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# Executive Summary

This section should be a maximum of one page.

Write this section last.

Include everything you would cover in a 5-minute interview.

Make it enthusiastic, professional, complete, and concise.

Explain the fundamentals of the proposed business: What will your product or service be? Who will your customers be? What do you think the future holds for your business and your industry?

# Company Description

This section should be a maximum of one page.

What business will you be in? What will you do?

Mission Statement (30 words or less)

Company Goals and Objectives

Business Philosophy

To whom will you market your products? (State it briefly here – you will do a more thorough explanation in the Marketing Plan section.)

Describe your industry. Is it a growth industry? What changes do you foresee in the industry, short term and long term? How will your company be poised to take advantage of them?

Describe your most important company strengths and core competencies. What factors will make the company succeed? What do you think your major competitive strengths will be? What background experience, skills, and strengths do you personally bring to this new venture?

# Products and Services

This section should be approximately two pages.

Describe in depth your products or services (technical specifications, drawings, photos, sales brochures, and other bulky items can be included in the Appendices).

What factors will give you competitive advantages or disadvantages? Examples include level of quality or unique/proprietary features.

What are the pricing, fee, or licensing structures of your products or services?

# Marketing Plan

***This is the first major section of the business plan.***

The information you provide here will be based on secondary market research. This means you will look at published information such as industry profiles, trade journals, newspapers, magazines, census data, and demographic profiles. This type of information is available in public libraries, industry associations, chambers of commerce, from vendors who sell to your industry, and from government agencies such as Statistics Canada.

In this section, be as specific as possible: give statistics, numbers, and sources. The marketing plan will be the basis of the sales projection. Please include in the references and appendices which sources you used and how you arrived at the numbers you provide.

## Market Segmentation

Describe:

* the market of interest and how it is currently segmented
* your target market and its total size
* current demand in the target market
	+ provide some rationale for the demands identified (e.g., sources, references, etc.)
	+ identify any trends in your target market: growth trends, trends in consumer preferences, trends in product development, etc.
	+ relate these points to the growth potential and opportunity for your business

## Product

Describe the product/service in terms of features and benefits as perceived by your customers. Note: ***features*** are what you build into a product and ***benefits*** are what customers perceive and pay for.

Describe:

* describe the most important features. what is special about it?
* describe the benefits. what will the product do for the customer?

What after-sale services will you provide? Consider: delivery, warranty, service contracts, support, follow-up, refund policy.

## Customers

Within your target market segment, identify your target customers. Use the geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioural variables as needed to create a profile of your customers.

## Competition

What products and companies will compete with you? List the major ones. Briefly describe how you are different from them (in terms of features and benefits).

Will they compete with you across the board, or just for certain products, certain customers, or in certain locations?

Will you have important indirect competitors? For example, video rental stores compete with theaters, although they are different types of businesses.

Identify your two most important competitors and fill out the Competitive Analysis table. Please use the general format as provided. You may customize the list of factors as appropriate for your industry. Write a few words to compare you against the two competitors identified. If more space is needed, note it separately and describe it after the table. In the “Strength or Weakness” column, indicate whether you think the corresponding factor will be a strength or a weakness for you be labeling “S” or “W” respectively.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Factor** | **Me** | **Strength or Weakness?** | **Competitor A** | **Competitor B** |
| **Products** | *few words* | S | *few words* | *few words* |
| **Price** |  | W |  |  |
| **Quality** |  | S |  |  |
| **Selection** |  | S |  |  |
| **Service** |  | … |  |  |
| **Reliability** |  |  |  |  |
| **Stability** |  |  |  |  |
| **Expertise** |  |  |  |  |
| **Company Reputation** |  |  |  |  |
| **Location** |  |  |  |  |
| **Appearance** |  |  |  |  |
| **Sales Method** |  |  |  |  |
| **Credit Policies** |  |  |  |  |
| **Advertising** |  |  |  |  |
| **Image** |  |  |  |  |

Summarize by stating your competitive advantages and disadvantages.

## Marketing Strategy

Describe:

* niche (approximately one paragraph; where do you fit in best given the competitive analysis above?)
* the strategy
* promotion and budget: how will you get the word out to customers? ads, prints, graphics, etc.
* price and pricing strategy
	+ explain your method(s) of setting prices
	+ how do the prices compare with those of the competitors?
	+ show a simple break even analysis, including fixed costs and variable costs
* distribution channels: how will you sell your products or services? e.g.:
	+ retail, direct, web, agents, bids, etc.

## Sales Forecast

Do a “best guess” forecast, based on your chosen marketing strategies, findings from the market research, and any industry data available. Note that the numbers in “Unit Prices” may not change over time. But you may provide promotional packages that give long term customers a discount. The third table is just the combination of the first two tables (multiply the corresponding table cells).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit Sales** | **July 2020** | **August 2020** | **September 2020** |
| **Product** |  |  |  |
| **Service Package** |  |  |  |
| **Training** |  |  |  |
| **Other** |  |  |  |
| **Total Unit Sales** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit Prices** | **July 2020** | **August 2020** | **September 2020** |
| **Product** |  |  |  |
| **Service Package** |  |  |  |
| **Training** |  |  |  |
| **Other** |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Sales** | **July 2020** | **August 2020** | **September 2020** |
| **Product** |  |  |  |
| **Service Package** |  |  |  |
| **Training** |  |  |  |
| **Other** |  |  |  |
| **Total Sales** |  |  |  |

#

# Operational Plan

***This is the second major section of the business plan.*** Create subsections as needed to discuss the following points:

* production: how and where are your products and services produced? explain your method of:
	+ production techniques and costs
	+ customer service
	+ product development
* web plan
	+ domain name registration
	+ website design and development
	+ identify all relevant user groups for your system
	+ provide a logical design of the system and identify major components
	+ description of functionality for each system component – explain how each functionality is meant to support your business needs
	+ mockups of website
* order placement and payment methods
* inventory (if applicable)
	+ what kind of inventory will you keep: raw materials, supplies, finished goods, etc.

# Management Summary

***This section should be a maximum of one page. If the company size is small (i.e., fewer than 8 people total), then this section should be very short.***

If your company requires more than 8 people to operate, then be sure to discuss:

* the company’s organizational structure
* key positions to operate the company

# Financial Plan

This section is typically the heart of the business plan for most readers. However, in the context of this course project, ***this section is considerably shorter than the Marketing Plan and the Operational Plan*** sections. The crucial components of this section are tables, numbers, and charts. Please be sure that the numbers you provide are realistic, and cite relevant sources to back that up. For each table and chart you include, please be sure there is accompanying text that describe the key points illustrated in those tables and charts.

## Startup Expenses

List the expenses needed to start your business. Below is an example table. Please modify as needed. At the bottom of this table is a row for “Contingencies”. A general rule of thumb is to use 20% of the expenses for this bracket. Please leave this percentage intact.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Item** | **Cost** |
| **Current Assets** | Starting cash |  |
|  | Starting inventory |  |
|  | Prepaid insurance |  |
|  | Other prepaid expenses |  |
| **Capital Assets** | Machinery and equipment |  |
|  | Office Furniture |  |
|  | Automobiles |  |
|  | Computers and data processing equipment |  |
|  | Leasehold improvements |  |
|  | Tools and other assets |  |
| **Startup Expenses** | Office supplies |  |
|  | Advertising |  |
|  | Fees and licenses |  |
|  | Utility hook-ups |  |
|  | Miscellaneous |  |
| **Subtotal** |  |  |
| **Contingencies** |  | **20%** |
| **Total** |  |  |

## Twelve-Month Profit and Loss Projection

Please see excel template.

# References

Please cite all the references you used in a consistent format. If you use information from a website, please include the URL.

# Appendices

Include detailed materials here and explain what they are.