

Alberta Intercollegiate Sales and Marketing Competition 2025

Marketing Case Participant Screening Presentation

To secure your spot in the competition, here's what you need to do:

- 1) Review Terra Eats, the mini-case that follows
- 2) Create and upload a short video (maximum 5 minutes) presenting your solution to the business case.

Please note: Don't just upload a PowerPoint or Keynote file with narration—we're looking for a direct and engaging presentation of your ideas. Be convincing, persuasive, and professional!

- 3) The mini-case rubric below is a simplified version of the full rubric we'll use for the main marketing case in the competition. Think of this as a great opportunity to practice and prepare!

While there's no entry fee, we want to make sure we have the strongest candidates competing, so please consider that fact as you create and submit your video. We're calling it an audition because we cannot accept all the students who have applied, because spots are limited.

So this application step helps us ensure AISMC is filled with Alberta's best and brightest post secondary students!

Remember, there's no right or wrong answers to business cases. We're looking for articulation of solutions that are logical, defensible, and solve the problem with imagination and insight.

We can't wait to see what you bring to the table—good luck!

Warm Regards,

Keith Dundas
Co-founder, AISMC

Instructions for Video Case Audition for Marketing Competition

Step 1 – Review Case

- Carefully review the details of the mini-case provided
- Identify key facts, stakeholders, and context that impact the situation

Step 2 – Identify three (3) Business Issues

- Share down **three** specific business issues related to the mini-case
- For each issue:
 - Clearly state the issue
 - Provide a brief explanation (1–2 sentences) of why this is an issue

Step 3 – Select and Defend the Most Important Business Issue

- Choose **one** (1) business issue from the **three** business issues you identified above
- Use a simple analytical framework (eg, urgency, impact, feasibility) to explain why this issue is the most important
- Clearly articulate your reasoning for your choice in 2–3 sentences

Step 4 – Propose three (3) Strategies to Address the Chosen Business Issue

- Develop three potential strategies that could address the business issue you selected
- For each strategy:
 - Provide a short description of the approach
 - Explain how it addresses the issue in 1–2 sentences

Step 5 – Select and Defend the Best Strategy

- Use a simple analytical framework (eg, cost, ease of implementation, long-term impact) to evaluate the three strategies
- Choose one strategy as the best solution
- Explain why this strategy is the most effective in 2–3 sentences

Step 6 – Outline the Selected Strategy

- Provide a clear and concise outline of your chosen strategy:
 - What actions need to be taken? Generally, what tactics will you employ?
 - Who is responsible to execute the strategy?
 - What outcomes are expected from your chosen strategy?

Step 7 – Prepare and Record Your Presentation

- Summarize your analysis and recommendations in a clear and engaging video presentation
- Time Limit: Keep your video under 5 minutes

Include the following in your presentation:

Element	Suggested Duration in Video
Brief overview of the case and business issues	1 min
Description / explanation of the 3 issues you identified, identify your 1 chosen issue, then explain why it's the most important business issue	1-2 mins
Description of your 3 potential marketing strategies to address that issue, and why the single strategy you chose is the best	1-2 mins
Total	5 mins

Step 8 – Submit Your Video Presentation

- Upload your completed presentation to the designated platform by the deadline
- Ensure your video is well-organized and stays within the time limit.

Disclaimer:

This business case has been synthesized using personal experience and AI-generated insights. Any resemblance to real, existing, or historical business issues, firms, organizations, or individuals, is purely coincidental. The content is intended for educational and illustrative purposes only.

Introducing Terra Eats

Background

In 2015, lifelong friends Emma O’Leary and Liam Walsh founded TerraEats in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, with the vision of preserving and promoting Newfoundland’s rich culinary traditions. Both Emma and Liam grew up in small fishing villages, deeply connected to the land and sea. Inspired by their shared roots and a desire to showcase Newfoundland’s unique food culture, they created TerraEats as a farm-to-table dining experience with a twist: every dish would celebrate locally sourced ingredients and traditional cooking methods while being presented with a modern flair.

The concept was an immediate hit. TerraEats opened its doors in downtown St. John’s with a cozy, rustic restaurant that served dishes like salt cod fritters, moose stew, and partridgeberry tarts. They partnered with local fishers, farmers, and foragers to ensure the freshest ingredients and invested in educational programs to teach their staff and patrons about the cultural significance of the cuisine. TerraEats quickly became a beloved establishment, attracting tourists, food critics, and locals alike. Its unique combination of authenticity and innovation was a refreshing addition to Newfoundland’s culinary scene, positioning it as a standout.

By 2018, TerraEats expanded its operations to include a small packaged goods line featuring items like bottled bakeapple preserves, dried cod, and locally sourced herbal teas. This move allowed them to reach customers beyond Newfoundland, appealing to expatriates and culinary enthusiasts across Canada. The success of these products stemmed from their authenticity, as each item was rooted in Newfoundland’s heritage and crafted with care. Emma and Liam’s passion and commitment to authenticity earned TerraEats several accolades, including “Canada’s Best New Restaurant” from EnRoute magazine and a feature on a popular travel cooking show. These achievements solidified their reputation and spurred growth opportunities.

As their brand gained recognition, Emma and Liam found themselves balancing community engagement with broader ambitions. They hosted local food festivals, organized charity dinners, and partnered with schools to introduce students to the flavors of Newfoundland. To deepen local engagement, TerraEats introduced seasonal cooking classes and foraging tours in 2019, where locals and tourists alike could learn to prepare dishes using Newfoundland’s unique ingredients. These workshops highlighted traditional techniques while emphasizing sustainability, further embedding TerraEats within the community. However, as they navigated the challenges of scaling their operations, Emma and Liam grappled with new pressures that tested their vision and operational capacity. Balancing the need for authenticity with scalability became a central tension, especially as demand for their goods and restaurant offerings grew beyond initial expectations.

By 2022, TerraEats began exploring partnerships with local tourism operators to expand their reach further. Their workshops evolved into multi-day culinary retreats, where participants could experience the intricacies of Newfoundland’s food culture. This expanded offering helped TerraEats establish a deeper connection with the tourism industry while diversifying its revenue streams. Emma and Liam also sought advice from business mentors to navigate the complexities of scaling operations without losing their brand’s essence. These steps proved essential in maintaining TerraEats’ standing as both a community hub and a tourist destination.

Today, in 2025, TerraEats remains a cornerstone of Newfoundland’s food scene, but operational inefficiencies, changing customer expectations, and increasing competition now threaten its ability to stay true to its roots while scaling sustainably.

Industry Trends

The food industry in Newfoundland and Labrador continues to experience transformative shifts driven by global and regional dynamics. Sustainability has emerged as a central concern, with consumers actively seeking out businesses that demonstrate eco-friendly practices. Beyond composting and carbon offsetting, leading restaurants are now adopting cutting-edge solutions such as renewable energy systems, sustainable seafood sourcing, and zero-waste kitchens. Competitors in the region have taken significant strides, installing solar panels and leveraging rainwater harvesting to showcase their environmental commitment. TerraEats must consider integrating these practices more robustly to stay relevant to the increasingly eco-conscious diner base.

Simultaneously, the integration of technology is reshaping customer expectations. The rise of app-based reservation systems, personalized marketing through AI-driven data analytics, and seamless online ordering platforms is setting new standards in the dining experience. Restaurants embracing these innovations are enhancing customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. For TerraEats, upgrading digital systems and adopting data-driven insights could streamline operations and create a more personalized dining experience.

Culinary tourism, another growing trend, presents both opportunities and challenges. Tourists now expect immersive, culturally rich dining experiences that blend authenticity with modern appeal. Collaborations with travel influencers, curated culinary tours, and exclusive seasonal menus can position TerraEats as a must-visit destination for tourists. Additionally, trends in alternative proteins and sustainable seafood are capturing the attention of environmentally and health-conscious diners. TerraEats could explore partnerships with innovators in these spaces to craft forward-thinking yet tradition-inspired menu options.

Hyper-local sourcing and storytelling are becoming key differentiators in the competitive landscape. Diners increasingly value transparency about the origins of their meals. Highlighting partnerships with local producers through multimedia storytelling or interactive table features can deepen customer engagement. As these trends continue to evolve, TerraEats must balance its foundational authenticity with bold, future-forward strategies.

Another significant trend is the focus on food waste reduction, with more restaurants adopting circular economy principles. For example, by utilizing scraps and byproducts in creative dishes or finding ways to donate excess food, businesses are reducing their environmental footprint. These initiatives resonate with customers who prioritize sustainability, creating opportunities for TerraEats to reinforce its commitment to eco-conscious dining. Additionally, embracing food preservation technologies, such as vacuum-sealing and fermentation, could add depth to TerraEats' packaged goods line while further reducing waste.

Emerging culinary techniques, like molecular gastronomy, are also making their mark in the fine dining sector. Although TerraEats' focus is on traditional cooking, incorporating modern techniques sparingly could create signature dishes that captivate adventurous diners without compromising its core ethos. Staying attuned to these broader trends can help TerraEats remain competitive in a rapidly evolving market.

Evolving Customer Preferences

TerraEats' customer demographics have diversified significantly, introducing new challenges and opportunities in meeting their expectations. While the local community remains a loyal base, tourists and younger generations are reshaping the restaurant's market dynamics. Tourists, often seeking more than a meal, demand immersive experiences such as foraging tours, hands-on cooking classes, and culturally rich storytelling. TerraEats' initial foray into experiential dining has resonated well, but scaling these initiatives—such as offering curated farm-to-table tours—could further cement its appeal to this lucrative audience.

Younger diners, particularly millennials and Gen Z, emphasize values like sustainability, transparency, and digital accessibility. While TerraEats prioritizes local sourcing, competitors excel in visually narrating their suppliers' stories through digital platforms and QR code-linked content. Expanding TerraEats' supplier narrative, both in-house and online, could bridge this gap. Additionally, embracing social media strategies, including influencer collaborations, behind-the-scenes content, and user-generated campaigns, could elevate TerraEats' brand visibility among tech-savvy audiences.

Health-conscious consumers represent another critical segment. While TerraEats' traditional dishes are celebrated, they may be perceived as heavy by diners seeking lighter, nutrient-rich options. Competitors offering plant-based or gluten-free adaptations of traditional recipes have captured this segment effectively. Introducing balanced options—such as vegan partridgeberry desserts or lighter variations of moose stew—could broaden TerraEats' appeal without compromising its heritage.

Families with young children are an untapped demographic. Parents often look for family-friendly dining experiences, complete with kid-centric menus and activities. TerraEats could explore themed family nights, interactive cooking workshops, or simplified versions of its core menu to attract this audience.

Finally, the rising interest in seasonal and exclusive offerings is shaping dining habits. Diners are drawn to menus that rotate with the harvest, providing unique reasons to revisit. TerraEats could diversify its seasonal options—highlighting ingredients like bakeapples or snow crab—to create excitement and repeat business. By addressing these evolving preferences with targeted strategies, TerraEats can strengthen its market position.

Furthermore, technology-savvy customers now expect more convenience. Online reservation systems, app-based loyalty programs, and personalized digital offers have become essential for attracting and retaining a modern clientele. TerraEats' adoption of these tools could significantly enhance customer engagement. To further appeal to millennials and Gen Z, TerraEats might consider limited-edition pop-up menus or collaborations with local influencers to generate excitement and social media buzz.

Finally, TerraEats could incorporate educational storytelling into its dining experience. Offering augmented reality (AR) features or interactive menus could provide diners with deeper insights into the history and origin of their meals, creating a lasting impression and distinguishing TerraEats from competitors.

The Competitive Landscape

The competitive landscape for TerraEats has intensified as Newfoundland's culinary scene embraces the growing demand for local and artisanal dining experiences. Small-scale restaurants, such as SaltSprout, have emerged as formidable rivals by emphasizing sustainability and innovation. SaltSprout's zero-waste philosophy and partnerships with environmental groups resonate with eco-conscious diners, while their creative use of food byproducts appeals to sustainability enthusiasts. These efforts have garnered a loyal customer base, particularly among younger diners. TerraEats must innovate further in this area to maintain its competitive edge.

Global chains have also adapted to cater to Newfoundland's unique culinary market. Fast-casual brands offering localized menu items—like cod sandwiches and screech-flavored desserts—attract budget-conscious diners. These chains benefit from large-scale advertising campaigns that saturate local markets during peak tourist seasons, reducing visibility for smaller establishments like TerraEats. To counteract this, TerraEats could explore partnerships with tourism boards and launch its own targeted campaigns to highlight its authenticity and community roots.

Seasonal restaurants catering to tourists add another layer of competition. Located near waterfronts and cruise ports, these establishments capitalize on tourist foot traffic with all-inclusive packages and aggressive marketing. While TerraEats has a strong reputation, its location and traditional advertising methods could be reimaged to capture more of the tourist market. Offering exclusive seasonal dining packages or waterfront pop-ups could increase its visibility during peak seasons.

Competitors are also leveraging digital innovations to enhance customer experience. Dynamic reservation systems, seamless online ordering, and AI-driven menu suggestions have become industry benchmarks. In contrast, TerraEats' traditional systems may seem outdated to modern diners. Investing in advanced digital tools and launching interactive features like loyalty apps or menu customization options could attract tech-savvy patrons.

Pop-up events and collaborations are additional competitive strategies that resonate with customers. Brewery pairings, culinary workshops, and themed dining nights have successfully drawn diners to competitor establishments. Expanding TerraEats' community engagement initiatives, such as hosting more collaboration events or offering innovative pop-up experiences, could strengthen its market presence. By addressing these competitive pressures with bold, strategic responses, TerraEats can sustain its position as a leader in Newfoundland's culinary scene.

Moreover, TerraEats could consider diversifying its pricing strategies. Offering tiered menu options, such as prix fixe meals or affordable tasting menus, might attract a broader range of customers without diluting its premium brand image. Finally, the integration of sustainable packaging and delivery services could open new revenue streams and further solidify TerraEats' reputation as a socially responsible business.