To: Dr. Erika Paterson

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Subject: Proposal for Expanding Customer Base for Futian Dumpling Restaurant

**Introduction**

Boundary Road and Kingsway area are famous for the delicious Asian foods provided by local restaurants, while the Futian Dumpling Restaurant is one of the youngest restaurants among them. Opened in December 2018, Futian Dumpling Restaurant primarily serves hand-made dumplings in the northeast Chinese style. Managing a new and small business near those well-known restaurants is competitive and challenging, and Ms. Song, the owner of Futian Dumpling Restaurant, wants to gain more revenue and attract more new customers, especially for those customers who are not from China.

**Statement of Problem**

Currently, the main problem of the Futian Dumpling Restaurant is that, although it gets many positive reviews from its existing customers, the amount of new customers grows slowly. Also, most of those existing customers are from Chinese, while it seldom has customers from other countries.

Ms. Song has tried to improve the situation with many different approaches. For example, she chatted with old customers often and asked them to recommend her restaurant on Google Map or WeChat. However, the situation does not improve a lot.

**Proposed Solution**

Besides those common issues for most Chinese restaurants like English speaking and advertisement strategy, I would like to focus on the constitution of the food menu. More specifically, I would like to suggest Ms. Song to consider adding some vegan foods to her restaurant.

Currently, all of the vegetable dumplings provided by the Futian Dumpling Restaurant contain either eggs or shrimps, while whether eggs and shrimps are vegan foods has already been a controversial question. Based on recent research, there are around 9.4% of people in Canada consider themselves vegetarian [1], but it does not mean the dumpling restaurant may only lose around 10% of the potential customers. For example, when multiple people have lunch together, they will usually not choose restaurants without vegan foods if one of them is vegetarian. Moreover, if some companies want to provide group meals for their employees, they may always need to order some vegan food for vegetarian employees. Since the majority of the customers of the dumpling restaurant are residents or employees from nearby companies, similar situations may happen more often.

As the vegetarian culture is not quite popular in China, Ms. Song, who is immigration from Dalian, China, may not have considered too much about vegan foods when designing the food menu. As a result, I would like to investigate this topic and give her suggestions based on my investigation.

**Scope**

In this report, I will investigate whether adding vegan foods can help the Futian Dumpling Restaurant extend their customer base and gain profit. To be more detail, I will try to address these questions:

* Do local vegetarians consider the two kinds of vegetable dumplings provided by Futian Dumpling Restaurant as non-vegan food?
* What do people in Vancouver think of the vegetarian culture? For example, will non-vegetarian people like to have lunch with vegetarian people, or even try vegan foods in the restaurant?
* What factors will the nearby companies consider when choosing the restaurant for group meal ordering?
* Are there any technical difficulties or culture concerns about making vegan dumplings without eggs or shrimp in the Northeast Chinese style?
* Will providing vegans food introduce some extra cost in the dumpling restaurant?

**Methods**

The methods I want to conduct during this report include:

* Survey my vegetarian friends and classmates about their vegetarian culture
* Survey my non-vegetarian friends and classmates about their opinions of vegetarian.
* Interview the facilities coordinators from some companies nearby
* Interview Ms. Song for her opinions and concerns about providing vegan foods.

**My Qualifications**

I am a final year computer science who has taken many classes about statistics and data analysis, so I can analyse the results from surveys and interview effectively and get some useful conclusion. Also, I live near Boundary Road and Kingsway area and go to Futian Dumpling Restaurant for meals quick often, so I will have many chances to talk with Ms. Song during my meals. Moreover, I used to be a Software Engineer intern in the Arista Network near that area, so I know the facilities coordinator of that company well and I am able to ask for a short interview from him. Last but not least, although I am not a vegetarian, I have many vegetarian friends here and I can survey them about the vegetarian culture.

**Conclusion**

Futian Dumpling Restaurant needs to take action to attract more new customers and make more revenue. By addressing the 5 questions above, I will be able to have some estimation on whether providing vegan foods can help it to extend the customer base and gain more revenue.

**Reference**

[1] Charlebois, Sylvain, Maggie McCormick, and Mark Juhasz. "Meat consumption and higher prices: Discrete determinants affecting meat reduction or avoidance amidst retail price volatility." British Food Journal 118.9 (2016): 2251-2270.