

Operations Committee Report

February 3, 2010

GERTS

1. *Gerts (in General)*

We're looking at a favourable financial situation at Gerts – as of December 31st, we had a cumulative loss of \$7 214.00 whereas we had budgeted a loss of \$10 784.00. This is largely due to the fact that we have better-than-expected sales, particularly in food, though drinks are doing well too: apparently we had an additional \$10 000 worth of drunks in the bar this year (probable cause: the economic crisis??).

While we're currently favourable vis-à-vis our projected budget by a substantial margin, we will expect this amount to more closely resemble the expected amount at the end of the year, once further advertising costs & SLF have been paid out.

2. *The Great Gerts Challenge*

The *Gerts Challenge* is well underway. As of Sunday, January 31, we had received 4 complete submissions for the bar design competition and 46 submissions for the logo design competition. We've got some great ideas coming in already and are expecting to see some more arrive in the next few days. In light of the fact that the specs of the bar were late going up on our website, we decided to extend the deadline for submission by one week (until this Friday, February 5th).

We have advertised the challenge through our website, through Facebook, by posterage throughout the University and playing commercials for the renovation on the TVs in Gerts. We have also issued a press release to the Trib and the Daily.

We've filled half of the student member-at-large positions on the judging panel, though we rejected two applications that were submitted, as those applications did not instill confidence in the Operations Committee. We have re-opened the application process for students wishing to serve as members-at-large. The commitment is relatively small (a few hours of your time early next week) and applications are available on our website (<http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/gertschallenge>). Show Gerts some support and send in an app by Friday!

Given the extension to the submission deadline, the judging process has been somewhat accelerated. The judging panel will still render a decision as to the winner next week such that the winning candidate(s) can be informed by February 12th, for public release on February 15th. We did not want to shift these dates back any later as it is very important that we get this process rolling with McGill: there needs to be adequate time for us to

send the winning design to an architecture firm, have the architects liaise with the student designers, provide us with a quotation for the job, have it approved by you all here, and then ensure that McGill (specifically Deputy Provost Mendelson's office) gives us the "thumbs up." If all goes well, the renovated bar will be ready for the big unveil in September.

HAVEN

The current manager of Haven spoke to OpsComm at length last week to update us on the various issues that currently face the store.

On a positive note, Haven has continued its two-year growth streak and has continually seen diminishing losses. Sales are also up \$20 000 from last year. The store has begun to sell guides (e.g. Oxford "Very Short Introductions" et al) to generate sales during off-peak periods when students are not traditionally buying or selling textbooks (i.e. the portions of the school year that don't take place during the course change period). This is definitely a big step for Haven to encourage students to make use of its services throughout the year: to give you an idea of how concentrated of sales are during the course change period, fully one third of Haven's sales from August 24th, 2009 – January 22, 2010 occurred during the first three weeks of January 2010.

Concern was expressed over several current features of Haven that have precluded earning higher profits, including a re-designed cataloguing system that is incompatible with the store's current inventory list, and the continued inability of Haven to advertise on McGill property. OpsComm spent a fair amount of time discussing the current commission rate paid to students who consign their books to Haven. We have also been asked to render an official statement of the committee as to whether we consider Haven to be a student service or a profit-maximizing business. These are all issues and questions that we have begun to examine and that we will be looking at into the future. We welcome your comments and feedback.

Respectfully submitted,

David Marshall