

Outline for Business Plan

I. Executive Summary

A. Opportunity

1. Problem Summary
2. Solution Summary
3. Market Summary
4. Competition
5. Overview
6. Why Us?

B. Expectations

1. Forecast
2. Financial Highlights by Year
3. Financing Needed

II. Opportunity

A. Problem & Solution

1. Problem Worth Solving
2. Our Solution

B. Target Market

C. Competition

1. Current Alternatives
2. Our Advantages

III. Execution

A. Marketing & Sales

1. Marketing Plan
2. Sales Plan

B. Operations

1. Locations & Facilities
2. Technology
3. Equipment & Tools

C. Milestones & Metrics

1. Milestones Table
2. Key Metrics

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IV. Company

A. Overview

B. Team

1. Management Team
2. Advisors

V. Financial Plan

A. Forecast

1. Key Assumptions
2. Revenue by Month [chart]
3. Expenses by Month [chart]
4. Net Profit (or Loss) by Year [chart]

B. Financing

1. Use of Funds
2. Sources of Funds

C. Statements

1. Projected Profit & Loss
2. Projected Balance Sheet
3. Projected Cash Flow Statement

VI. Appendix

1. Monthly Financial Forecasts
2. Additional Documentation

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STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?



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WHERE DO I START?

1. Conduct market research

Market research will tell you if there's an opportunity to turn your idea into a successful business. It's a way to gather information about potential customers and businesses already operating in your area. Use that information to find a competitive advantage for your business.

2. Write your business plan

Your business plan is the foundation of your business. It's a roadmap for how to structure, run, and grow your new business. You'll use it to convince people that working with you — or investing in your company — is a smart choice.

A sample outline of a business plan is included in this brochure.

3. Fund your business

Your business plan will help you figure out how much money you'll need to start your business. If you don't have that amount on hand, you'll need to either raise or borrow the capital. Fortunately, there are more ways than ever to find the capital you need.

4. Pick your business location

Your business location is one of the most important decisions you'll make. Whether you're setting up a brick-and-mortar business or launching an online store, the choices you make could affect your taxes, legal requirements, and revenue.

5. Choose a business structure

The legal structure you choose for your business will impact your business registration requirements, how much you pay in taxes, and your personal liability.

6. Choose your business name

It's not easy to pick the perfect name. You'll want one that reflects your brand and captures your spirit. You'll also want to make sure your business name isn't already being used by someone else.

7. Register your business

Once you've picked the perfect business name, it's time to make it legal and protect your brand. If you're doing business under a name different than your own, you'll need to register with the federal government, and maybe your state government, too.

8. Get federal and state tax IDs

You'll use your employer identification number (EIN) for important steps to start and grow your business, like opening a bank account and paying taxes. It's like a social security number for your business. Some — but not all — states require you to get a tax ID as well.

9. Apply for licenses and permits

Keep your business running smoothly by staying legally compliant. The licenses and permits you need for your business will vary by industry, state, location, and other factors.

