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Business Plan Outline

A. Your submitted business plan should include the following:

- Executive Summary
- Company Summary
- Products/Services Summary
- Market Analysis Summary
- Strategies and Implantation Summary
- Management Summary including resume(s)
- Financial Plan

B. In addition, we would like the following questions answered:

- a. How would my business benefit from locating in Downtown Columbus? (Limit 3000 characters)
- b. How would the proposed site meet my locational objectives? (Limit 3000 characters)

C. Entries must be submitted to ECDI, Attn> Douglas Craven, 1655 Old Leonard Avenue, Columbus, OH 43219.

All entries must be received or postmarked by August 18, 2014.

Business Plan:

Company Name

Company Tagline

Name, Title	
Address	
Phone	
Web Address	

Goals and Directions for Writing Your Business Plan:

1. *A business plan is your time to think through your business concept, product/services and pricing; customers and competition.*
2. *Take your time to research and provide facts and information instead of assumptions and desires.*
3. *The business plan is your road-map for implementation. You are not only stating what you are going to do, but how you are going to do it.*
4. *The Executive Summary portion of the business plan should be one page or less.*
5. *Your Executive Summary should be written last, it is a summation of your business plan, a quick snap-shot of your company, product, and goals; and, if asking for a loan or investment the amount you are asking for and how the loan/investment will be utilized.*
6. *Your business plan should not be a book! Be concise in your descriptions and explanations.*
7. *Not every category in the following table of contents is a requirement. Please review the following categories and what you want and need to share about your business concept.*
8. *Keep it simple, and most importantly, be realistic.*
9. *Once you are ready to begin writing each section of the plan be sure to delete the bolded/italic explanations from each section*

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II. Executive Summary

While the Executive Summary is the first section of your business plan it should be written last. The Executive Summary should be one page or less and is a snapshot of your entire business plan and should contain a statement of the business concept, goals and expectations.

A business plan should start with defining a problem and how your business will solve the problem or answer the question, "How are you different?"

If asking for a loan/investment be sure to state the amount desired and how the funds will be used. Also, if asking for investment money, state your exit strategy here and how your investor will receive a return on their investment. Be sure to write your business plan with your audience in mind.

III. General Company Description

The general company description should be one page or less. Where your Executive Summary is your snapshot of your entire business plan, the general company description is the snapshot of your company identity who and your customers are.

Describe the owners, percent of ownership per owner, and legal entity. Describe your business and industry. Be sure to state facts not opinions.

Describe your product/service and target customer.

Describe your company strengths and core competencies. Describe your background and experience.

While not a requirement, you can include your 'Mission and Vision' statements in this section.

IV. Products and Services

Start this section by describing in one to two paragraphs what your company provides, the need, and how you fill that need. After you have your description listed above complete the following bullet points:

- a. Pricing:
Describe your product/services, name of product, description of product and pricing.
- b. Feature & Benefits:
List product/service features and benefits.
- c. Competition:
List competition. Do not state there is no competition; there is always someone who could be considered a competitor. If you state there is no competition it could be construed you did not take the time to do your homework. If this is a totally new concept that has never been done before and you truly feel you have no competition, discuss how you will overcome competitors when they do enter the industry.
- d. Competitive Analysis:
Break down the differences between you and the competitors listed above.
- e. Niche:
Describe your NICHE. It is important to describe how you are different from your competitors, what sets you apart, why your target customer would choose your product/service.
- f. Sales Forecast:
Breakdown your sales forecast goals; and, why and how you feel you can achieve them.

V. Marketing Plan

Describe in one or two paragraphs your target market, size, and strategy for breaking into the market. One or two paragraph overview of marketing concept followed by a breakdown of each point listed below.

a. **Market Research:**

Explain your market research. There are online resources you can use for assistance with facts and figures, be sure to list your sources. Do not rely solely on internet research. Personally visiting and talking with competitors and customers shows you put effort into your research, and that you have taken the time to clearly understand your business. Every assertion should be provable by your research.

b. **Market Size:**

Explain the size of your market. List the resources used to gather the information such as census.gov, sba, library, etc.

c. **Target Market:**

Describe your perfect customer. Who are you attempting to reach with your marketing message?

d. **Market Strategy:**

Once you have done your homework and identified your market, describe what marketing you will use to get your message out to your target audience and why. Examples of marketing strategies include networking, social media, and advertising.

VI. Operational Plan

Describe in one or two paragraphs how your business will operate, legal entity, location of the business, and who will be involved in the business. List hours of operation.

If a product, describe your manufacturing and distribution. If a service, how will you provide the service?

One to two paragraph breakdown of your operations plan followed by a breakdown of the following:

a. Legal Entity:

Describe your legal entity and why.

b. Location:

Address, location, etc. of where your business will be located. Benefits of location for your business.

c. Personnel:

Besides your management team (that will be spelled out later) who will assist you launch and run your business? Describe the personnel, their role and experience.

d. Inventory:

Will you store inventory? If yes, explain the procedure.

e. Suppliers:

Who are your suppliers?

f. Credit Policies:

What are your credit policies? Will you accept credit cards? Will you offer discounts?

VII. Management and Organization

One to two paragraph overview of your management and organization followed by a breakdown of the following.

a. Management Team:

List owners of the organization including titles and bios. Who is your management team? Explain experience, jobs and titles. This is your chance to describe your management team and how their experience and knowledge will achieve the results touted in the business plan.

b. Professional Services:

Who are your professional advisors? Attorney, Accountant, etc. Be sure to provide contact information.

c. Consultants:

Are you working with consultants or advisors? List them with bios and describe how they are assisting you. If your management team does not have the experience investors would prefer don't fret or try to expound on experience you do not have, instead surround yourself with advisors who have the expertise potential investors are looking for and explain their roles within your organization.

VIII. Financial Breakdowns

Insert financial documentation to prove the viability of your business concept. Be realistic. Include a Personal Financial Statement, Start-up Expenses, Proformas, Projected Cash Flow and a Break-Even Analysis.

- a. Personal Financial Statement:
- b. Start-Up Expense Spreadsheet:
- c. Proformas: profit & loss
- d. Projected Cash Flow:
- e. Break-Even Analysis:

IX. Appendices – Supporting Documents

Include contracts, letters of intent, testimonials, anything that would show efforts achieved to date that will support your concept and prove the validity of your idea.