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[Replace County star with Business LOGO]

**Business Plan for**

**[Insert Legal Business Name]**

Date:

Prepared by:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Website:

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## Executive Summary

Write this section last. Be brief but impactful with your answers, highlighting the important points and explaining the value of your business. This section should make the reader want to continue reading.

* What is your business name and what is your business structure?
* When did you open / when do you plan on opening? (making sales)
* Where is your business located / operating out of?
* What products / services are you selling?
* What is your unique value proposition and how do you differentiate from your competition?
* Who are your main customer segments you will sell to?
* Why do you know these customers will buy your product or service? (what problem are you solving?)
* What type of marketing strategies and advertising means will you use to promote and sell?
* What will the owner(s) bring to the business to make it a success?
* Do you have any major opportunities available and / or do you have major goals to highlight?
* What are your (if applicable) current sales and profits, and what are your expected sales and profit?
* What are your total start-up (or expansion) costs?
* How are you funding the start-up (or expansion)?
* If you are requesting funding (loans, investors, grants, etc.) through means of this business plan, what will the funding be used to buy?

## Company Profile / Business Description

* What is your registered business name?
* What is the business structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, or corporation)?
	+ Who are the owners? / What is the ownership breakdown?
* Where is the business located and what is the address (if online only, what is the website)?
* When did the business open (or expand) / is it opening (or expanding)?
* What do you provide to your customers (what products / services do you sell)?
* What is your unique selling (value) proposition?
* What does your brand represent?
* What is your Mission Statement: what is the purpose of the business? (focused on objectives)
* What is your Vision Statement: what is your long-term goal for the business? (focused on future goals)

## Company History

* Why did you start the business?
	+ What problem did you see an opportunity to solve?
	+ Where did you get the idea?
* What is the history of the business?
	+ When did it open (expand) / when you do plan on opening (expanding)?
	+ What type of successes or failure have your experienced to date?
* If operational, what type of sales and profits have you experienced?
* Who are you?
	+ How do your passion, experience, education, and skills relate to the business?

## Products & Services

* What products / services are you selling?
	+ What are they like? What are the attributes of the products or the process of the service?
	+ What value does the customer get from the product or service?
* Besides the value, what key traits are you trying to sell your product / service on? Quality? Service? Price? Sustainability?
* Why will a customer buy from you instead of the competition? What sets your business apart?
* What experience will the customer have when buying from you? What is it like to deal with you and your business?
* What is your branding like? How do your logos, colours, messaging, communication, customer service, physical and online environment, etc. define your brand?

## Customers

* Overall, who is your target market (your best customer)?
* Is your business selling to a customer (B2C) or a business selling to another business (B2B)?
* If selling B2C What are your top two or three customer segments?
	+ For each segment, what are their demographics (age, gender, ethnicity, income, marital status, family, education, occupation, etc.)?
	+ For each segment, what are their lifestyle and psychographics (interests, hobbies, values, personality, attributes, etc.)?
* If selling B2B What are your top two or three customer segments?
	+ For each segment, what is the industry, size (by employees, profit, or budget, etc.), organizational structure, location, decision maker, etc.?
* What is your local market (what geographical region(s) are you selling to)?
	+ How many of your target market customers are in this area?
* What type of market research did you conduct to learn about your target market and what were your findings?
	+ Did you conduct primary (your own) and / or secondary (existing resources) research?

## Marketing & Sales

* What are your top three marketing activities to reach and sell to your best customers?
* \*Consider completing the Marketing Activities table at the end of this document.
	+ How will you implement these action-driven activities and know if they are working?
		- Answer: How, where, when, how often, budget, expected results
	+ What are your support tools to help these activities? (ex. Business cards, website, etc.)
* What is the sales process like for your customers? How does the customer purchase and receive the product or service?

## Industry

* What industry is the business in?
	+ What is the history and projected future of this industry (growing, stable, declining)?
	+ What is the industry worth (nationally, internationally, etc.)?
	+ What are the average sales or profit of businesses in the industry?
	+ Are there any trends, opportunities, or threats within your industry that have or may affect its future?
* For your consideration: Are there any regulations or licenses you need to be in this industry?
* Who are your top competitors (including indirect competition)?
	+ How many main players are there?
	+ Why are you different from the competition?
	+ What are their key strengths and weaknesses?

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Competitor** | **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
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## Objectives & Action Plan

* What milestones do you want and need to reach in the near and distant future to open (or expand) your business?
* \*Consider completing the Objectives & Action Plan table at the end of this document.
	+ What actions do you need to take to achieve these milestones?
	+ When do you need to achieve them by?

## Operations

* Where do customers buy from you (in store, online, mobile, and / or salesperson)?
* Where is your business located / operated? What is the address?
	+ Do you own or rent the space? What are the terms / conditions?
	+ Why did you choose this location? Is it easily accessible to your customers?
	+ What is the facility like? How big is it? What does it look like?
	+ Did (or do) you complete any interior or exterior renovations / leasehold improvements to the facility?
	+ For your consideration: Is the location properly zoned, do you have any necessary permits (if needed), etc. to run from this location?
* What are your hours of operation?
	+ Are you closed certain days of the week or certain holidays?
* Do you currently have paid employees or contractors, and how many?
	+ What role(s) do they hold?
* Do you plan to hire or contract workers in the future?
	+ What role(s) will they fill?

* What type of people do you want on your team?
	+ What skills, experience, education, values, interests, attributes do you / will you require your employees to have?
* What type of insurance do you have for your business and what protection does it provide?
* Who are your suppliers and / or partners?
	+ Who are your back-up suppliers if issues arise with current suppliers?
* Who are your professional advisors?
* Are there any identified risks you should be prepared for?

## Financials

* What are your start-up (or expansion) costs?
	+ What are your funding sources: where did you get the money to start your business?
	+ If you are asking for money from an investor / a grant / etc., what will you use the money for? What is the repayment (if applicable) plan?
	+ Refer to your Start-Up (or expansion) budget / forecast.
* What prices are you selling your products / services for?
* What are your expected sales (monthly / yearly)?
	+ Are there any fluctuations in sales due to (for instance) marketing activities or seasonality?
	+ Refer to your Sales Forecast.
* What are your expected expenses?
	+ What are the cost of goods sold (COGS) of your products / services? (percentage or dollars)
	+ What are your fixed costs?
	+ What are your variable costs?
	+ Refer to your Cash Flow Statement
* What are your sales and profit to date (if applicable)?
* What are your expected sales and profits (year one and year two)?

## Contingency Plan

* What will you do if the business start-up (or expansion plans) fails? How will you repay loans, investors, obligations, etc.? What will you do with business assets? Do you have an exit strategy?
* What will you do if a major operational, marketing, staffing, etc. objective / goal is not reached?

## Templates

### Marketing Activities

* How will you implement the action-driven marketing activities and know if they are working?
	+ Answer: How, where, when, how often, budget, expected results

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type (how)** | **Where** | **Target Market** | **Cost per Activity** | **When & Frequency** | **Total # Activities** | **Total Cost $$** | **Expected Results** |
| **Jan** | **Feb** | **Mar** | **Apr** | **May** | **Jun** | **Jul** | **Aug** | **Sep** | **Oct** | **Nov** | **Dec** |
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### Objectives & Action Plan

* What milestones do you want to reach in the future and when do you want to achieve them by?
	+ \*Consider completing the Objectives & Action Plan table at the end of this document.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Overall Objective** | **Actions (to do)** | **Due Date** | **Status**  |
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