

Final Report

Jim Grips

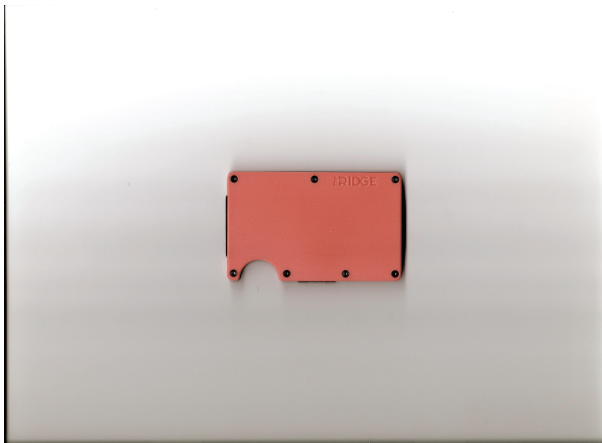
GCM 495

Rachel Polachek

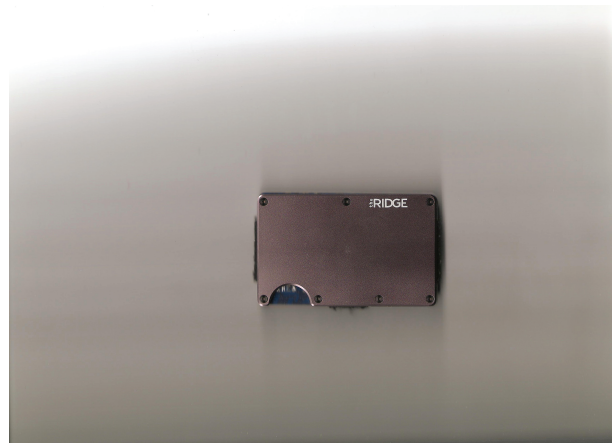
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My internship project started with creating a brand and brand identity. However, before my internship project officially began, I went through the stages of product development. I created a skin for the Ridge Wallet. The Ridge Wallet is a minimalist wallet, popular with EDC (everyday carry) enthusiasts. It comes in a handful of colors and a few different materials. I was looking for ways to make it more customized and that's when I created a skin for the wallet.

After the initial idea, I scanned my polycarbonate Ridge Wallet, but found it to be slightly different than the aluminum wallets which were more popular. Since Ridge was discontinuing the polycarbonate wallets, I scanned my dad's aluminum wallet and decided to use that one for the outline. I straightened the image in Photoshop and using Adobe Illustrator, I traced the image with the Pen Tool. I printed a sample and it was a little off along the edges and around the screws. I printed around five more samples, making adjustments each time, before settling on the sixth cut.



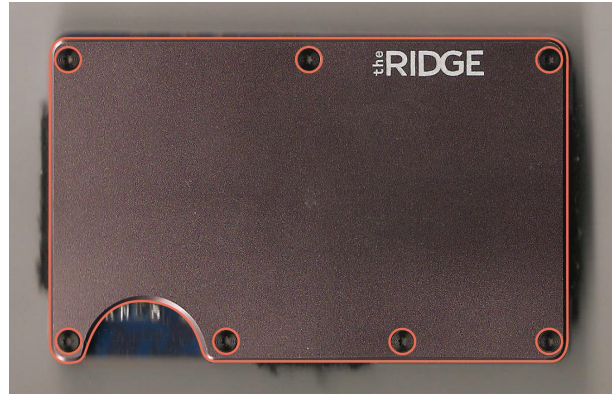
Original scan of red polycarbonate wallet.



Scan of aluminum wallet.



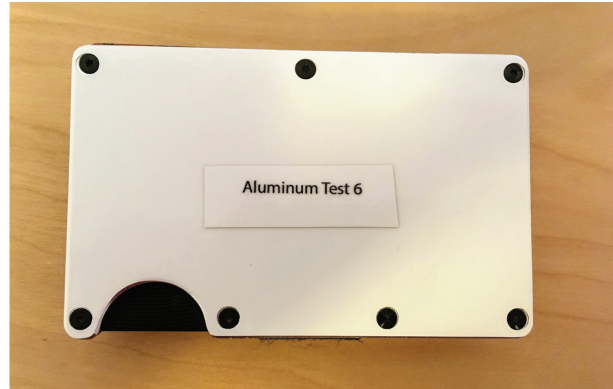
Scan of aluminum Ridge with first pen tool outline.



Scan of aluminum Ridge with final pen tool outline.



First outline applied on wallet.



Final outline applied on wallet.

As you can see with the first outline, the outside edge is close so it avoids the small bevel along the outside of the wallet. The circles for the screws are larger and extremely close to the edge, causing the material to be very thin and rip along the edges once applied. The final outline is slightly larger, the screw circles are smaller and more accurate.

Now that there is a product to sell, it was a time to create a Brand Name and Identity. I started by jotting down brand name ideas on a piece of paper. I had in total around twelve name ideas. After narrowing them down the following were left: "Eco Grips", "One Grip", and "All Grips". First, I searched for them on GoDaddy to see if domains were available. The domains were either hyphenated or already taken.

To try and help make a decision I started sketching out different logo ideas for each name. When I was getting my dad's opinion on my name and logo ideas I had the idea to name them Jim Grips. My dad's name is Jim and he was the first to carry a Ridge Wallet in our family. At first I just joked about it, but the domain name was available and I put together a logo for it. I liked the domain name for a few reasons. First, the domain wouldn't be hyphenated. Secondly, it had a good backstory and I could envision some marketing tactics I could possibly implement. Thirdly, it would be easy and simple to remember.

I took the brand name and logo to my mentor and friend to get his opinion. He too liked "Jim Grips" for the same reasons. I bought the domain and created a Shopify Account to start creating my website. I also created accounts for e-mail, social media, and Mail Chimp. In addition, I created a style sheet containing the brand logo, colors, and fonts.



jimGRIPs

Now that the brand name and identity had been decided and accounts created, it was time to start putting together the website. I opened up a storefront through Shopify and started adding elements such as the logo, photos, and spots where products and collections would go. I tried a few website templates and updated a couple for a while until I had a good idea of the layout and how things would look. I created the "About Us" and "Contact Us" pages.

After creating the overall layout of the website, it was time to start putting together a collection of designs. I knew of a few specific designs I wanted such as carbon fiber, camo, and summer-inspired designs. I created some designs myself and also looked into websites that sold artwork/designs such as Shutterstock and Creative Market. I bought a few designs from Creative Market that were more intricate and unique. I altered and changed some of the designs to make

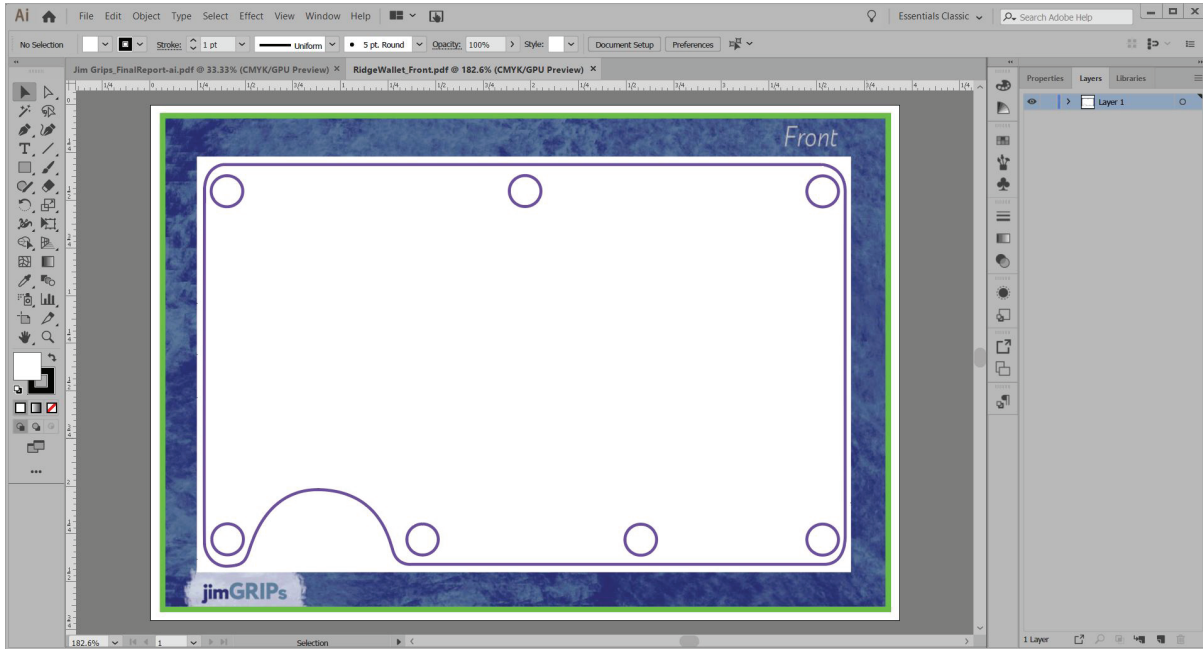
them more unique to what I was looking for and what fit with the wallet design. After I had a good amount of designs with a nice mix of ones I created and bought I got to work on putting together a collection.

I started by creating a template which I would be able to add to files for printing and a different file with which to create product image renderings. I created the print file template through Illustrator. I created a product border containing the logo and either “front”, “back”, or “front+back”. The border was created in Photoshop using the two colors in the logo and combining them using a combination of brushes. I had four templates for printing in total.

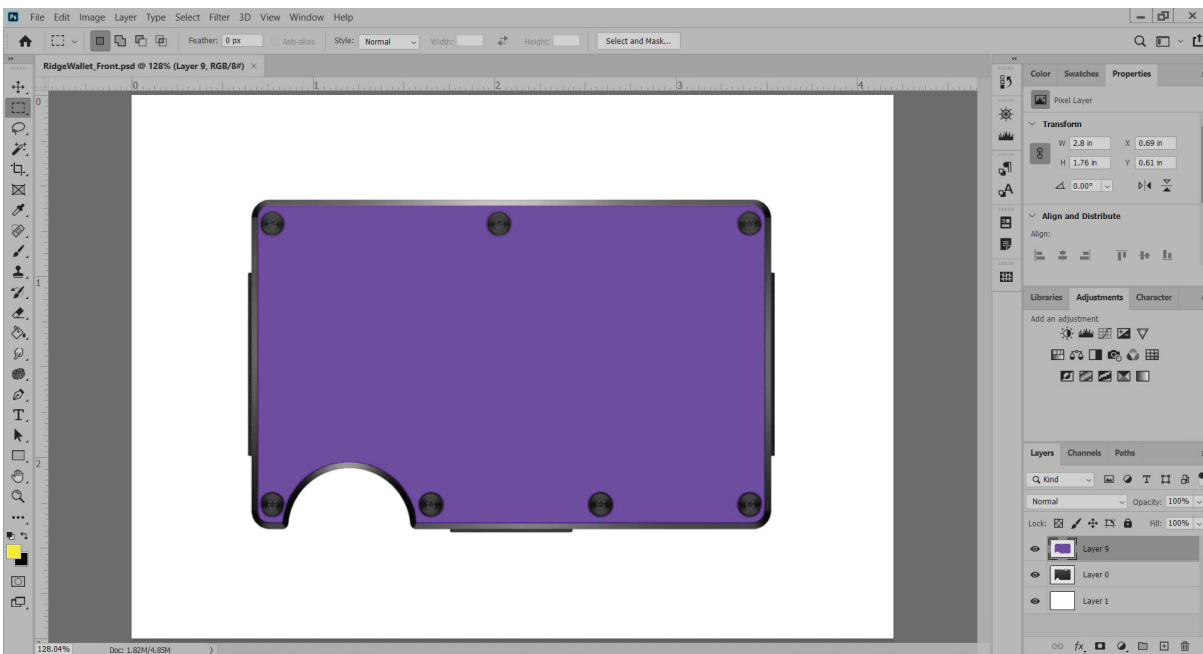
Next I created a template in Photoshop for the product images to put on the website. I started with a basic image of a Ridge Wallet, then I created a filled outline with solid colored mimicking a grip for the Ridge. I then added each design separately and created a clipping mask; making sure they matched the print files. I saved them as image files and uploaded them to the website. For the textured grip I used the same method but had to add an effect to the design to create a textured look.

Before uploading them to the site, I created a Collection on Shopify. I then created a Template for the product that I could easily duplicate to add in the designs. The template included a product description, tags, and pricing. I then added in the designs and their variants. When creating a template for the product on Shopify, I created five or six in total just trying to figure out the best way to set up the variants. I was in contact with support trying to figure out if the available options could be automatically chosen and shown. I was told it could possibly be done, but would have to be sent to the design team and would cost an undetermined amount. I decided to wait and see how things developed.

I utilized keywords and SEO's. I used the website SEM Rush to view keywords popular with the Ridge Wallet and made sure to utilize those in the product and collection descriptions. I added alt text to the product images and also created SKU's for each product and its variant.



A screen shot for the Illustrator template for the front of the wallet. There are three more, for four in total. One for the back, both the front and back, and then one for the textured grip front. The inside purple lines represent the kiss cut and the green outline is the perf cut.



A screen shot for the Photoshop Render template for the front of the wallet. There are two additional; one for the back and another for the textured front. The second layer contains an image of the Ridge Wallet. The third layer contains a blank purple grip. This purple layer is used to create a clipping mask for designs.

Free Shipping on all orders over \$25

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HOME SHOP



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Featured Collection



Tropical Triangles Ridge Wallet Grip
from \$9.99



Summer Breeze Ridge Wallet Grip
from \$9.99



Sketched Wave Ridge Wallet Grip
from \$9.99



Old Glory Ridge Wallet Grip
from \$9.99

[VIEW ALL](#)



Be Like Jim.

Jim has a Ridge Wallet and Jim also has a Jim Grip on said wallet. Put a Jim Grip on your wallet and be cool, like Jim.

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Home » Ridge Wallet Grips

Ridge Wallet Grips

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BEST SELLING

Ridge Wallet Grips are designed specifically for the Ridge Wallet. Made with an eco-friendly vinyl or textured grip material, they ensure a perfect fit that won't obstruct screws, clips, or straps. Protect and personalize your minimalist wallet with one of our customized designs.



Tropical Triangles Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Summer Breeze Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Sketched Waves Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Old Glory Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



King of Hearts Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Carbon Fiber Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



BBQ Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Rusted Metal Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Patriotism Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Patriotic Camo Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Kayaks Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Camo Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Burlap Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Blue Jeans Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Beach Vibes Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99



Beach Retreat Ridge Wallet Grips
from \$9.99

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Thank you for visiting our store!

Tag us on social media with your Jim Grips to be featured on our social media pages!

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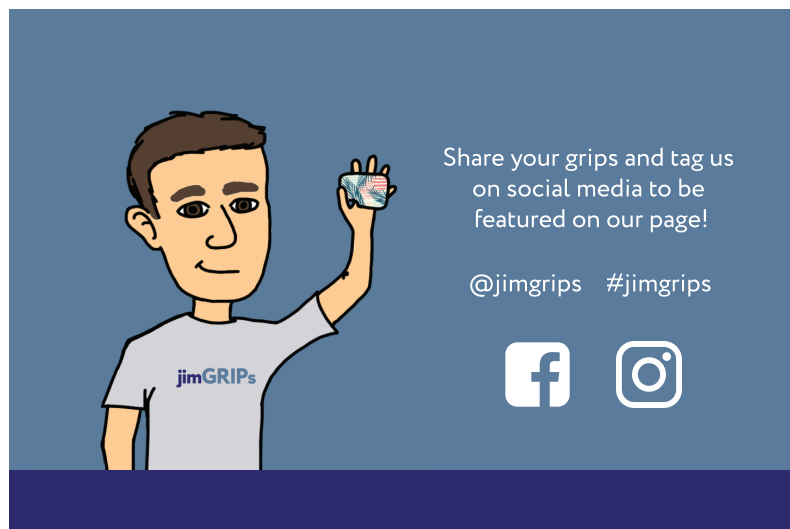
Screen capture of product page on website. <https://jimgrips.com/collections/ridge-wallet-grips>

As you can see from the Home Page screen capture there is a cartoon holding a Ridge Wallet with a design on it. This cartoon is Jim; he's sort of like a mascot for Jim Grips. He's inspired from my dad and helps to represent the company. I created Jim on Photoshop using a Wacom Tablet. I sketched him out and traced him on photoshop and got the design on the Ridge using a clipping mask. This allows me to easily switch designs in the image.

After getting everything on my website and creating the products, I had to create a shipping post card. I created the post card using a mix of Photoshop and Illustrator. For the front of the card I used the two main blue colors and blended them with a mix of brushes. For the back, I kept it simple and straightforward.



Front




Back


Once my website and products were created, it was time to turn my attention to creating some content for social media. I decided to focus on photography to showcase my product. I printed out a few designs and went to multiple locations to get images. I went into Pittsburgh and took images in the city and by the rivers. I also went on some hikes and to a local lake, park, and walking trail. I took hundreds of photographs of different designs in different settings. Once I narrowed down the images, I edited them using Photoshop. After this, I drafted posts on Instagram and Facebook. After I launched my website, I started posting them.

The following are a few of the posts from Instagram.







 jimgrips • Following ...

 jimgrips Sunny days and beachy vibes. 🌞 🏖️ 😊

•
One of our favorite designs here at Jim Grips. Beach Vibes is simple and clean. You'll almost feel like you're sitting on a beach.

•
•
•
•
#jimgrips #ridgewallet #minimalism #minimalist #edc #edcgear #everydaycarry #summervibes

1w


 Liked by sacred_sparklez and 11 others

JULY 28

Add a comment...

Post



 jimgrips • Following ...


 jimgrips The grip is in the details. 😊

•
Our textured material provides an extra layer of grip and protection to your wallet. 😊🙌

•
•
•
•
#jimgrips #ridgewallet #minimalism #minimalist #edc #edcgear #everydaycarry #tropicalvibes #tropical #summervibes #summer

3d

 Liked by sacred_sparklez and 6 others

3 DAYS AGO

Add a comment...

Post

Although all the products and pages were set up on my website, and some marketing materials were in place, I wasn't ready to launch. I had to complete a few other tasks first. I went through and added some apps to website. There are a few essential ones I needed. These included a bulk image edit app, bulk product edit app, quick announcement bar app, an e-mail pop up app, and an app called Shop Sync. Most of these are self-explanatory. The e-mail pop up app lets you create a pop-up with a coupon code which the customer receives if they put in their e-mail. This helps to increase your chances of receiving subscribers. The Shop Sync app syncs your Shopify store with Mail Chimp. Mail Chimp is, at the most basic level, an e-mail campaign service website. It allows you to easily send e-mail campaigns to your subscribers so it is essential that it connects to your Shopify account.

I then had to go through the account settings. Settings contains the fourteen following tabs: General, Locations, Plans and Permissions, Payments, Notifications, Store Languages, Checkout, Gift Cards, Billing, Shipping and Delivery, Files, Legal, Taxes, and Sales Channels. Most of these were fairly straightforward. General contains general information such as name, address, phone number, etc. The Locations is where you are located and will be shipping orders from. Plans and Permissions contains your plan information and who has permission to view it. Payments is the type of payments you will collect and Notifications are the notifications that are sent to you and your customers when orders are placed, shipped, etc. Store Languages are the languages your store can be shown in. Checkout is where you can customize your online checkout process and Gift Cards is where you can edit them and their settings. Shipping and Delivery you specify what location you are shipping out of and shipping costs. Also if you are shipping Domestically and/or Internationally. Files shows photos and documents you upload to your website. Here you can update and delete ones you are no longer using. Legal contains all of your policies. Although Shopify provides a basic template, they need to be updated for your site specifically and there was a lot that needed to be changed.

The Taxes section was one of the most involved and of which probably took the longest to figure out. Among other things, I had to apply for an Employee Identification Number (EIN) and figure out if I needed to charge PA sales tax yet. After applying for an EIN, I had to contact Shopify customer support where I was connected to their Tax Team and sent them my EIN forms from the IRS. I also learned that I did not need to charge PA sales tax unless I made over six-hundred dollars in sales or would be continuing the business for longer than six months.

After all of this, I was ready to launch my website. I launched the website and made my first post on Instagram announcing the launch. Since then, I have received a few orders. A couple were from friends and family. My second order was from the COO of The Ridge. He ordered a few grips and I reached out through e-mail and note. I thanked him for his order and told him about my project. I explained I was reaching out to see if they were interested in working together on joint campaigns/releases and product designs/ideas.

I printed his order on 3M LX480MC vinyl material and BriteLine BL-MG4825 material. Using an HP 315 Print and Cut Solution, the grips were printed, laminated, and cut out. They were shipped via USPS First Class Mail.



The following is some information regarding starting a business and the different types.

Business 101:

To start you should check the USPTO Patent Search for your business idea to make sure you're not infringing on any patents. Trademark search for your business or product name. Assuming you aren't infringing on a patent, you can file for these to be legally binding of your proof of ownership. You can also do a 'poor man's patent' which would be mailing your idea, trademark, logo, etc... to yourself. The envelope would contain a government issued date of your idea which is legally binding.

The following are articles of incorporation which you could file. LLC is a limited liability company which takes the liability off the individual. A Sole Proprietorship is where you work for yourself and the liability is on you. An S Corp contains a board of directors where meeting minutes is required. A C Corp contains a board of directors, has meeting minutes, and stock options.

After deciding how your business will incorporate you would file for an EIN number, which is the business version of a social security number. This is how your business will file taxes. If you need grants, government contracts, or larger loans you would file for a DUNS Number.

The two main incorporations are Sole Proprietorship's and LLC's. With Sole Proprietorship's all money made is taxed on all assets, is simple easy, and has a higher tax rate. An LLC separates the liability and ownership from the individual to the company so that you can operate and function outside your personal life. It protects you from lawsuits, has a lower tax rate, and your personal and business finances and taxes are separate.

You're able to deduct things you use for your business such as a car or room in your house or an entire office, as long as it's used for the business. These things that you use and buy specifically for your business would be able to be deducted from your taxes. If you own a business you always want to have an accountant and/or tax advisor because there are so many rules on what you can and can't do and everything is taxed differently.

As I started this project and wrote out an outline, although it looked like a fair amount of work, I thought most of it would probably be straightforward. However, as I worked through the different steps I realized there was no clear cut, straight path. I would find myself starting on one section of the website, but then my attention would have to turn to a different task so everything would be able to line up. There were a lot of little, tedious tasks I had to work through to feel like I had completed anything at times. At other times, it was overwhelming what to complete and start next. I found it hard to figure out what needed prioritized because everything needed to be done.

There were quite a few spots where I would get stuck and have to take a break; particularly within the account settings and taxes. My mentor, who was helping to advise me on the project, repeats the saying "If it was easy everyone would do it.". That's what he found as he was starting his business years ago and still finds today. I found myself saying it to myself, because it is true. There are so many places along the way to get stuck, put off a tedious task, and then never come back to it.

I had to scrap a lot of ideas, start from scratch, and re-create templates and all of my designs at one point after deciding to do things differently. I was on chat support quite a bit and brainstorming ideas for different ways to set things up and new things I could try. Although I've been posting on social media, gaining people's attention is also extremely hard. I've had a small amount of traffic to my website. However, the difficult part is converting those visitors into customers and that's what I'll continue to work on. For the foreseeable future I'm going to continue marketing this product. I'll maybe have the opportunity to partner with the Ridge, as I know they're continuously looking for ways to customize their wallets.

I feel like this product has a real chance to make even a small profit, it's just getting recognized in today's ever saturated market of never ending products.

Overall, I really enjoyed completing the project. At times it was hard and overwhelming, but it was also extremely exciting and accomplishing to complete. It's given me a new perspective on business owners and everything that goes into starting and maintaining a business.