BUSINESS PLAN

Australian Shepherd Club of America®

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1.0 THE ORGANIZATION PLAN

1.1 Description of ASCA

ASCA® was founded in 1957 to be a national registry for the Australian Shepherd, with the secondary purpose of sponsoring competitive events for the breed.

The ASCA® Articles of Incorporation, the ASCA® Bylaws, and the ASCA® Code of Ethics govern ASCA®. A Board of Directors elected from the ASCA® general membership administers ASCA®. The ASCA® President, 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, Secretary, Executive Secretary, Election Secretary, and Treasurer are elected annually by the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the newly elected Board. Officers of the Club may be Directors or may be chosen from outside the Board, with the exception of Treasurer.

ASCA also oversees affiliate clubs spread throughout the world who function as the program administration implementation arm of ASCA.

Due to growing workload, the ASCA® opened a central Business Office in Bryan, TX on August 13, 1990. The location was chosen because of its central location (meaning it should be available to all areas of the country within business hours) and because of its proximity to the current leadership, which helped set it up. All business and financial functions of the Club are conducted from this location. ASCA® contracts a general services Attorney, a trademark Attorney, and an Accountant. ASCA® also contracts an Editor for the Club newsletter-*The Aussie Times.*

Important ASCA document history:

Breed Standard – There were many permutations of this document, dating from as early as 1961. ASCA amended this's document was amended in 1977 with the absorption of IASA.
Working Description – ASCA aThis document was approved inthis rule in 2006 as a marker for the typical working style of the Australian Shepherd.
By-laws – ASCA approved the by-laws of the Club in 1984 or 1985 and most recently amended on October 11, 2000.

1.2 Mission

The Australian Shepherd Club of America is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the responsible breeding and registering of purebred ASCA® Australian Shepherds and to do all in its power to bring their natural qualities to perfection.

Purpose:

Encourage and promote the breeding of purebred Australian Shepherds, and do all possible to bring their natural qualities to perfection;

Encourage the organization of affiliated local Australian Shepherd specialty clubs in those localities where there are sufficient fanciers of the Australian Shepherd to meet the requirements of the Club;

Encourage members and breeders to accept one breed standard for the Australian Shepherd as approved by the Club as the only standard of excellence by which Australian Shepherds shall be judged.

Protect and advance the interests of the Australian Shepherd as a purebred dog, and encourage sportsmanlike competition at dog shows, working and obedience trials, tracking tests/trials and at any other event where Australian Shepherds participate;

Encourage and promote sanctioned matches, specialty shows, working and obedience trials, tracking tests/trials and any other such events which promote the Australian Shepherd under the rules of the Club;

Establish and maintain the unified registry of the breed and advance the confidence of the public in the breed, and maintain accurate breeding records;

Esablish Breeder's Code of Ethics

To establish a set of standing rules to govern the internal policy of the Club;

Mechanisms to Achieve Purpose:

Direct Services to Members

Sanctioning of Events to Affiliate Clubs

Breed Registry

Development of a Breed Standard

Operations Support Functions:

Controls and Oversight

Policy Development

Revenue Collection

Human Resource Functions:

Human Resource Management

Financial Management

Administrative Management

Information and Technology Management

Business Model

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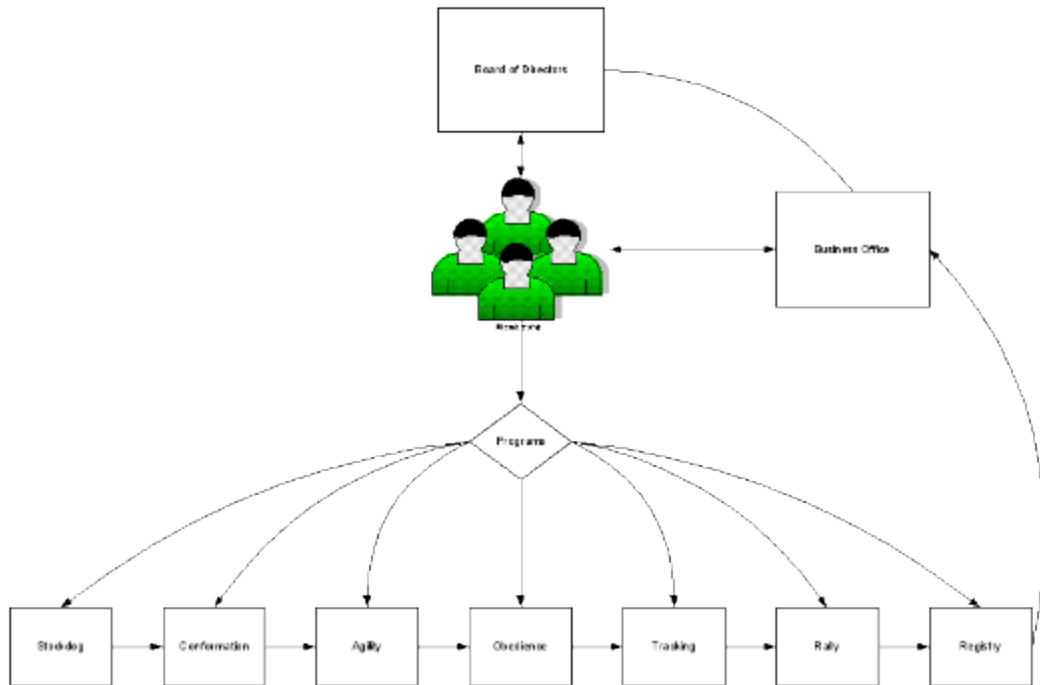
Strategy

Strategic Relationships

ASCA maintains a strong relationship with its XXX affiliate clubs in the United States, Canada, and Europe, by sanctioning events to promote the versatility of the Australian Shepherd. ASCA maintains an insurance policy that protects all affiliate clubs where an ASCA sanctioned event occurs.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
Largest Single breed registry	Single breed registry
Active membership	Financial stability
Sanctions XXX events per year	
Comparative registry fees and membership dues	

Allows participation of other breeds in performance events through a tracking number

Opportunities	Threats
Approving Rally ObedienceImproving existing and creating new programs	Increased activity fees
	Membership reductions
Increased Membership Retention	
	Reduced number of sanctioned events
Increased revenues	
	Reduced income
Improved webcustomer services through automation	
	Reduced program activity
FCI recognition of the ASCA registry	Lack of strategic planning
Expanding stock dog and agility programs beyond the United States	

1.3 Products and Services

According to American Pet Products Manufacturers Association research, current trends in the market indicate that dog ownership is up, along with spending. The expenditures tracked include food, vet care, supplies, animal purchases, and pet services, so these numbers may not be applicable to our needs.

The pet industry has experienced steady growth, but purebred dog registries have experienced a declining trend, possibly due to purebred status no longer signifying status. The AKC reflects this in its current bid to appeal to mixed breed dogs through its PAL program. Their new catch phrase is, "We're more than champion dogs, we're the dog's champion." They are shifting some attention away from purebred association in their marketing, and may compete in the future for our all-breed event market share.

According to 2008 AKC trends, small dogs are on the rise in popularity and the Miniature Australian Shepherd may compete for the market share that we currently hold.

ASCA currently provides a number of services integral to purebred Australian Shepherd enthusiasts, but to maintain growth and increase income, it needs to diversify its offerings in order to bring more value, or diversify its demographic.

1.4 Intellectual Property

ASCA® and the logo are registered trademarks for the Australian Shepherd Club of America.

1.5 Location

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ASCA requires a facility large enough to house eight employees, serverystems, and a room full of historical records and files. High-speed Internet and phone lines must be available to conduct business.

1.6 Legal Structure

1.7 Management

1.7.1 Board of Directors

ASCA has nine (9) Directors on the Board. Except for certain circumstances, each Director holds office until his successor is elected and qualified. Each Director serves a three (3) year term, with the terms of office staggered. Directors #1, #6, and #7 are elected in the first year. Directors #2, #3, and #8 are elected in the second year. Directors #4, #5 and #9 are elected in the third year. Directors may serve only two (2) consecutive elected terms. Each Director has one vote on every issue that comes before the Board.

A Director must be a current voting member of ASCA, and must have been a voting member of the Club for a minimum of eight (8) years prior to his or her election to the Board and must remain in good standing as a member during his or her tenure as Director.

A Director performs their duties as Director, including duties as a member of any committee in the best interest of ASCA. In performing duties, a Director is entitled to rely on information or financial data prepared or presented by persons and groups at face value. However, if a Director knows or doubts the accuracy of the information provided, they are not considered acting in good faith if they do not present what they know. In performing these duties, a Director cannot be held liable. A Director is entitled to rely on information, opinions, reports, and statements from the following entities:

Officers or employees of ASCA, whom the Director reasonably believes to be reliable and competent in the matters presented;

Counsel, public accountants, or other persons as to matters which the Director reasonably believes to be within such persons' professional or expert competence; or

A committee of ASCA as to matters within its designated authority, which committee the Director reasonably believes to merit confidence.

1.7.2 Executive Director

The executive director designs, develops, and implements strategic plans in a cost-effective and time-efficient manner. The executive director is also responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organization, including managing committees and staff and developing business plans in collaboration with the board for the future of the organization. In essence, the board grants the executive director the authority to run the organization. The executive director is accountable to the president of the board and reports to the board on a regular basis – annually and any other time as requested by the board. The board may offer suggestions and ideas about how to improve the organization, but the executive director decides whether or not, and how, to implement these ideas.

The executive director is a leadership role for an organization and often fulfills a motivational role in addition to office-based work. Executive directors motivate and mentor members, volunteers, and staff, and may chair meetings. The executive director leads the organization and develops its organizational culture.

The executive director needs to be informed of everything that goes on in the organization. This includes staff, membership, budget, company assets, and all other company resources, to help make the best use of them and raise the organization's profitability and profile.

1.7.3 Executive Secretary

Duties and Responsibilities:

Corporate recordkeeping:

Maintains Board Meeting minutes and archives
Maintains Board email archive
Maintains records of all incoming and outgoing communication for the ASCA Board.
Maintains roster of incoming resumes for committee positions.
Updates existing ASCA policy and bringing to the Board any issues that are not covered by the policies
Coordinates mediation and dispute resolution on behalf of the Board of Directors.

Operations:

Handles mechanics of the voting calendar for the Board of Directors.
Distribution and tracking of Board of Directors motions for comment
Recording and distribution of voting results.
Recording and distribution of operating manuals for the Board of Directors and appropriate offices.

Records minutes of all Board of Directors meetings and conference calls.
Communicates effectively with Members on matters relating to the ASCA Board or ASCA's operation.
Operates as the communications conduit between the membership and the Board.
Facilitates Board meeting organization and management
Files and keeps archives of all Board business records from hard-copy and electronic media.
Maintains archive of all Board actions.
Maintains archive of Club and Board operating policies documentation.
Coordinates travel and lodging arrangements for Board of Directors and Staff to the Nationals, Spring Meeting and any other travel that may become necessary.

1.7.4 Office Manager

1.7.5 Personnel

Ray Fryar – Office manager

– Executive Secretary

Heidi Mobley – Web master

I would consider striking all names & listing out function & responsibility.

– Systems liaison

– Front Desk

– Agility/Juniors

– Registrar

– Conformation/Obedience

– Stockdog

– Part Time Bookkeeper

1.8 Accounting and Legal

1.8.1 Accounting

1.8.2 Legal

1.9 Insurance

<mark>ASCA maintains an insurance policy that protects all affiliate clubs where an ASCA sanctioned event occurs.</mark>

1.10 Security

2.0 THE MARKETING PLAN

2.1 Goals of Marketing Strategy

While a single-breed dog registry may not seem to have the kind of brand strength as an everyday appliance or cleaner, the fact is: the pet industry is up. According to a Pet Industry Trends analysis (2007), there is growth in every pet-related venue:

Growth in unique pet goods.
Growth in pet services such as grooming, boarding, pet photography, dog walking, and pet sitting.
Growing interest in pet health care.
Continued steady increase in pet insurance.
More pet-friendly environments.
Increased online sophistication from new pet-related businesses in ecommerce, design, and usability.
More meaningful pet-related blogs.
Pet adoptions continue to grow.

2.2 Market Analysis

2.2.1 *Target Market*

The Owners of Australian Shepherd is a great performance breed beyond working stock. They excel in obedience and agility in all-breed competitions. ASCA will be conducting membership surveys over the next several months of existing and previous members of the club. This data should provide a better understanding of who owners of Aussies are.s tend to be outdoor aficionados, socialites, and of above average intelligence.

Based on some national research, Wwomen are more likely to have dogs, though without reliable statistics relating to the specific breed specifically, one cannot be sure how this relates to Aussies.

Once the general homogeneity of members is established, it is then prudent to segment the population by age:

We can use results of survey to actually document this.

Children – ages 8 to 17

College students – ages 18-25

Family age individuals – ages 26-35

Older adults – ages 36-60

Seniors – 60+

2.2.2 Competition
ASCA's main competition comes in the form of much larger all-breed dog registries AKC and UKC. Smaller single-breed registries such as the Jack Russell Terrier Club of America fit more in with competitive comparisons because they are single-breed dog registries with a similar membership and registry size.

2.2.2.1 American Kennel Club (AKC)

In 2006, it regulated almost 20,000 dog events and boasted revenue over $72 million dollars, a 12% drop in 2005 (but the best-recorded year in AKC's history). It experienced an entry gain of 11% over 2005.

Registration revenues dropped $2.3 million in 2006, but branded sales increased by $1.3 million. Event fees rose 9% thanks to Agility and Rally.

Operating expenses of $69 million increased 6% from 2005.

In addition to competitive programs, DNA, a non-profit Foundation, and registry, the AKC offers a number of products.

Title patches
Credit card
AKC Store featuring non-branded items
Database-generated win and progeny reports
Art work featuring winners
Pins
Magazines
Breeder directory
Pet wellness program
AKC registration number tag for lost and found recovery services
Dog care DVDs
Gift certificates

The AKC maintains a registry similar to ours, but offers online services for our paper-driven ones. Sixty percent (60%) of litters were registered online in 2006, and 25% of individuals were online registered.

AKC offers value-added incentives with registration.

2.2.2.2 United Kennel Club (UKC)

UKC hosted 12,000 events in 2006 and 250,000 registrations annually.

In addition to typical competitive programs, UKC hosts more breed-specific programs (with an emphasis on hunting). It offers a host of magazines, but has not expanded to other products.

Litter registration is $20, with value added pedigree and online access for more money. Individual registration runs at $28 with a discount for multiple dogs. UKC charges for all changes, and offers expedition fees.

UKC acknowledges ASCA as the parent club for Australian Shepherds and maintains an approved breed standard that closely adheres to ASCA's.

Market Trends

ASCA's registration statistics have dropped 25% frombetween 2000-2005, which mirrorsing AKC's registration downturn of roughly 21% from the same time span. This Anis assumptioned to is this is be due largely to the well-constructed network available to adopters and well-advertised spay/neuter/adopt marketing programs. Evidence of this is a growing market for designer crossbreeds – purebred is losinghaving lost elite status.

According to APPMA (American Pet Products Manufacturers Association), over 92% of pet owners consider their pets as part of the family. "Only a third of all pet owners today are married with children, according to New York City-based Mediamark Research, Inc. An increase in cohabiting couples, and longer waiting periods before becoming parents, have led to a growing niche of pet lovers: young couples who acquire pets as a means of testing the waters of parenthood. At the same time, married Baby Boomers are filling their empty nests with dogs, cats, and birds. Single households, primarily those headed by Baby Boomer divorcees and seniors, are also on the rise, with many of them finding comfort in furry companionship."

This rise in trends has prompted car manufacturers such as GMC and SAAB to include special pet transport packages in their offerings.

It still maintains status amongst American working dogs, though the popularity of Border Collies and Kelpies for such work eclipses potential homes for working Australian Shepherds. Expense of membership and registration are also factors.

2.3 Market Research

The market potential, according to APPMA as follows:

· Forty-five percent of women ages 35 to 54 who have been divorced, separated, or widowed own a pet.
· Americans ages 45 to 54 spend the most per year (an average of $281) on their pets. The average U.S. household spends $209.
· Spending on pets in single households is expected to grow.
· Single households make up 28 percent of total expenditures on pets.
· Thirty-nine percent of Americans ages 55 to 64, and 25 percent of those 65+, own a pet. While they are less likely than the average American to have a pet, their projected growth makes seniors a potentially important future market. By 2020, 1 in 6 Americans, or 56.2 million people, will be older than 65.
· Spending on pets by adults ages 55 to 64 is expected to grow the fastest of all age groups (4.8% annually) in the next few years.
· Fifty-two percent of 18- to 34-year-old married Americans without children own a pet, 36 percent own a dog and 26 percent own a cat. This group is 33 percent more likely than the average American to own more than one pet.

- Twenty-eight percent of women ages 25 to 29, and 20 percent of those ages 30 to 34, were childless in 1998, up from 16 percent and 11 percent in 1976.
- Childless couples ages 22 to 45 spend $345 per year on average on their pets, compared with $282 that married-with-children couples of the same ages spend.
- Fifty-two percent of married 35- to 54-year-olds without children have a pet, and 31 percent have two or more. This group is 27 percent more likely to own a pet, and 30 percent more likely to own more than one than the average American
- In 2000, married couples without children spent more on average on their pets ($284) than married-with-children households ($275).
- Married-without-children household spending on pets is expected to grow the fastest (5.2 percent annually) of all household groups through 2004.

No market research exists regarding the actual members of ASCA. Although the breed has an American West appeal, many owners do not fit the Wrangler-wearing, cowboy hat-toting lifestyle. Most members are likely suburbanites with families. The breed represents different things to different people, but it is most attractive for its friendly qualities, intelligence, and striking looks.

2.4 Marketing Strategy

2.4.1 Method of Sales and Distribution

ASCA shall begin its marketing strategy by way of operations improvement. As response speed and accuracy increases, the membership will market by word of mouth.

ASCA's second step is to foster loyalty through brand-strengthening. Demographic research should be performed and results analyzed in order to find the most compelling pleasure and pain points within the membership. The ASCA Board of Directors should choose a brand identification with this research and market accordingly.

Relationships should be sought with partner companies in order to add value to membership and the Australian Shepherd experience.

Media advertisement via concentrate artistic and scientific methods should coincide with the brand image (ie advertising in Western Horseman). Jointly, awards should be made to individuals promoting the breed positively for the public (a la AQHA).

ASCA should consider value-added reselling of related products along with registry or membership services. A lost-dog recovery tag could be issued cheaply with dog's registry number and increase revenues, for example.

Logo and artwork merchandise could be marketed to the public online and at National Specialties, keeping in mind that we should primarily sell to members.

2.4.2 Pricing

ASCA should base its pricing on industry average, commensurate with level of service provided and ease of service requests.

Fee increases should occur only when service levels have merited improvement.

Fee lowering should be considered to build membership base demographic, thereby increasing partner interest.

2.4.3 Branding (if any)

2.4.4 Service Strategies (improved services)

ASCA is poised to excel at its purpose in exceeding the offerings of comparable facilities in the county. Because of its excellence, very little in the way of sales shall be required. Most visitors will come through word of mouth, though many may respond to advertisements, shirts, or mailing campaigns that shall be conducted as sales needs and advertising budget dictate.

2.4.5 Advertising Strategies

The Problem: ASCA relies largely on word-of-mouth and sustained minor presences that have not been updated or evaluated for effectiveness.

Program Goal: To clearly show target audiences why ASCA membership and registry is the best option.

Target Audiences:

      (1) Owners of Australian Shepherds,

      (2) Non-Aussie owners who use our programs, and

      (3) The public.

Audience Objectives:

      (1) Join ASCA and make use of its programs and services,

      (2) See ASCA's programs and services as the benchmark compared to competing organizations, and

      (3) Be aware of all of ASCA's programs and services.

Major Strategy: Set advertising goals based on greatest need and current strategic plan and work to attract the appropriate demographic. Continually measure the effectiveness of ad campaigns with tracking metrics and using not just simple ad campaigns, but rigorous efforts to attract specific demographics with targeted promotions.

Evaluation Plans:

> (1) Maintain a database of demographics for members and users of the programs and service,

> (2) Note increases based on targeted advertising in each demographic, and

> (3) Provide codes for promotions to track which ads work.

If an ad does not return desired results, evaluate and approach a new way.

Action plan: Appoint a specific party or committee to carry out the work of achieving the above. They will work with the Board to obtain specific objectives and search out ways to meet those objectives. They will consider the following forms of promotion:

> Clippings from newspapers, magazines, trade publications, and newsletters tracing print media coverage of organization and problem situation;

> Reports of radio, television, and cable placements;

> Content analyses of media coverage;

> Generate lists of media, journalists, columnists, and free-lance writers who report news about the organization and related issues;

> Generate lists and descriptions of individuals and groups that share the organization's concerns, interests, and views (including their controlled print and broadcast media);

> Generate lists and descriptions of individuals and groups that oppose the organization's positions on the issues (including their controlled print and broadcast media).

They should also continually run survey results of public's awareness, knowledge, opinions, and behaviors related to the organization and problem situation.

Create schedules of special events, observances, and other important dates related to the organization and problem.

2.4.6 Public Relations

Objectives: Create and maintain a sense of security, well-being, and proper stewardship of the club and the Australian Shepherd.

Plan: Create and maintain a baseline of public and membership perception of the club and its doings in order to determine where the plan is effective or not effective – best achieved by designing surveys and maintaining an open communication policy via

Public boards. Maintain information sharing lists – identify potential information dissemination audiences, lists, websites, print media, etc., and keep it updated.

Approaches:

• Press kit – Design a press kit that includes a description of the organization, key facts and figures, biographies of the principals, a history, and two or three stories on current trends and issues. It functions as instant background material when a story arises. Press packages also usually include photography. This should be available online.

• Announcements – Make use of brief news releases on such topics as interesting motions, promotions or hiring, new clubs, new services, confirmed trends, etc. These should be one- or two-paragraph stories for release. This should also be available online.

• Become a source – by issuing regular news releases and maintaining a presence in the media or related dog-fancy organizations, an ASCA representative becomes available for comment and provides approved experts for interviews, etc. Calls must be returned within the hour, seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

• Issue Public Service Announcements – publish on Youtube or via news release to provide information while branding the club.

• Encourage Op-Ed(?) articles getting run by experts and make published work available as a reprint.

• Secure some vibrant photography, when needed.

• Maintain a newsletter sent via email and available online that links announcements and facts along with events.

• Develop fact-sheets regarding programs

• Provide an annual report of trends and news including finances and important action items that are on the agenda or were completed.

Reaction to events:

• Ride news stories - when a relevant news story appears, issue a release immediately with a brief comment and statement that a representative is available for interview.

• Attend or present at related trade shows

• Maintain a community calendar of ongoing events on the website

• Provide crisis management:

• Allow a designated person to be liaison regarding the emergency or controversy and be sure that person has data available.

• Realize that "no comment" implies evasiveness or guilt.

• Inform the audience, if unable to answer a question at that time that it will be forthcoming and follow up on the question within a reasonable amount of time, even if none is available.

• Be prepared and forthright.

2.4.7 Networking

2.5 Customer Service

2.5.1 Description of Activities

ASCA is heavily dependent on member loyalty. One of the best ways to maintain this loyalty is to provide good customer service. ASCA has the advantage of being smaller than the multi-breed registries so the personnel that members interact with is smaller and often is more familiar to our members. This helps to focus our staff on providing the best service to our members.

2.5.2 Expected Outcomes

ASCA will continue to provide the best customer service by:

· Providing timely turnaround of member generated paperwork such as registry forms, sanctioning of shows and trials, and membership services.

· Timely replies to email inquiries.

· Providing help to members who are not knowledgeable about proper procedures, etc.

· The use of member committees to oversee needed changes to our competitive programs.

· Continued updates to the web-based services we provide.

2.6 Implementation of Marketing Strategy

2.6.1 In-House Responsibilities

2.6.2 Out-Sourced Functions (if any)

2.7 Assessment of Marketing Effectiveness

2.7.1 What has worked and why?

3.0 FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

3.1 Budget

3.2 Three-Year Income Projection

3.3 Projected Balance Sheet

3.4 Break-Even Analysis

3.5 Income Statement

3.6 Balance Sheet

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3.8 Financial History