[Company Logo] or [**Company Name**]

**BUSINESS PLAN**

[Current Month], [Year]

[Name]

[Title]

[Company Name]

[Address 1]

Tel: [ ]

Fax: [ ]

Email: [ ]

Website: [ ]

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**I. Executive Summary**

***Key Questions to Answer:***

* *What does your business do?*
* *What market need does your business solve?*
* *What are 4-7 reasons why your business will be successful?*
* *How much capital, if any, are you seeking for your business?*

Normally 3-4 pages, including some (2-3) graphs / tables.

**II. Company Overview**

**Company Profile**

* Where are you located?
* When were you formed?
* What is your legal entity form?

**Company Vision/Mission Statement**

* What fundamental value is your company trying to create and for whom?

This includes mentioning of products/service, but more detail about product/service should be in either a separate section or integrated, as in this template, with Market Plan.

* Company 'Mantra'

**Past Accomplishments**

* What successes have you (or your company) already achieved?

**III. Industry Analysis**

**Market/Industry Overview**

* In what industry will you compete?
* Industry characteristics in terms of Technology, Supply Chain, Global vs. Local, Customer Interfaces, Business Models, Regulations…?

**Market/Industry Trends**

* What are the key industry trends and how do they affect you? Consider the same elements as above in terms of trends, i.e., Technology, Supply Chain, Global vs. Local, Customer Interfaces, Business Models, Regulations…
* Assess past, and anticipate future growth
* Assess drivers for growth and how drivers evolve and might change in the future

**Unique Qualifications**

* What qualifications make your business uniquely qualified to succeed in the industry when you relate your value proposition and intended business model to what is already out there?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION YOU NEED TO TALK TO EXPERTS IN THE INDUSTRY/SECTOR, I.E., INDUSTRY EXPERTS, CONSULTANTS SPECIALIZED IN THE SECTOR, SALES REPRESENTATIVES, WHOLESALESR, DISTRIBUTORS AND RETAILERS IF APPLICABLE, INDUSTRY ASSOCIATIONS, ACADEMICS RESEARCHING THE INDUSTRY…

**IV. Customer Analysis**

**Customer Needs**

* What are the key needs of your target customers?

**Target Customer Profile**

* Who are your target customers?
* What are the major characteristics of the customers with these explicit or implicit needs? Give basic demographic profile.

**Relevant Market Size**

* How large is your relevant market (the # of customers that can realistically buy from you)?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION SOME FORM OF MARKET RESEARCH HAS TO BE CONDUCTED. FOR A START-UP IT IS NORMALLY IN THE SHAPE OF DIRECT CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS AND FOCUS GROUPS USING DEMOS, MOCK-UPS, SIMULATIONS… THE RESULTS ARE PRESENTED IN THE B-PLAN THROUGH BASIC DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, CASE EXAMPLES AND STORIES SHOWING HOW CUSTOMER REACTIONS ARE SHAPING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE VENTURE; NOT ONLY THE PRODUCT/SERVICE BUT THE ENTIRE BUSINESS MODEL.

**V. Competitive Analysis**

**Who are the important (big, famous, iconic, neighboring…) players in the industry?**

* What are their distinctive offers?
* What are their strengths?
* What are their weaknesses?

**Direct Competitors**

* Who are your direct competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

**Indirect Competitors**

* Who are your indirect competitors? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

**Competitive Advantage**

* What are your competitive advantages? Are these sustainable (can competitors emulate them)?

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION YOU NEED TO TALK TO EXPERTS IN THE INDUSTRY/SECTOR, SIMILARLY TO WHEN YOU DO THE INDUSTRY ANALYSIS.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, IS TO ACCESS COMPETITORS' OFFERINGS AND TEST THEM, USE THEM, CHALLENGE THEM AND 'DISMANTLE' THEM IN WHATEVER WAY THIS CAN BE DONE DEPENDING ON YOUR OWN PRODUCT / SERVICE.

**VI. Product / Service and Marketing Plan**

*THIS SECTION LINKS DIRECTLY TO RESULTS OF SECTION IV. AFTER DESCRIBING PRODUCT/SERVICE (HERE OR EARLIER), THE BRANDING, PROMOTION AND DISTRIBUTION PLANS WILL SHOW HOW YOU FIT YOUR OFFER TO THE CUSTOMERS YOU ARE TARGETING, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT MARKET TRENDS.*

**Products and/or Services (THIS CAN BE A SEPARET SECTION BETWEEN THIS TEMPLATE'S II AND III)**

What are your products and/or services? Provide basic ID sheet for ONE lead product/service:

* Name
* Description of design and features
* How does it work and what does it offer– Answer this with a basic example of use
* Product/Service System: Components and/or related services
* Current stage of development: Plan, prototype, pre-series, demos…
* Proprietarily rights if any
* Intended market price

**Branding and Promotions Plan**

* What is your desired brand positioning?
* How do you plan to promote your company’s products and/or services?

**Distribution Plan**

* How will you sell your products and/or services to customers? Directly? Through partners/distributors…?

**VII. Operations Plan**

**Key Operational Processes**

What are the key operational processes that your organization needs to accomplish on a daily basis to achieve success?

* Production?
* Service Flow?
* Supply Chain, Inventory Management and Logistics?
* Distribution?
* Virtual processes on web / mobile networks?

**Business Milestones**

* What milestones will you need to accomplish over the next 12 months – month-by-month, in order to achieve success?

This concerns all activities in the development of your venture, all parts of the Business Plan and Business Model Canvas in a chronological order.

TO COMPLETE THIS SECTION YOU NEED TO SIMULATE YOUR WHOLE VALUE CREATING PROCESS FROM A - Z, WHATEVER THIS COMPRISES IN TERMS OF RAW MATERIAL ACCESS, COMPONENT SUPPLY AND STORAGE, PROCESSING, CODE WRITING, LICENCES, PERMISSIONS, DISTRIBUTION (PHYSICAL OR DIGITAL), PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS, SUB CONTRACTING… MANY PLANS FAIL TO ACTUALLY SHOWING PROOFS THAT COLLABORATIONS HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH ALL THE PARTNERS AND PROVIDERS NEEDED TO MATERIALIZE THE PRODUCT / SERVICE AND GET IT TO THE CUSTOMER.

**VIII. Management Team**

*The Management Team section of the business plan must prove why the key company personnel are “eminently qualified” to execute on the business model.*

**Management Team Members**

* Who are the key members of your management team? Brief bio of positions held, experiences, qualifications, education, awards, soft skills…

**Management Team Gaps**

* Who do you still need to hire? Why? What are the specific profiles you still need?

**Board Members / Advisors**

* Do you have a Board? An informal advisory board/group? Any other advisors or mentors? Brief experience profile and position of all individuals taking part in any such scheme.

**IX. Financial Plan**

**Revenue Model**

* *In what ways do you generate revenues?*

**Financial Highlights**

**Key Assumptions**

* What key assumptions govern your financial projections?

**Topline Projections**

* What are your topline 3-5 year financial projections?

Give as much details as possible for 12 + 6 + 6 months. Then discuss scenarios up to 3 or 5 years with some exemplifying depending on each case.

**Funding Requirements/Use of Funds**

* How much money do you need to start and/or run your business?
* What are the primary uses of these funds?
* What is your 'burn rate'? (The rate at which a new company uses up its venture capital to finance overhead before generating positive cash flow from operations. In other words, it's a measure of negative cash flow, usually cash used / month).

**Exit Strategy (or Repayment Strategy)**

* How will equity investors be paid? How will debt investors be paid?

**X. Risk, opportunity and sensitivity**

**Identify the main risks that might hamper the achievement of your plan**

* Describe each risk, its nature and source
* Discuss its likelihood of occurrence
* Discuss the impact on cashflow if each risk does occur

**Identify the main opportunities that can work in favor of your plan**

* Describe each opportunity, its nature and source
* Discuss its likelihood of occurrence
* Discuss how the opportunities can outbalance the risks – give specific examples illustrating a few likely scenarios. Give further detail in the sensitivity analysis below.

THE OBJECTIVE IS TO SHOW THE BACKER OF THE PLAN THAT THERE IS NO SHOWSTOPPER RISK IN YOUR PLAN AND THAT OPPORTUNITIES OUTWEIGH RISKS.

**Sensitivity**

* Quantify certain risks and opportunities and run some scenarios to show how cashflow forecasts are affected.

THE OBJECTIVE IS TO SHOW THAT CASHFLOW FORECASTS REMAIN ROBUST AND ARE ABLE TO STAND UP AGAINST REASONABLE ASSUMPTIONS DERIVED FROM RISK.

SHOW THAT YOUR PLAN IS ROBUST AND BACKABLE!

**CONCLUSION**

A one-page wrap up of the plan.

It is a summary of the Exec Summary with the essential conclusions emerging from each of the plan's sections.

**Appendices**

*The Appendix is used to support the rest of the business plan.*

*Indicatively, appendices can include:*

* Product/Service Details
* Technology: Technical drawings, patent information, etc.
* Customer and market segment details – Market Data
* Expanded Competitor Reviews
* Operations Data
* Environment, Health and Safety Data
* Projected Income Statements, Balance Sheets and Cash Flow Statements
* Partnership and/or Customer Agreements – Letters of Intent…

**SEVEN COMMON WEAKNESSESS / OMISSIONS IN B-PLANS**

***THEY SHOULD NOT BE IN YOURS!***

1. **There are *no key numbers* on sales, growth, margin, market size, market share… ALL backers look for *bottom line* (and most are number-crunchers by profession). If key numbers are missing, right from the Executive Summary, your plan goes in the bin!**
2. **There is *no discussion of market demand drivers*, of what lies behind the need for your offer and how market dynamics will act in favor of your growth and development.**
3. ***Competitors are dismissed*, treated as irrelevant. Competitive intensity and competitors' capabilities are ignored. Competitors will not ignore you, so *you should not ignore them*!**
4. ***MY VENTURE is the best* – such 'pub-talk' is common in B-plans but should be banned! Emphasize value and meaning that you create for your intended customers, and show through examples/cases, supported by numbers if possible, *how you make a difference*.**
5. **There are *some ghost team members*, some backers, some experts, some advisors… OK, fine, but WHO are they? WHAT are their qualifications? HOW can they really back the venture?**
6. **There are *no plans for growth and expansion* after launch of a first product or service. Your venture should be *scalable* and your first offer is just the first in a series of developments or potential expansions. Which are these? How will you grow organically from your first market launch?**
7. **What, *no risk* in your venture??!! ALL ventures have risks and failure to identify, to assess and analyze their impact means an irrelevant plan.**

**AND REMEMBER…**

**A BUSINESS PLAN IS A DOCUMENTATION OF AN UNFOLDING VENTURE.**

**IT IS NOT AN EXERCISE IN PLANNING.**

**IT IS AN EXERCISE IN DOCUMENTING WHAT YOU *DO*, BASED ON YOUR RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTATION, AND WHAT YOU *BELIEVE IN*, BASED ON INFORMED ANTICIPATION.**