



SECTION 5

IMC - Nigeria

THE BUSINESS PLAN STRUCTURE



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THE BUSINESS PLAN STRUCTURE

- **Title page:** Title or heading of the plan and brief description if required, author, date, company/organisation if applicable, details of circulation and confidentiality.
- **Contents page:** A list of contents (basically the sections listed here, starting with the introduction page) showing page numbers, plus a list of appendices or addendums (added reference material at the back of the document) allowing the reader to find what they need and navigate the document easily, and to refer others to particular items and page numbers when reviewing or querying.
- **Executive summary page:** Optional and usually beneficial, this should normally be no more than a page long (or it's not an executive summary) - the key points of the whole plan including conclusions, recommendations, actions, financial returns on investment, etc., clearly readable in a few minutes.
- **Main body of plan:** Sections and headings as required see template below.
- **Acknowledgements and bibliography/reference sources:** if relevant (no required normally for very large formal plans)
- **Appendices:** appendices or addendums - additional detailed reference material, examples, statistics, spreadsheets, etc., for reference and not central to the main presentation of your plan.

BUSINESS PLANS - MAIN BODY SECTIONS EXAMPLES TEMPLATE

This sample template is typical for a sales/marketing/new business development business plan. (a business plan for a more complex project such as an international joint-venture, or the formation of a new company including manufacturing plant or other overhead activities would need to include relevant information and financials about the overheads and resources concerned, and the financials would need to show costs and profits more like a fully developed profit and lost account, with cashflow projections, balance sheet, etc.) Where appropriate refer to your position regarding corporate ethics and social responsibility. While these aspects are not mechanism within the plan, they are crucial reference point.

1. Define your market - sector(s) and segment(s) definitions.
2. Quantify your market (overview only) - size, segmentation, relevant statistics, values, numbers
(locations, people/user, etc) - make this relevant to your business.
3. Explain your market(s) - sector trends, e.g., growth, legislation, seasonality, PEST factors where relevant, refer to Ansoff matrix, show the strategic business drivers within sector and segments, purchasing mechanisms, processes, restrictions - what are the factors that determine customers' priorities and needs - this is a logical place to refer to ethics and CSR (corporate social responsibility) 4. Explain your existing business - your current business according to sector, product/services, quantities, values, distributor, etc.
5. Analyse your existing customer spread by customer type, values and products/services including major accounts (the 'Pareto Principle' or the '80:20 rule' often applies here, e.g., 80% of your business comes from 20% of your customers)
6. Explain your products and services - refer to Boston matrix and especially your strategic propositions (what these propositions will do for your customer) including your USP's and UPS's (see sales training section and acronyms)
7. Explain your routes to market, gatekeepers, influencers and strategic partners - the other organisations'/individuals you will work with to develop your market, including what's in it for them', commissions, endorsements, accreditations, approvals, licenses, etc.
8. Case studies and track record - the credibility, evidence and proof that your propositions and strategic partnerships work.
9. Competitor analysis, e.g. SWOT analysis of your own business compared to SWOT analysis of each competitor.
10. Sales/marketing /business plan (1 year min) showing sales and margins by product/service

stream, mix, values, segment, 'distributor', etc; whatever is relevant, phased monthly, in as much as you need. This should be on a spread sheet, with as many different sheets as necessary to quantify relevant inputs and outputs.

11. List your strategic actions (marketing campaigns, sales activities, advertising, etc) that will deliver the above, with cost and return on investment activity.

Tip: if the business plan concerns an existing activity, use the previous year's sales/business analysis as the basis for the next year's sales/business plan. Adapt as necessary according to your new strategic plans.

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QUESTION

List and explain the 6 key components of a good Business Plan Structure.

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