# :::Images:Logo:the-seo-effect-horizontal-logo-small.png

# Business Blueprint For

# (Put Your Company Name Here)

This business blueprint workbook will provide a foundation of information that will help business owners, managers, workers and consultants quickly get on the same page. This document should be regularly updated to remain current with the current state of the company and the vision for the company’s future.

This document can be used as a litmus test against marketing messaging, operations and product quality to help keep your business on it’s intended course.

Finally, this workbook should be completed in conjunction with the “Online Business Fundamentals” course. Type your answers in the boxes to the right of each question.

## Basic Business Information

This basic business information section will help you quickly get new team members and consultants quickly up to speed with the current state of your business.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is the name of your business? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How many employees? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Website Address(s) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What platform / programming languages / technologies / CMS does your website use? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Approximately how many visitors does your website get each month. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Is your business strictly online or is a physical location critical to your business? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Do you have multiple locations? List addresses of each or a URL of where that info can be easily found. | • How many locations?  • List Name/ID & Address of each. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How long has your company been in business? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your approximate annual revenue? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. % of your revenue is driven from the internet? Or, how does the internet tie into your business model? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How big is the total market in your industry? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Can you estimate your approximate market share? |  |

## Products, Services and Messaging

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. List each product or service along with its features. If you have an ecommerce store, list the categories and their features. | • Product: Features  • Service: Features  • Product / Service: Features |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Write a full description of your product or service. Remember benefits are more important than features to the reader. | Full description |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. List 3 characteristics that describe your business | • Characteristic 1  • Characteristic 2  • Characteristic 3 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your mission statement | Try to create one sentence that conveys: What do you do? How do you do it? Who do you do it for? What unique value are you delivering? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your mantra | 2-5 words that encompass what your brand stands for. (A mantra is used internally for company direction.) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your tagline | A few words that convey your benefits with personality and attitude. (A tagline is used to convey what your brand stands for with attitude.) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How would you like your brand to be positioned in the market as it relates to quality, sophistication, specialized, general solution, expensive, affordable, quick? | A few words that convey your benefits with personality and attitude. (A tagline is used to convey what your brand stands for with attitude.) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What percentage of your target market is currently aware of your brand? | A few words that convey your benefits with personality and attitude. (A tagline is used to convey what your brand stands for with attitude.) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What do people actually think of your company? What are the areas of strength and weakness? | A few words that convey your benefits with personality and attitude. (A tagline is used to convey what your brand stands for with attitude.) |

## Customer Profiles / Customer Personas

The first thing that you should do is make a list of every different type of customer that you will serve. Remember that any key differentiator should cause you to create a different group or sub-group. The following questions should be answered for each customer group. You can cut and paste all of the questions into as many documents as you need, or download separate “Customer Profile” documents.

It should be noted that not all of these questions may be relevant, and there may be relevant questions that you should have answers for that do not appear on this form. Feel free to create your own questions and delete ones that do not apply. This is about making sure you and your team really understand your specific target audience(s).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Age |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Gender |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Income |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Education Level |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Personality Type & Style |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Risk Tolerance |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Location |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Likes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Dislikes |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Brands They May Follow |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Recreational Activities |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Online Habits |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Social Networks |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is their need? What is their pain point? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What motivates them? What are they really hoping to find? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is their level of technical expertise? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is their title? Can they make a decision or do they need approval from someone else? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is their evaluation process? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What would stop them from buying? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Are they likely to become repeat customers? How often? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Are they likely to recommend your business to others? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Name / Photo | • Give this persona a name so they become more personal and easier to identify and remember.  • Drag & Drop a photo of a person into this space that you feel is a good representation of this persona. |

Once you have created a customer persona it is often a good idea to find an Avatar to go along with it. That just means a photo of a person who seems like a good fit to represent that customer profile. You can go to <http://images.google.com> and just search for a photo of a person that you will use to represent this category. Even give them a name!

While this can seem like a silly exercise, it truly can be one of the most valuable assets that you can create to guide your content, articles, blogs, social posts, emails and advertising that your business will be using to attract new customers. Every person in your organization should read each of these customer profiles and anyone who is responsible for writing content, ad copy or creative direction should have them pinned to their wall.

## Competitor Profiles

This brief survey of your known competition will provide us with valuable information for the development of your marketing messages, as well as provide a foundation for the deep competitive analysis that we will perform in the Competitive Analysis course later in The SEO Effect.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Who are your biggest direct competitors? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Who are your indirect competitors? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What competitive advantages do you have over your competition? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What added value do you offer your customers? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What potential advantages do your competitors have over you? |  |

## Business Economics

This exercise is aimed at determining the profit margin for your business. If you have an existing business and have a good understanding of your profit margin, then simply answer the few questions in section A below. However, if your business is not yet live or if you do not know your profit margin, then skip to section B to figure out your profit margin.

### Section A: Established Financials:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. List your products and services along with the price and profit margin for each if possible. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What has your overall profit margin traditionally been? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Do your sales fluctuate seasonally? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What factors affect the profitability of your business? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your marketing budget? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Is your marketing budget flexible or fixed? How and when is it reviewed? |  |

### Section B: Projected Financials

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. List your products and services along with the price and profit margin for each if possible. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Fixed Costs | • Rent  • Utilities  • Internet & Phone  • Accounting  • Legal / Insurance / Licensing Fees  • Web Development  • Web Hosting  • Email  • Salaries  • Other |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Variable Costs | • Cost of Goods Sold  • Taxes  • Direct Labor costs  • Customer Service  • Direct Sales  • Direct Marketing |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How many units must your business sell to reach breakeven? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your profit margin after your business hits breakeven? |  |

This information will be used later during the keyword and competitive analysis courses as well as during the SEM & Paid Online Marketing courses to determine both market capacity and projected ROI.

## Goals

This exercise is aimed at establishing and communicating the goals that will guide your business and provide a measure of success.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What is your target market share over the next 1,3, and 5 years? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What are your revenue goals for the next 1,3, and 5 years? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How much do you realistically expect your organization to grow over the next 1,3 and 5 years? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What type of atmosphere and culture do you envision for your company? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How do you hope to incentivize your employees for outstanding performance? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What do you see as your biggest opportunity for growth over the next year? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What initiatives do you want to introduce within your company over the next year? What is their timeline for implementation, execution and success? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. What metrics would you like to see improve over the next year? List in order of priority. |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How hard do you want to work? |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. How are you going to reward yourself for reaching your business goals? |  |

## Organizational Outline

The following is an organizational outline of an example online business, with descriptions of the responsibilities for each department. You should customize this organizational outline to represent the current state of your business. Start by deleting any departments that do not exist within our organization. Then change the description of responsibilities for each of the remaining departments. Finally, add any additional departments that exist within your business with a description of their responsibilities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Owner / CEO | Decision maker  Leader to organization  Advisor to Board of Directors  Face of the company for press and marketing  Policy maker  Drive strategic direction of company  Sets the tone for company culture and atmosphere  Responsible for delivering employee rewards and bonus’s |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. COO | Manage day-to-day operations  Oversee progress and efficiency of departments  Conduct employee evaluations  Fine tune processes to maximize efficiency  Oversee HR department  Responsible for any employee punishment |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. CFO / Accounting / Bookkeeping | Supervises all financial matters  Financial reporting and projections  Budget management  Cost benefit analysis  Manages accounts receivable & collections  Payment processing  Payroll  Payment of all bills and debts  Maintaining financial records  Taxes |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Developers, Engineering, R&D, Product Development | Build websites  Apps  Software  Manage and update existing products  Solve technical problems  Deliver iterative product improvements  Technical optimization  Networking & IT within company  Skills: HTML5, CSS3, PHP, Java, jquery, Ajax, Ruby, ASP, .net, MySQL, Python, MariaDB, C++, iOS SDK, Android SDK, Drupal, Wordpress, Magento (Basically your development department should be skilled in the programming languages, development platforms and CMS system that your company will be using.) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Marketing | Be experts on target market & customer experience  Understand all legal and compliance issues  Understand SEO & ensure all digital content is well aligned with best practices and SEO strategies.  Develop and guide all company messaging  Create, monitor and improve all conversion funnels  Create calls to action  Oversee editorial department  Oversee design department  Ensure developers execute user experience vision  Identify, implement and manage all customer communications channels (pages, articles, videos, email, social, etc.)  Work with editorial department on editorial calendar  Work with editorial department on unique research & reports  Create videos  Create, implement, manage and report on contests & promos  Monitor analytics (Analytics Certified)  Create conversion optimization strategies  Create and manage advertising, ad spend & ROI |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Design | Work with marketing to create assets that will ensure a unified brand experience across all marketing channels.  Design web pages  Work with editorial department to create images for all content and marketing materials  Design all banners, signage, etc…  Design infographics for use in marketing  Design images and layout for business cards, flyers, marketing collateral, ebooks, webinars & video presentations  Skills: Adobe Suite, HTML5, CSS3, any video editing software, etc) |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Editorial | Work with Marketing to ensure all content is well aligned with intended messaging and SEO strategies.  Write all content for:  Webpages  Articles  Blogs  Guest Blogs  Press Releases  Reports  eBooks  Video scripts  Work with marketing on creating email campaigns for marketing automation  Work with Sales to ensure all company messaging is congruent. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Social Media, Link Building and Editorial Outreach | Set up and optimize all social network profiles  Manage social profiles & grow social network following  Engage in groups & forums  Work with marketing on social promotions  Work with editorial on content syndication  Work with design for use of images  Manage outreach to key influencers such as people within your industry that have a significant following, notable journalists and bloggers.  Set up guest blogging opportunities.  Run back link reports for your competitors and contact all those sites to develop relationships and get links to your site. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Customer Service | Answer customer calls  Monitor and engage in online chat with visitors to your website  Monitor and respond to emails from your website or route them to the appropriate department. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Sales | Personal responsibility for and management of the sales process for all inbound leads.  Create outbound sales opportunities. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Order fulfillment | For most web based businesses this includes warehouse management and shipping, however based on your own unique business model this could include partner communications for drop shipping, or any one of a multitude of options. |

The above list does not by any means attempt to account for every possible department within every organization. There are simply far too many types of businesses to attempt to account for a complete org structure here, and that is far beyond the scope of this course. However, the above examples are typical roles and responsibilities for a web based business and this is a highly valuable exercise for any organization. For purposes of this course you are simply asked to customize the above to reflect your organization as it related to the management of your website and online presence. This will allow you to bring new employees and outside consultants quickly up to speed with how your organization works.

## Team Evaluation Criteria

The following is a basic example of the type of evaluation that should be conducted for each team member within every department of your organization.

The purpose is to ensure that each employee is being utilized for their strengths, not their weaknesses, and they are being properly motivated, held responsible and rewarded. In a large organization, these employee evaluations should be held by the COO and department heads and used in meetings to evaluate if every person is being utilized in a way that will maximize their effectiveness, or, if changes in roles, responsibilities and incentives could yield performance improvements.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Name |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Department |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Skills |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Strengths |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Weaknesses |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Responsibilities |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Personal goals and motivation |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Outside Interests |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Team Feedback |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Example of excellence |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Example of needs improvement |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Opportunities for promotion or reward & specific promotions or rewards available |  |