiary of Globe Telecom), Co.Lab Xchange Incubator, the Small World Group Incubator (SWGI), Impact Investment Exchange (Asia) and the Bago City local government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our Impact</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>All-time graduates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current No. of Students</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>122</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total No. of Graduates by end 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>80%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Passing rate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>65%</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Graduates still employed after 1 year</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$290</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Average monthly salary of graduates</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$2,520</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated increase in yearly income per BagoSphere graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>$22,680</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total estimated increase in yearly income for all current BagoSphere graduates</td>
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Mechanism

1. BagoSphere pre-screens rural youths with a selection tool to gather the best rural talents

2. Rural youths pay only $12 upfront and enter training at BagoSphere

3. Students are provided with transportation allowance, free stationery and course materials during the 2 month training

4. In a “pay it forward scheme”, once students gain employment at an established call center company, they start to pay their tuition fee in affordable monthly installments

5. BagoSphere also works with Micro-finance partners such as Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation (NWTF) to offer special loans to students

6. Call Centers pay a commission fee per hire to BagoSphere

Our Clients

- Transcom
- Teleperformance
- Teletech
- Panasiatic Solutions
Elvie Cabigon was one of our graduates from our pilot project in 2011.

Before BagoSphere, Elvie was

- One of the top graduates of her high school
- She had no financial means to continue to college
- She has not been able to find a job for about a year

After BagoSphere, Elvie is now a call center agent at Transcom, and earning a salary $290 per month including work performances bonuses and healthcare benefits. After paying BagoSphere’s tuition fees and other taxes, she takes home about $275 per month. She intends to work a few years in a call center to save money to study business in college. Her goal in life is to start her own restaurant business.

Since Elvie does not have to support a family, so her income of $290 means that she is no longer at the BoP. In the long run, she will continue working in the call center or find work of similar nature (which is highly possible given her strong English and IT skills):

- With training, Elvie would earn a total of about $10,000 at the end of 3 years; if she saves part of her salary, she can pay for college education
- This means a return of about 50 times her original investment into training
- Without training, Elvie would most probably find work at a fast food joint or as a contract worker in the agricultural sector and would remain at the Base of the Pyramid (BoP)
Among BagoSphere’s 2nd pilot students, is Juan Carlos M. Galvez (JC). After 2 months of intensive training, he managed to secure a position at Teletech in March 2013.

BA: Could you share with me about your family background before you joined BagoSphere?

JC: Before I joined BagoSphere, my family lived a very simple life. I am currently living with my aunty and my father. I used to live with my grandmother when I was young. My grandmother took care of my aunty, while my grandfather took care of my father because they were not very close to each other. My father was the one who gave me allowance when I studied in college (interviewer comment: JC dropped out of college due to financial issues), but I spent most of my time with my aunty, and she really helped me a lot and provided allowance for the training. Our lives were really very simple back then.

BA: So why did you choose to apply for the Call Center Training in BagoSphere?

JC: My aunty was the one who persuaded me to apply for the training. She told me that the training could really help me find a good job. I was in doubt at first, but after searching up some of the benefits of working in a Call Center, I decided to sign up for the training because it will really help me in the future.

BA: I understand that 2 months of training can be quite intensive for you and your fellow classmates, so what were some challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?

JC: I think one of the challenges I faced is fatigue. The main reason is because I need to take an hour to travel to BagoSphere daily, but when I enter the center and start training, my tiredness just fades away as I really enjoyed and have a lot of fun during the training. I think it’s just the tiredness and stress I felt throughout the training.

BA: Were you nervous before the interview(s) at the Call Center(s) and what are some steps you learnt to help you prepare for them?

JC: Yes, I was nervous. But what BagoSphere taught me is to have confidence and really believe in myself. I also learnt to let my personality show, to be more conscious of my pronunciation and grammar, and listen attentively to the interviewer as these are key requirements in a Call Center job. I would also pray a lot and think of relevant answers to the interview questions. I kept saying to myself, “I can do this”, and that really help me to stay calm before the interviews.
BA: Were you not discouraged when Transcom turned down your application?

JC: No, because I know it’s just the first step of my journey in applying for a Call Center Job. I was really encouraged by one of my friends when she texted me the meaning of failure; the first attempt to success. So I’m really thankful for her words of encouragement. Even though I was rejected at Transcom, I know that there are other Call Centers that can see and acknowledge the skills I have, to believe in my capability to grow in their company.

BA: I heard your family is under the Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation (NWTF), how has the organization benefited you and your family throughout this training program?

JC: The Negros Women for Tomorrow Foundation (NWTF), also known as Dungannon, helps many mothers to set up their own businesses. They help to develop a good business environment so that families can benefit from it by providing micro loans. My aunty has been under Dungannon for five years, and it has provided her great assistance to support me and my cousin’s education, she even has her own direct selling business now.

BA: What are the roles and responsibilities of your job?

JC: Call Center Agents’ duty is to provide the right information to solve customers’ problems. They have to maintain good customer relations to ensure that customers will continue to patronize the company in the future. But as of now, I am not very certain of my job scope as I am still waiting to undergo training.

BA: Overall, how was your experience in BagoSphere?

JC: For me, my experience in BagoSphere has been very enjoyable and knowledgeable. The lessons taught were really related to Call Center works which helped us to understand more about the environment in a Call Center Agency. It has also equipped us with the skills required to excel in a Call Center job, and be prepared and ready to face probable challenges in the workplace. In addition, we learnt about financial literacy and stress management that we can apply in our daily lives.

BA: Finally, with your current job in TeleTech, what do you aim to achieve in the future?

JC: With my current job in TeleTech, I would really like to help my family break out of poverty. For instance, I want to help my aunty expand her business in direct selling and provide financial support for my cousin to complete his elementary studies. As for myself, I’ve always dream of travelling to Thailand. So if I’m able to save enough money, I would really like to go there one day.
PEOPLE

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