# Instructions

How to use this template:

1. Read the instructions carefully. This will help you understand how to fill out the template and what information is required.
2. Fill out each section of the template. Be sure to provide as much detail as possible. **This template is meant to serve as a guide only. You may wish to add, delete, or modify sections based on the intended audience of your plan.**
3. Review your business plan. Once you have filled out the template, take some time to review it and make sure it is complete and accurate.
4. Share your business plan with others. Get feedback from your team or colleagues to ensure that your plan is sound.

Tips for tailoring your business plan:

* The structure of this document is a guide only. You may need to delete or add sections depending on your business type or the intended audience of your plan.
* Be sure to tailor the language and tone of your plan to your target audience.
* Use visuals to help illustrate your points.
* Keep your plan concise and easy to read.

**[cambridgesavings.com](https://www.cambridgesavings.com/)**

Business Plan for [Enter business name here]

Part 1: Organization and Marketing Plan

# [Business Name] At-a-glance

## Company Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Doing Business As |  |
| Business Structure (LLC, Sole Proprietorship, etc.) |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Email |  |
| Address |  |
| Mailing Address (If Different from Address) |  |
| Website |  |

**Plan prepared:** [MM/DD/YYYYY]

**Prepared by:** [Name of Preparer]

**Copy:** [##/##]

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**Part 2: Financial Documents**

# Executive Summary

## Mission

[Insert text - This is the thesis statement and states business plan objectives. Use the key word approach (who, what, where, when, why, how, how much) to summarize the following:

Your Company (who, what, where. when)

What your objectives are.

Why you will be successful.

If you need financing, why you need it, how much you need and how you intend to repay the loan or benefit the investor.]

## Company History and Management

[Insert text - Give a broad overview of the nature of your business. Using the key word approach, tell when and why the company was formed, describe the nature and uniqueness of the services and/or products provided, and review the general development of the company. Project a sense of where you see your company going in the next few years. **(This statement should not exceed one page.)**]

## Products/Services

[Insert text – Give a brief description of the product or service your company provides. Outline exactly how you can solve a problem for your customers.]

## Market

[Insert text – Provide key takeaways from your market analysis to summarize how large the market is for your product or service.]

## Competitive Advantage

[Insert text – Identify key strengths and differentiators that will lead your customers to choose your business, rather than your competition.]

## Financial Projections

[Insert text - Estimate the sales projections for the first year in business. At a minimum, you should have at least a one-year projection, but it may be better to have three to five years if you can project that far ahead.]

## Financing Requirements

[Insert text - State what it will cost to get the company launched and running. You may tackle this as a first-year requirement or if you have made further projections, look at two to three years of cost needs.]

# Our Team

## Management Structure and Team Members

[Insert text – Describe your company’s structure and the credentials of key members of the management team. You may consider creating an organizational chart depending on the number of members and complexity of your organizational structure.]

## Retention and Recruiting

[Insert text – Briefly describe your organization’s process and strategy for attracting, developing, and retaining talent. Be sure to consider salary, benefits, team-building activities, and training programs, if applicable.]

## Vacant Positions

[Insert text – Are you currently hiring for any open positions? Do you see your team growing soon?]

## Mentors and Business Support

[Insert text – Are you connected with any mentors or networking groups, i.e., accelerators, chambers of commerce, etc.?]

# Market Research and Analysis

## Target Customer

[Research your target market. This may include population data on age, wealth, family, interests, or anything else that is relevant for your business. Fill in the sections below to outline your market.]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Demand: Is there a desire for your product or service? |  |
| Market size: How many people would be interested in your offering? |  |
| Economic indicators: What is the income range and employment rate of your target customers? |  |
| Location: Where do your customers live and where can your business reach? |  |
| Market saturation: How many similar options are already available to consumers? |  |
| Pricing: What do potential customers pay for these alternatives? |  |

### If you’ve created a customer persona, outline the details below.

[Insert text – Have you thought about creating one of more customer profiles of the specific type of people you plan to target? If so, discuss this here. Check out [this link](https://www.semrush.com/blog/buyer-persona/?kw=&cmp=US_SRCH_DSA_Blog_EN&label=dsa_pagefeed&Network=g&Device=c&utm_content=622080544485&kwid=dsa-1754723164073&cmpid=18348486859&agpid=145169394950&BU=Core&extid=60113850002&adpos=&gad=1&gclid=CjwKCAjw04yjBhApEiwAJcvNoZxxZjrmGNhKhxKIS5VnqUqopD0cNBo8_TcM0HRr6Ulo1IPcd13NMxoCMU0QAvD_BwE) for more information on creating customer personas.]

### List the most effective ways of approaching your target customers.

[Insert text – Note each method you intend to use to market your offerings to potential customers.]

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Market segment/persona | Channels | Messaging/value proposition |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## 

## SWOT Analysis

### What are your business’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats?

[Fill out the SWOT analysis below by listing **your business’s** strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in the left column. Detail how you could mitigate threats and weaknesses and leverage strengths and opportunities on the right.]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strengths | *I will capitalize on them by:* |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] |
| Weaknesses | *I will mitigate them by:* |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] |
| Opportunities | *I will capitalize on them by:* |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] |
| Threats | *I will mitigate them by:* |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] |

### How does your SWOT analysis inform your business strategy?

[Insert text – Do you have a specific strategy in mind, for example, leveraging a specific strength to capitalize on an opportunity?]

## Competitor Analysis

### Who are your main competitors?

[Fill out the table below with the strengths and weaknesses of at least three key competitors.]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Competitor | Market Share (est.) | Strengths | Weaknesses |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] |
| [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] | [Insert text] |

### How will you combat their strengths and target their weaknesses?

[Insert text]

### Are there any barriers to entry or unique advantages to entering the market?

[Insert text – Think about the following questions:

* How important is your target market to your competitors? Are you targeting an underserved market segment?
* How do you expect your competitors to react to a new or growing competitor?]

# Marketing Plan

## Products/Services

### What products/services are you selling?

[Insert text – List each of the products/services your business will offer. Use as much detail as possible and specify which segment they will appeal to, if you offer different products/services for different market segments.]

### Why will potential customers buy your offerings?

[Insert text – Explain why customers will purchase your products/services rather than your competitors’. What differentiates your offerings?]

## Pricing

### How much will you be selling each of your products/services for?

[Insert text – List the prices, or ranges of prices, you plan on charging customers.]

### How have your competitors priced their products/services?

[Insert text – Research competitors and detail their main competing offerings here, along with the prices they’re charging.]

### If you have relatively high prices, how will you justify them?

[Insert text – If your business has prices higher than your competitors’, explain how you plan to justify these higher prices.]

### If you plan to compete on low prices, how will you keep them low?

[Insert text – Consider how changing your suppliers or implementing operational improvements to your business may help you pass savings onto your customers.]

## Placement

### Where will your products/services be available for sale?

[Insert text – Are you exclusively selling through a brick-and-mortar location, or will you employ a mix of in-person and online sales?]

### How will your product placement change as your market share grows?

[Insert text – Do you have any plans to test an online channel or acquire another physical location?]

## Promotional Strategy

### What are the features, advantages, and benefits of your offerings?

[Insert text – Discuss these in relation to how you will advertise your products.]

### What is your advertising message?

[Insert text – How will you show the benefits of your products/services and suggest a ‘need’ or a ‘problem’ that your offerings can solve for consumers? Do you have a slogan?]

### What is your overall marketing budget?

[Insert text – How much money do you have to spend on marketing activities as a whole?]

### How will you raise awareness of your business/brand?

[Insert text – Write down any upcoming events, activities, sponsorships, or contests you’re planning to create to increase awareness of your brand.]

### How will you use marketing to drive sales?

[Insert text – Consider options like sending out coupons in a weekly newspaper to draw in customers to your place of business. Is there an opportunity to place your product in a TV show, film, or webpage to increase your visibility?]

## Promotional Tactics

### How will you use online marketing to increase sales and brand awareness?

[Insert text – How will online channels drive your marketing? Consider each of the areas below and detail how it factors into your marketing activities or delete rows that are not applicable.]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Search Engine Optimization (SEO): The process of optimizing your website's content and structure to improve its visibility and ranking in search engine results pages. |  |
| Social Media Marketing: The use of social media platforms to promote your brand, engage with customers, and drive website traffic. |  |
| Content Marketing: The creation and sharing of valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience and drive profitable customer action. |  |
| Email Marketing: The use of email to promote your products and services, build relationships with customers, and drive website traffic. |  |
| Search Advertising: A form of online advertising where your ads may trigger when a consumer types a relevant query into a search engine. you pay each time someone clicks on your ad. |  |
| Display Advertising: The use of banner ads and other visual ads to promote your products and services on websites and social media platforms. |  |
| Affiliate Marketing: A form of performance-based marketing where you pay affiliates to promote your products and services and drive sales. |  |
| Video Marketing: The use of video content to promote your brand, engage with customers, and drive website traffic. |  |
| Influencer Marketing: The use of social media influencers to promote your brand, products, and services to their followers. |  |
| Other |  |

### Which social media platforms will your business utilize and why?

[Insert text – Discuss which platforms you’ve chosen and why they will be the most useful for your business. If you plan to create a blog or run a website, include these details too.]

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Website | [Enter address] | Blog | [Enter address] |
| LinkedIn | [Enter address] | TikTok | [Enter address] |
| Facebook | [Enter address] | YouTube | [Enter address] |
| Instagram | [Enter address] | Tumblr | [Enter address] |
| Twitter | [Enter address] | Pinterest | [Enter address] |
| Reddit | [Enter address] | Other | [Enter address] |

## Marketing Budget

[Insert text – Include a breakdown of the costs of your marketing plan. Try to be as accurate as possible.]

Business Plan for [Enter business name here]

Part 2: Financial Documents

**Instructions:**

Insert relevant financial documents after these pages, using the divider sheets as needed to clearly demarcate where each statement begins and ends. Below is a **suggested** list of financial documents to include. You may choose to include a different set of documents based on your situation.

1. **SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL NEEDS** This is an outline giving the following information: (1) Why you are applying for financing; and (2) How much capital you need.
2. **LOAN FUND DISPERSAL STATEMENT** You should: (1) Tell how you intend to disperse the loan funds; and (2) Back up your statement with supporting data.
3. **PRO FORMA CASH FLOW STATEMENT (Budget)** This document projects what your Business Plan means in terms of dollars. It shows cash inflow and outflow over time and is used for internal planning. It is of prime interest to the lender and shows how you intend to repay your loan. Cash flow statements show both how much and when cash must flow in and out of your business.
4. **THREE-YEAR INCOME PROJECTION** A Pro Forma Income Statement showing your projections for your company for the next three years. Use the revenue and expense totals from the Pro Forma Cash Flow Statement for the first year’s figures and project for the next two years according to expected economic and industry trends.
5. **BREAK-EVEN ANALYSIS** The break-even point is the point at which a company's expenses exactly match the sales or service volume. It can be expressed in: (1) Total dollars or revenue exactly offset by total expenses; or (2) Total units of production (cost of which exactly equals the income derived by their sales). This analysis can be done either mathematically or graphically. Revenue and expense figures are drawn from the three-year income projection.

*NOTE: The following (F,* G, *H) are Actual Performance Statements. They reflect the activity of your business in the past. If your business is new and has not yet begun operations, the financial section will end here, and you will add a Personal Financial History. If yours is an established business, you will include the following actual performance statements:*

1. **BALANCE SHEET** Shows the condition of the business as of a fixed date. It is a picture of your firm's financial condition at a particular moment and will show you whether your financial position is strong or weak. It is usually done at the close of an accounting period. Contains: (1) Assets, (2) Liabilities and (3) Net Worth. You may also be required to supply your lender with a Projected Balance Sheet if you are a new business.
2. **PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT (Income Statement)** Shows your business financial activity over a period of time (monthly, annually). It is a moving picture showing what has happened in your business and is an excellent tool for assessing your business. Your ledger is closed and balanced and the revenue and expense totals transferred to this statement.
3. **FINANCIAL STATEMENT ANALYSIS** In this section you will use your Income statements and balance sheets *to* develop a study of relationships and comparisons of: (1) Items in a single year's financial statement, (2) comparative financial statements for a period of time, or (3) your statements with those of other businesses. Measures are expressed as ratios or percentages that can be used *to* compare your business with industry standards.
4. **BUSINESS FINANCIAL HISTORY** This is a summary of financial information about your company from its start to the present The Business Financial History and Loan Application are frequently one and the same. If you have completed the rest of the financial section, you should have all of the information you need to transfer to this document.

# ****Summary of Financial Needs****

## **Reason for Applying for Financing**

## Capital Needed

Loan Fund Dispersal Statement

Pro Forma Cash Flow Statement

Three-year Income Projection

Break-even Analysis

Balance Sheet

Profit & Loss Statement (Income Statement)

Financial Statement Analysis

Business Financial History