

Product Development and Marketing

Be Known from Sea to Sea

Unit 9

Unit- 9A

Develop A Business Plan



Put Together a Business Plan

Unit 9A

The following unit consists of articles, ideas and exercises to give your business ideas momentum! These articles are optional resources for your endeavors. Not every student is interested in having a home business. Do not feel pushed in anyway. Explore this path if it interests you.



Transformations:

- 1) Explore the idea of becoming your own boss and having a home business.
- 2) Develop a simple business plan.
- 3) Determine which resources you have available and what you might need.
- 4) Assess if this is a risk you wish to take, but remember you can scale it, so it is more-or-less expensive, depending on your resources.
- 5) Learn about labeling products- create a label that identifies your product with safety information, directions of use and contact information.
- 6) Learn about some marketing methods.
- 7) Find marketing resources and people.
- 8) Think about how you would be comfortable marketing your product.
- 9) Fantasize about the future of aromatherapy and how what you create may help build this future.

Unit 9A offers a smattering of articles for you to peruse on starting a business.

<http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5680-simple-business-plan-templates.html#sthash.m8ZDhAex.dpuf>

Writing a business plan is an important step in the startup process. It helps



you and your partners decide if you will work well together, teaches you about the marketplace, and lets you brainstorm business and product goals. But because of all the effort and detail involved, many entrepreneurs dread the thought of sitting down and creating this critical but

time-consuming document.

While business plans can be frustrating if you're writing one from scratch, there are plenty of online templates available to take some of the pain out of the process. Small business owners can benefit from simple, easy-to-follow business-plan tools so they can spend less time writing and more time launching.

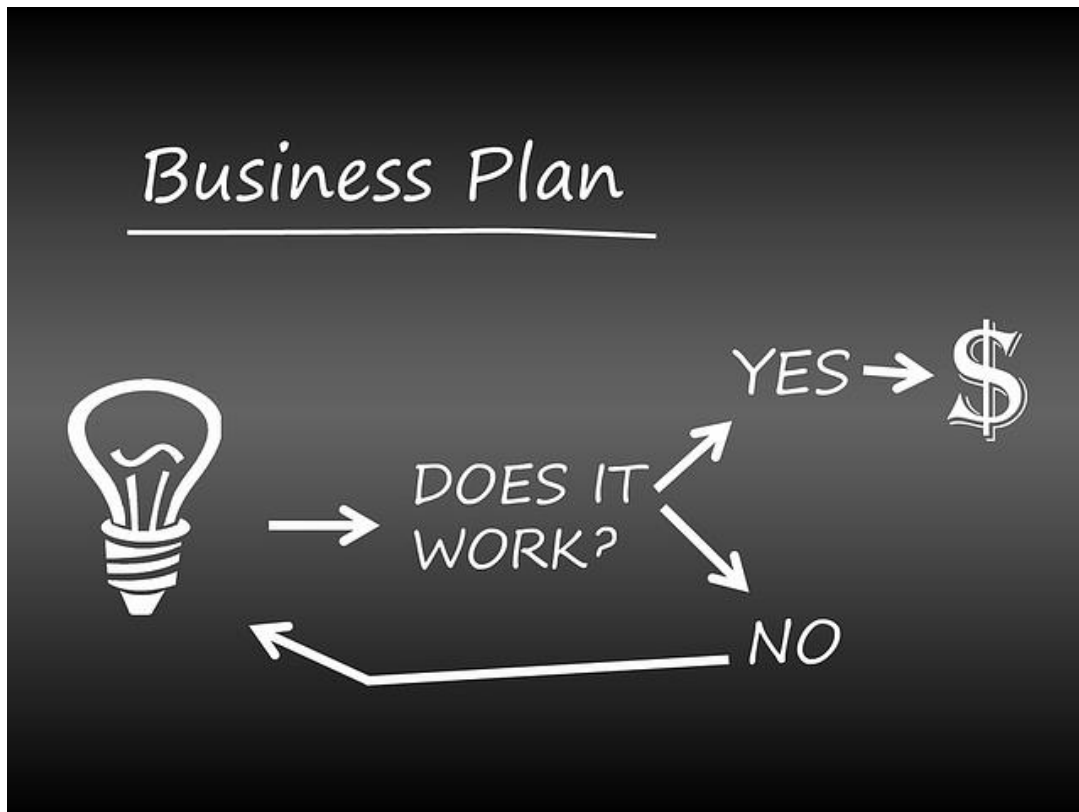
Here are eight resources you can use to help you craft a professional business plan quickly and easily.

\$100 Startup

You've heard about those entrepreneurs who started off by jotting down their ideas on a napkin at a bar, café or restaurant. \$100 Startup's [One-Page Business Plan](#) is a little like that, but more organized. Designed for entrepreneurs who are itching to get started, this simple business-plan template asks a handful of questions that you can easily answer in one or two sentences. It covers everything from what you sell and who will buy it

to how you will get paid, "hustle" to find customers, foresee challenges and overcome the obstacles — all in a single page. [\[Writing a Business Plan? Do These 5 Things First\]](#)

Not all small businesses are concerned with credit lines, partnerships and office space — at least not in the beginning. So why should their initial business plans include these things?



Copyblogger's [Remarkably Simple Business Plan](#) doesn't. Instead, it offers a business-plan template fit for the real would-be entrepreneur's world. Whereas most business-plan templates assume all businesses are uniform, Copyblogger's Remarkably Simple Business Plan was created to get to what entrepreneurs really need to know to start a business: the ins and outs of the product or service, how customers will find the business and how the business will make money. Simply copy and paste the template of the Remarkably Simple Business Plan, created by Sonia Simone, co-founder and chief content officer of Copyblogger Media, and you're good to go.

Founded in 2011, [Enloop](#) is regarded as an innovative player in the business-plan-creation industry. Like many others, the service uses an

online interface to help automate your business plan's creation. To get started, users enter basic information about their businesses, including product details. Then, Enloop's software uses metrics to help predict the financial performance of the company in comparison with others in the sector. According to CEO Cynthia McCahon, the goal of the company is to help entrepreneurs make better-informed decisions. Users can get started on Enloop for free; more advanced paid options are also available.

LivePlan

[LivePlan](#) is a relatively new entrant to the online business-tools market that helps you every step of the way, from the planning stages through your launch. Like other services, LivePlan allows business owners to craft perfectly formatted plans.

From there, users can create the presentation necessary to pitch their business ideas to would-be investors. Once off the ground, businesses can track revenue and expenses against forecasts, and multiple users within a company can work through the LivePlan interface. Pricing starts at less than \$12 a month.

The One Page Business Plan Company

Created by [The One Page Business Plan Company](#), this simple business template covers only the key areas entrepreneurs need to address to start a business: their vision for the company, mission for why the business exists, objectives for setting out goals, strategies to make the business successful and action plans indicating what work needs to be done. Unlike complicated business plans, boring blocks of text are not required – bullet points will do.



The fact that the U.S. [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) has an online tool to help users craft business plans will come as no surprise to anyone who has investigated the SBA's offerings before. The agency has a wealth of free planning, financing and consulting tools and resources, both online and through available consultants. The SBA's online tool for business-plan creation allows a user to enter information on a Web interface that is tied to that user's account. The administration says this is intended to be a "live" plan that can be referred to and changed as the company's plans progress. The SBA encourages entrepreneurs to use their generated plans to discuss their company's prospects with SBA advisers like those available through SCORE and the Small Business Development Center. The SBA's tool is available online at no cost.

Wise Bread

Greg Go, co-founder of online finance community Wise Bread, is a big believer that entrepreneurs who are just starting out don't need lengthy business plans. What they actually need, he said, is an "internal working plan" to get started. The internal working plan consists of four simple questions that make up the simple business plan: What is your product or service? Who are your customers? When will, things get done? When are bills due, and when do you get paid? To guide entrepreneurs in completing their four-question business plan, Go provides a simplified way of answering each question in his [blog post](#) on the subject.

- See more at: <http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/5680-simple-business-plan-templates.html#sthash.m8ZDhAex.dpuf>

Create a Business Plan by Answering 4 Simple Questions

By [Greg Go](#) on 28 July 2008 [27 comments](#)

This post is a part of the [Money Blog Network Group Writing Project](#) focusing on advice for new entrepreneurs.

There are a lot of would be entrepreneurs out there with a great idea, but are afflicted with Business Plan Paralysis. Instead of shipping product, they're "working" on their plan, doing more "research", or "thinking about it".



I think the current literature on entrepreneurship overcomplicates things. Read the guides at www.Entrepreneur.com or bplans.com, and you run into 50 page documents with charts, spreadsheets, and financial projections accounting for every dime. And if these sources are to be believed, your business plan must also have serious sounding sections like Executive Summary, Competitive Analysis, and Financial Projections. No wonder would be entrepreneurs stall at this step.

The good news is that you don't need that kind of plan right now.

Right now, all you need is an **internal working plan** to get you going. And to get that working plan, all you need to do is answer these four simple questions.

1. What is your product or service?
2. Who are your customers?
3. When will, things get done?
4. When are bills due and when do you get paid?

What are customers going to give you money for?

Every company exists to create new value. That's what customers are paying for. What do you do to earn your income?

A few examples:

The service provider (barber, accountant, dry cleaner) creates value by providing a service you're willing to pay for.

A retailer (hardware store, car dealership, eBay seller, etc.) creates value by connecting consumers and product manufacturers. Retailers buy inventory in bulk, split it up, showcase it, market it, teach customers how to use it, deal with returns, etc. For that work, they charge a markup on the product.

A blogger (or other website publisher) creates value by providing information and a forum for people to discuss stuff. If the content and community is great, there's a lot of value (lots of readers and page views). The more readers, the more the publisher can charge for advertising.



So back to the fundamental question. What do you do? What's the value your business is creating?

Equivalent sections in a fancy plan: Executive Summary, About Our Product/Service, Company Description

2. Who are your customers?

2a. Who's going to give you money? Who are you marketing to?



Write down all the potential customer profiles you think you will have. Your customers may come from multiple sources or have different needs.

For example, if you're opening a local brick & mortar store, you might have walk-in customers, regulars, and online customers.

For content publishers, you're serving your readers (every page view or feed subscription is a "sale"), but you're also serving advertisers or affiliated vendors (the people who give you money).

If you want to flesh this out even further, you can create customer profiles and even customer personas with names and personalities.

Marketing and selling to each type/group will require different strategies and tactics. The first step though, is to identify these groups.

2b. How many potential customers are there?

There's no point selling a product if there are only a handful of people interested. How big is the group of people who might potentially buy from you?

You can look at your competitors to get an idea of the market size. eBay



sellers can look at the number of feedback received in the last 1, 3, and 6 months. Bloggers (content publishers) can look at the number of page views and/or feed subscribers of other sites in their niche.

If you need more extensive data, you can find a lot of information via [Google](#). There are a lot of surveys and research papers available for free.

2c. Who are your competitors?

Imagine you're one of the customer types you described in answer 2b. Other than your new business, where else could these customers go to get the product/service?

Equivalent sections in a fancy plan: Market Analysis, Target Market, Primary (and Secondary) Markets, Marketing Strategy, Marketing Plan, Competitive Analysis/ Advantage, Market Size

3. When will things get done?

Given the specific customers you describe above, how do you plan on reaching them? Will you buy ads, encourage referrals from existing customers, create a website?

This is when we get to the nitty-gritty. Write down *concrete action steps* and scheduled milestones.

3a. What does your company look like in 1, 3, and 5 years?

Answer this quickly. It's okay to "dream" a bit here. Three to five years is a long time away, and the point of this article is to get you past planning



mode and into execution mode. So, dream a little bit. Once you're executing your plan, you'll have a better (more realistic) idea of what to aim for in 3 to 5 years.

3b. In the next 3, 6, 12 months, what are specific milestones you want to accomplish?

Be as specific as possible, without getting bogged down in too much detail. Otherwise, you'll be stuck in the dreaming mode for another 6 months instead of being in start-up mode.

For milestones, farther out, just jot down general goals. A common sticking point for new entrepreneurs is trying to plan for every possible scenario 12 or 24 months out. That's impossible unless you can see the future. (If you can, drop me an email. I've got work for you.)

3c. What are specific next steps you need accomplish to reach the first milestone? What can you do today?

For the first milestone (within 3 months), what are tasks that need to be done? For each task, what is the next action step? Who's responsible for doing it? When will it be done?

The more specific and actionable your answers, the more likely you'll move this project along. Write down some actionable tasks you can knock out today, this week, and this month. Milestones and Timeline, Exit Strategy

Equivalent sections in a fancy plan: Implementation Strategy.



4. When are bills due and when do you get paid?



How much money will it cost to make your product or provide your service?

Write down all the things you might have to pay for while launching or running your business.

Your expenses will fall into three categories: fixed expenses, variable expenses, and capital expenses.

Fixed expenses are the things you have to pay for, every month, whether you make one sale or 10,000 sales. Hosting, rent, employees are examples of fixed costs. Add up your fixed expenses, and you have the baseline cost of running your business.

Notes and Inspirations for Your Business Ideas