

Business Plan-Long Form/Complex

Cover Page: Cover pages should be professional and high-quality. This is the first thing that potential investors will see.

The Business Concept

Compelling Story: What makes your business story unique?

First Customer: What is going to bring your first customer into your business place? What is their story, and why are they compelled to choose you? What does your ideal customer look like?

Value Proposition: What unique value or service does your business offer that can't be found anywhere else?

How Benefits will be Delivered: Do you have a brick and mortar facility? Is your product a physical item or a service? How will it be administered?

Business Model: Explain how your business will be structured. Do you offer a product or service? Do you offer many products/services to many customers, or specific products/services to targeted customers?

Potential for Growth & Spinoffs: Will your business be able to expand or become a franchise?

Founding or Management Team

Critical Task Accomplishment: What tasks must be completed before your business is able to launch?

Gap Analysis: Identify where gaps exist in your organizational structure, distribution processes, financing needs, staffing requirements, and any other areas of your business.

Industry/Market Analysis

Porter's Five Forces: How competitive is the market? Complete a Porter's Five Forces analysis to determine the market intensity and industry attractiveness for your business.

Target Market Analysis: Who is your target customer and why? Does your product or service match your target audience?

Customer Profile: Are you targeting males or females; young or old; single individuals, families, or retirees? Who, specifically, are you targeting, and what are their interests, tastes, and dislikes?

Niche Market Entrance: What niche need are you addressing, and how to plan on breaking into the market?

Competitor Analysis and Competitive Advantages: Who are your competitors, direct and indirect? What makes your business stand out against the rest of the market?

Distribution Channels: How will your customers receive your product or service? Will you need to develop distribution channels or do channels already exist?

Product/Service Development Plan

Current State of Product/Service Development: Is your product or service a prototype? Does it meet regulatory standards?

Tasks and Timeline to Completion: What needs to be completed until your product or service can be made public? How long will it take? Is your timeline feasible?

Intellectual Property Acquisition: Do you need patents or copyrights for your products or services? Do you plan on licensing your products or services?

Plan for Prototyping and testing: What does your product look like, and how are you going to test it? If it is a service, how are you going to gauge the need for your service?

Operations Plan

Facilities: Do you need to build new facilities, are you renting, or is this an existing business? Are there any specific infrastructure needs that must be addressed for your business to succeed?

Business Processes: What are the specific, key processes that are going to drive the way your business functions? Is there a hierarchy that needs to be followed? Are there multiple shifts that need to be staffed?

Outsourcing Plan: What specific business processes, if any, will be outsourced? Are all business processes going to be done in-house, such as accounting, payroll, HR services, legal aid, cleaning, etc? If not, what functions are going to be outsourced to other companies?

Manufacturing and Distribution: Does your product require manufacturing and/or assembly? How will your product be distributed to the public—directly, from your location, indirectly from a third party, via the internet, or a combination of the above?

Organizational Plan

Management Philosophy and Company Culture: What values drive your management team? What does your company culture look like?

Legal Company Structure: How will your company be legally registered? Is your business a for-profit or non-profit organization?

Organizational Chart: Do you have a Board of Directors or a management hierarchy? What does the chain-of-command look like?

Key Management Duties and Responsibilities: What are the key duties of your management team? What are your policies and procedures to hold management accountable to their duties?

Marketing Plan

Purpose of the Marketing Plan: Are you trying to break your company into a new market? Are you trying to generate sales or leads within an existing market? Are you just trying to share your company information? Are you trying to develop your brand?

Target Market: How old are your customers? How much money do they make? Are they well educated? Do they live in city centers or rural areas? Are you targeting businesses, individuals, or both?

Unique Market Niche: Why are your customers going to choose you? What product or service can you offer that sets you above your competitors?

Business Identity: What does your business do that sets it apart from the other, similar businesses? Value, customer service, community involvement, being “green”...how does your business identify itself?

Financial Plan

Key Points and Capital Requirements: How much is your stake in your business? What funding is required to fully operate your business as intended? Are there funding gaps that need to be filled?

Risk Factors and Mediation: How strong is your credit? Do you have any existing assets to leverage? What can be done to alleviate any negative credit marks?

Break-Even Analysis and Payback Period: How much revenues will you need to generate to equal out your expenses? How long will it take to repay your investors/loans (prepare two: timeline with perfect conditions “best case scenario” and timeline at break-even points)

Narrative Assumptions for Financial Statements: Is this plan based on worst-case or best-case scenarios? What are the impacts of incorrect assumptions?

Pro Forma Financial Statements for Three Years: Complete a three-year projection plan. At what point does your business break-even? How long until you turn a profit?

Plan for Funding: Do you have many investors and/or partners, or are you the only individual providing upfront funding for your business? Can you apply for grants or loans?

Growth Plan

Strategy for Growth: When do you project your business will be ready to grow? Will this require additional facilities or production space? Will you have to add more staff or more products/services?

Resources Required: What will it cost, in terms of financial and human capital, to expand? Will new positions be created?

Infrastructure Changes: Can your business expand in their current facility? Will you have to purchase more equipment or additional office space?

Contingency Plan: What is your back-up plan if financing, location, supply-chain, or distribution channels fail or change?

Harvest Strategy: Do you want to buy-out, expand, franchise, retire, or maintain permanent ownership?

Timeline to Launch: All things considered, present a realistic and attainable timeline for your business to launch.

Appendix A: All Projections, Charts, Infographics and similar supporting visuals should be included in corresponding appendices.

References: Be prepared to back-up your research and data! All statistics and facts should be supported with factual and reliable sources.