

Business Plan Guide

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Using the ATB Business Plan

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This document will take you step-by-step through the process of creating a business plan. You should write your actual plan in the [ATB Business Plan](#) for future use.

If you have questions or need assistance, ATB's entrepreneur strategists are here to help. [Contact us today to book an appointment.](#)

Vision and mission

Your business mission

Briefly explain why your company exists and describe its values, primary products, target customers and the gap in the market that it meets.

Your business vision for the next three years

Define where you see your business in three years in terms of sales, number of employees, geographic reach and whatever additional indicators of success make sense for your business.

Products and services

Primary product or service offerings

Create a list of the products and/ or services your business will offer.

Pricing strategy

Include your strategy for pricing and the margin you expect to earn on each unit. Loss leader, penetration, skimming or premium pricing are all examples of pricing strategies.

Your competitive advantage

Identify why a customer would buy your products or services over those of a competitor.

Barriers to entry for more competition

Describe what prohibits a competitor from encroaching on your competitive advantage—for example, patents or exclusivity agreements.

Production/delivery process

How are your products or services produced and delivered? What's the connection to Alberta?

Guarantee policies

What are your terms for returns, refunds, discounts and insurance?

Marketing and sales

Define your primary and secondary target markets

If your business is business-to-consumer, identify your best prospective customers in terms of categories like age, gender, interests, economic status and geographic location. If your business sells to other businesses, define your customers in terms of company size, industry, decision makers and so on.

SWOT analysis

Identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) of your business. The strengths and opportunities should be internal. The opportunities and threats should be external.

Marketing plan

What marketing tools, like social media or direct mail, are you going to use to market your business? (If you need help developing a marketing strategy, check out ATB Marketing Plan Builder).

Sales

Identify your sales channels in order of importance.

Business operations

Location/facilities

Include major equipment needs.

Suppliers

Identify any suppliers that are critical to the delivery of your product.

Management team

Include brief summaries of each member's business background and why they matter to the team.

Employees

Identify how many employees you have or will need, where you'll find them and how you'll train them.

Advisors

Identify paid and unpaid advisors and their areas of expertise.

Financial plan and statements

ATB makes it easy to understand how money flows in and out of your business. Useful forms for filling out the fields below can be found [here](#).

Assumptions

List the assumptions you've made for your projected financial statements. Is your business scalable? Do your products become cheaper as volume changes?

Cash flow forecast

Use this form to show cash flow based on monthly projected sales and expenses.

Sales projections

Use this form to show your monthly projections for the next three years.

Income statement (for existing businesses only)

Please complete this form for your existing business and/or any businesses you plan to buy.

Financial needs

How financing will be used

List your startup costs and demonstrate what makes your business a sound investment.

Identify current loans and investments

Disclose all current loans and investments, including your own.

Your personal assets and liabilities

Investors and bankers need to know where entrepreneurs stand. Use this form to calculate your personal net worth.

Identify any security you can offer

Major assets such as a home or plant facilities can be used for security.