The Local Gift Shop

A local gift shop wants to take their online presence to a new level. They have seen their business gradually slowing as more of their customers order their gifts from popular online gift shops like Gifts Australia (http://www.giftsaustralia.com.au/) and Myer Gifts Online (http://www.myer.com.au/shop/mystore/gifts). The local gift shop management has decided that in order to survive, they need to broaden their customer base and that requires a better online presence, in addition to the existing store. However, they realise that they cannot compete directly with the large online gift sellers on price or range of stock, so they need to find a distinguishing point that will allow them to successfully grow in a niche market.

The gift shop currently sells gifts for everybody including ladies, men and children in store. It also takes special orders for specific gift items that are not available in store or that are sold out. The gift shop runs a loyalty card system for regular customers. Loyalty card holders receive a voucher to acquire gifts free every three months. The value of the voucher is calculated at 7.5% of the loyalty card holder's total purchases over the last three (3) months. Customers can also receive discounts for bulk purchases. The gift store has an inventory management system and orders gifts for the store online from the major suppliers and distributors. The gift store has a simple online presence, but it is more of a point of presence which merely advertises the store and does not give any real information about products or services. The site is updated, perhaps, once every couple of months.

The bestselling categories of gifts in the store are, in order, ornaments, Jewellery, perfumes, clothing, hampers, baby items, etc. The owners are not sure which one of these categories may provide them with an entry to a successful niche market. They are interested in spotlighting one of the categories on the new site for a period. They intend to rotate through these categories on a regular basis so that they can measure the response to each. They intend to use these measurements to determine how to further position themselves in the market.

You have been commissioned to design the new online presence for the store. The owners want to provide their customers with the ability to browse the gifts or comment on them; order any currently in-stock item online for either postal delivery or "click and collect"; enquire after gifts not currently in stock; convert those enquiries into special orders if required; have an online chat system running so that customers can chat with each other and gift store staff; provide special deals for loyalty card customers; provide notifications of coming events such as gift launches, coffee mornings, gift readings, etc.; provide a notification system to staff when an order or enquiry is received.

The online presence should be seamless across devices, so that it has the same user experience and functions on a PC screen, a tablet or a smartphone.

Your design focus is on providing the application screen design and layout function for the gift store. You do not have to worry about the accounting system for payments the gift shop nor about the delivery system for deliveries for goods ordered.

You may make any other assumptions not stated here but you must state them in your Key Assumptions in your Project Brief. You will need to provide drawings of the interface design for your chosen system. Drawings must clearly show all components of your design and each component must be clearly labelled. Do not use any existing gift shop name, trademarks or pictures.