

Sample Case Interview Question

Question Background

Food truck dining is a phenomenon that has been catching on in several cities around the US, including San Francisco. Your client is hoping to start a food truck called The Meringue Man, operating in various locations around the Bay Area each week. Berkeley Consulting has been tasked with optimizing profitability for this client.

Quantitative Assessment

Market Sizing

To begin, The Meringue Man would like to get an idea of how much revenue a typical dessert food truck would generate in an average week. Please provide a value for estimated revenue.

Possible Approaches / Distinctions:

- Week vs. Weekend
- Rotating Locations
- Prices
- Multiple Products
- Seasonal Adjustments
- Lunch vs. Dinner

Abstraction Test

Would you say that the estimate provided in the previous part is too low or too high? What assumptions would you change or factors did you not consider in approximating total revenue generated?

Sample Answers:

- Failed to account for any of the factors listed in “Possible Approaches / Distinctions” above
- Unrealistic assumptions
- Calculation errors
- Competition and market saturation

Graphical Analysis

View the accompanying graph document that shows dessert food truck revenues by location. Please point out any trends you notice, and how you would suggest the client use the information provided.

Main Insights:

- Creme Brulee seems to make the most money, and Kuhsterd the least as shown in the graph
- SoMa and South Berkeley seem to make more money than Oakland and North Berkeley
 - Maybe because there tends to be a younger crowd at those locations

Qualitative Assessment

Ideation

There are a lot of food trucks out there now, so your client feels he definitely needs some broad strategies to make his truck successful. Please suggest some possible strategies that the client can use to make as much profit as possible.

Sample Answers:

- Interesting truck art, social media
- Unique, creative desserts, flavors
- Organic, local, vegan, sustainable, etc.
- multiple forms of payment vs cash only
- Cheap ingredients, truck-share
- Fast service vs. less workers
- More automation / pre-prep
- Location-specific marketing

Synthesis & Recommendation

You are now at the conclusion of the project, and The Meringue Man has asked you to present your strategic recommendations to optimize profits and break into the food truck market. Based on conclusions you've drawn in this interview, take a few minutes to prepare a final recommendation and present this.

Typical Daily Dessert Truck Revenues

