An Economic Overview of Bliss Street
- Creating an insider’s neighbourhood guide

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Shifting Character of Bliss Street
A small restaurant where one went for a sandwich or a breakfast of foule or hoummos, El Shami

Jarjoura had regular customers, some of whom went on a monthly basis. The patrons of this restaurant went there hopefully for a meal like they had at home. The menu was varied - Lebanese and other cuisines.

Bikhazi had regular customers, some of whom went on a monthly basis. The patrons of this restaurant went there hopefully for a meal like they had at home. The menu was varied - Lebanese and other cuisines.

Later, after World War II, Sami Khoury, who owned the locale, together with his friend Milisbah Shatila, opened a little place they called Uncle Sam's. With Sami the owner, what better name than “Sam”? The place grew with time and became, probably, the first restaurant in Lebanon where you could have American food—hot dogs, hamburgers, doughnuts, American coffee, waffles, pancakes, apple pies, etc.

Hasan Takkoush. Hasan was famous for his sweets, (sumsimm-yeh - made of sesame, and bundukiyyeh - made of hazel nuts). These delicacies - made at his house near the upper end of Jeanne d'Arc Street - were carried on a large tray and brought for sale at the AUB Main Gate.

Faysal’s was a restaurant and soda fountain. Not only did it serve breakfast, lunch, and supper, but coffee, ice-cream, and soft drinks. Coca Cola concentrate was imported and served mixed with soda water long before bottled Coca Cola came to Lebanon. Faysal’s was not only a place to eat, but also a place to meet - a meeting place for friends, AUB faculty, staff, students, the intelligentsia, journalists, as well as men and women of letters and the arts. Each group tried to stay at the same table or corner. They sipped coffee in the mornings, and other drinks later in the day.
Stakeholders
Government

AUB

students

+ staff

AUBMC

Hamra employees

Residents

After party youth

Families outside hamra

Businesses

Suppliers of materials

Developers

Real estate owners

Government

Direct

Economy

Indirect

Formal

Informal

Direct

Indirect

Formal

Informal

Formal

Informal

Relationship

formal

Informal

Police men

Kiosk at med gate

Valet services

Shoe shine

Lot parking workers

Parking meter control

Shoe shine

Valet services

Beggars

Parking meter control

Manager

Direct
THE CASE OF PARKING

THE ISSUE OF PARKING?

- Comfortable Space
- Safety
- Need for Parking
- Time
- Good Service
- Price
- Trust
- Knowledge
InterBusiness Relationship

HASSEAN
LABOR
THOMAS

THOMAS IS A PARKING WORKER (FOREIGN)

This parking needs subscription. But if you pay Thomas you pay daily.

LABOR IS WORKING ON THE CONSTRUCTION SITE. HE WORKS AS VALET

DO YOU FEEL SAFE PARKING THERE

HASSEAN THE PARKING GUY WHO DOES NOT HAVE A PARKING LOT

Invisible Market

SHARINK PARKING

social

MANAGER
THE CASE OF PRINTSHOPS

WHAT ARE THEY OFFERING?
WHAT ARE YOU PAYING FOR?

COMFORTABLE SPACE
LOYALTY
SERVICE

SYMPATHY
TIME
GOOD SERVICE
UNIQUENESS

TRUST
KNOWLEDGE

LOCATION OF PRINTSHOPS
$$$$ $$ PRICES RANGE
•••• SERVICE RATE
InterBusiness Relationship

GHALI

RIYAD

EMPLOYEE X

EMPLOYEE AT GHALI

Social | Gossip

GHALI IS THE OWNER OF A PRINTSHOP

This printshop was the most popular among other printshops until Riyad opens its own

RIYAD IS THE OWNER OF THE PRINT SHOP

He used to work at Ghali

EMPLOYEE X is working at Ghali

Friend with riyad
The Characters
Hassan
The parking guy who doesn't have a parking

3amo Ahmad
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The "know-it" all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
Parking I
- Only allows monthly subscribers to park
- Charges 150$ / month

Parking II
- Only allows monthly subscribers to park
- Charges 130$ / month

Hassan's Parking
- Only allows monthly subscribers to park
- Charges 150$ / month

Parking III
- Charges 8$ daily for non-subscribers
- Charges 200$ / month for subscribers

Expanded the business in 2014 by bringing two additional partners

2005

2010

2011

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn't have a parking

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Wael
The “know-it” all Guy
Primary Stakeholders in Hassan’s Business

Value: Economic
Shares a percentage of Hassan’s revenues in order not to give him parking fees

Value: Friendship
Have meals and coffee together

Value: Friendship / Branding
Puts Wael’s Fliers in the student’s cars on purpose

Value: Service / Friendship / Trust
Shares conversations and coffee, borrows some student’s cars when in need

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn’t have a parking

3amo Ahmad
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Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The “know-it” all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB
“Everything changed. The shoes are slippers today! Before the war, they dressed much better.”
Ahmad Budair – 2014

Born outside Beirut
1925

Moved to Beirut, lived in Hamra
1936

Started working on Bliss street, near old Faissal/McDo

Became close to AUB students, bliss residents and known figures such: Marwan Hamadeh, Walid Joumblatt, Tahseen Khayyat, Norbert Hirschhorn

Died at the age of 89
2014

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn’t have a parking

Sammo Ahmad
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The “know-it” all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
Primary Stakeholders in Ahmad’s Business

**Value: Economic / Solidarity / Sympathy / Trust / Friendship**
Residents and students opened a monthly informal account in the name of 3amo Ahmad at Abu Naji

**Value: Friendship**
Have meals and coffee together

**Hassan**
The parking guy who doesn't have a parking

**3amo Ahmad**
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

**Riad**
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

**Wael**
The “know-it” all Guy

**Student X**
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

**Mustapha**
The head Barista at Abu Naji

**Abu Naji**
Founder of Abu Naji since 1960

**Resident X**
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
Primary Stakeholders in Riad’s Business

Value: Primary Competitors
Share the same supplier and same type of students

Value: Secondary Competitors
Share half of the suppliers and different type of students

Value: Service
Prints at Riad because of the lower cost

Value: Service \ Friendship \ Trust
Brand Riad, sometimes visit him for a coffee, do not follow regular payments

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn't have a parking

3amo Ahmad
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The “know-it” all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
2010
Entered AUB

2011
Started offering paid educational services for students
Hired people to distribute his brochures on Bliss

2014
Graduated

Trendsetter and promoter for other brochures distributors

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn’t have a parking

3amo Ahmad
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The “know-it” all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
Primary Stakeholders in Wael’s Business

Value: Primary Competitors
Other distributors gather in the same spot promoting the same services

Value: Friendship / Branding
Puts Wael’s Fliers in the student’s cars on purpose

Value: Service
Prints at Riad’s

Value: Service
Refrains from contacting clients directly

Hassan
The parking guy who doesn’t have a parking

3amo Ahmad
The local, friend, and the everlasting smile on Bliss

Riad
A major stakeholder in the printing shops business

Wael
The “know-it” all Guy

Student X
One of the 1000 students graduating each year from AUB

Resident X
One of the many residents living on Bliss Street
Our proposed intervention
The Insider’s Guide to Bliss
-a new app for an alternative, affordable experience

EAT

HEALTH

BEAUTY

COPY

BANK

PARK
How it works

The Insider's Guide to Bliss compiles up-to-date information on both informal (invisible) services and traditional services in and around Bliss Street. This single app allows the user to discover affordable services quickly and with ease.

**Search by:**
- Type of service
- Location
- Cost comparison

**Features:**
- Ping for service - users can call for the service to their location
- Receive daily discounts

**Provide feedback:**
- Let others know of new businesses and services
- Describe and rate the quality of the service
- Provide tips on how to negotiate with these services
Anticipated outcome

→ Improved access to essential services
→ Greater shared internal knowledge
→ Enhancement of safety around such services
→ Users can make their own choices with confidence

The Insider’s Guide to Bliss is an alternative solution to systems of alternative business on Bliss Street.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>COST</th>
<th>SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3ND RYAD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BOOKS AND PENS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>GHALI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MALIKS</td>
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<tr>
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The Insider’s Guide to Bliss

Welcome! Name of the User

The Insider’s Guide to Bliss
NEWS

EAT
HEALTH
BEAUTY
COPY
BANK
PARK

Customer Care

Location | Cost | Services
---------|------|--------
Parking Lot
Parking Meters
Free Public Parking
Valet Parking

Find a Valet Near Me
Merci