

Business Plan Outline

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Visit: <http://www.satbusinessconsulting.com/Services.html> for the comprehensive version of this plan that explains the outline in much greater detail.

Executive Summary (placed prior to the Table of Contents)

It's important to communicate the factors that will make your business successful in a competitive market. Outline key details, but avoid repeating complete paragraphs.

Table of Contents (new page)

I. Describe the Plan's Purpose

Is the purpose of the plan to attract investors, obtain a bank loan, to use internally for starting and operating your business, etc.?

II. Mission Statement

Define your business at the most basic level. It should tell your company's story and ideals: who your company is, what you do, what you stand for and why you do it.

III. Market Analysis

Explain the market need for your product or service, and that you not only understand this need, but also can meet it and be profitable.

- A. Industry Description and Outlook
- B. Customer Profile / Target Market
- C. Market Test Results
- D. Lead Times
- E. Competition
- F. Environment / Regulatory Restrictions.

IV. Company Description

Provide an overview of how all of the elements of your company will fit together without going into detail, since most of the subjects will be covered in depth elsewhere in the plan.

- A. Nature of Your Business
- B. Strengths (primary factors that will lead to your success)
- C. Weaknesses (competitive disadvantages).

V. Marketing and Sales Activities

Describe both general and specific activities that will allow you to meet the sales and margin levels indicated in your prospective financial statements.

- A. Overall Marketing Strategy
- B. Sales Costs / Strategies.

VI. Products and Services

Special attention should be paid to the readers of your business plan as you develop this section. Too much detail will have a negative impact on most external users of the plan.

- A. Detailed Product/Service Description (from the user's perspective)
- B. Product/Service Positioning (identify primary strategy)
- C. Product Life Cycle

- D. Copyrights, Patents and Trade Secrets
- E. Research and Development Activities.

VII. Operations

Be certain that the level of detail included in the plan fits the specific needs of the plan's readers. In some cases, a simple paragraph or two may be sufficient.

- A. Production and Service Delivery Procedures
- B. Production and Service Delivery Capability
- C. Facility / Office Requirements
- D. Operating Competitive Advantages
- E. Suppliers
- F. Manpower Requirements.

VIII. Management and Ownership

Your management team's talents and skills are some of the truly unique aspects of your company. If you are going to use your plan to attract investors, this section must emphasize your management's talents and skills, and indicate what distinctive capability they possess that cannot easily be replicated by your competition.

- A. Management Staff Structure
- B. Key Managers
- C. Planned Additions to the Current Management Team
- D. Legal Structure of the Business
- E. Owners
- F. Board of Directors.

IX. Required Funding and Use

Any new or additional funding reflected in your prospective financial statements should be discussed here.

- A. Current Funding Requirements
- B. Funding Requirements over the Next Five Years
- C. Use of Funds
- D. Long-Range Financial Strategies.

X. Financial Data

Contains the financial representation of all the information presented in the other sections. Various prospective scenarios can be included.

- A. Historical Financial Data (past three to five years, if applicable)
- B. Prospective Financial Data (next three to five years)
- C. Analysis.

XI. Implementation Plan

Define future actions required, supported by charts, schedules, milestones, etc.

Appendices or Exhibits

Any additional detailed or confidential information that could be useful to the readers of the business plan, but is not appropriate for distribution to everyone receiving the body of the plan, can be presented here. These should be bound separately from the other sections of the plan and provided on an as-needed basis to readers.