

BUSINESS PLAN: VIET BALO OY

The role of a business plan to a start-up in the food & beverage industry

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Abstract

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Title of publication BUSINESS PLAN : VIET BALO OY The role of a business plan to a start-up in the food and beverage industry		
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Abstract <p>As the result of changing dining-out habits in Helsinki, Finland and increasing amount of entrepreneurs looking to enter the food and beverage industry, rental premises in the Greater Helsinki region is extremely difficult to find and obtain especially for start-up companies like case company, Viet Balo Oy.</p> <p>As a start-up company Viet Balo is yet to create their business plan which could help them acquire a rental space for their business and funding from financial institutes. The objective of this thesis is to produce a business plan for the case company and a guide on how to write a business plan along with what it should include. The main topic in this thesis is to find out how a business plan can contribute to the success of a start-up.</p> <p>The research in this thesis applies an inductive approach and uses a qualitative research method for data collection. The thesis utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained from the interviews conducted and used to answer the research questions in the thesis. Primary data is analyzed using thematic analysis. Secondary data is derived from published book, documents and website sources. The theoretical part of the thesis covers the theories needed and defines the guide for the business plan. The thesis strives to be helpful to the case company and others who are interested in writing a business plan.</p> <p>The findings show that businesses with a well-done business plan succeed more often at acquiring a rental premises in high-traffic areas in the Greater Helsinki region. Data on consumers shows that they value convenience most when it comes to dining out and start-up businesses often found that there is the lack of information on how to make a business plan.</p>		
Keywords Helsinki, food and beverage industry, business plan, start-up, case company		

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1 INTRODUCTION

The idea of dining out in Finland was viewed as an exceptional situation, often for the purpose of celebration or other events. Nowadays in modern times, eating outside of home is often with the association towards convenience and enables people to save time to tend to other daily matters than preparations of meals. The term eating-out is now interpreted as a broader term which often includes snacking and/or full-meal. Now in Finland there are ample options of foods and places to indulge in coffees and eats. Restaurants, cafés, and eateries have become more accessible both on street level areas and shopping centers. (Varjonen, 2012.)

News Now Finland disclosed in an article that the task of acquiring a rental premises is becoming increasingly difficult in Helsinki for restaurants. The growing number of entrepreneurs looking to establish a restaurant of their own has led to a “cut-throat” market for restaurant rental premises leading to rental premises becoming almost unattainable due to price hikes caused by excessive demand. (News Now Finland, 2017) This is likely due to rapid population growth in Helsinki which generates greater demand for shopping centers. In Finland 21 new shopping centers and 8 extensions for centers have been opened during the period 2010-2019. By 2022 there will be an additional 5 new shopping centers in the Helsinki metropolitan area. (Suomen Kauppakeskustyhdistys, 2019.) Since shopping centers are regarded as high traffic areas, premises in these locations are often priced higher and the requirements to acquire a premises from shopping centers is more demanding. With this thesis research, the details of requirements can be disclosed.

According to Statistics Finland the food and beverage sales accounted for 6.6 billion euros in 2017, the number is spread out between different segments such as restaurants, fast food establishments, cafés etc. This sector has been showing growth in sales throughout the decade and by 4.9 % in 2018. (Suomen Kauppakeskustyhdistys, 2019.)

To enter the restaurant business, one of the crucial steps towards establishing a business start-up is to create a clear concept and intricate business plan especially for a start-up as financial institutes and leasing companies often require a business plan from a company before deciding to approve any proposals. The aim of this thesis research is to be beneficial for others who are seeking information as to how to form a business plan of their own along with discovering information about loans and current trends and situation in the Finnish restaurant/start-up industry. All this information is not only viable in terms of research but the practicalities of a start-up in the food and beverage industry as well.

1.1 Research background

The Greater Helsinki region contains the highest density in all of Finland. With inhabitants of all sorts and high international traffic as it is the capital region for businesses and tourism. Population in Helsinki as of 2019 is approximately 650 000. (Statistics Finland, 2020.) As mentioned earlier the sales in the food and beverage sector has shown an increase over the years. While the whole sector is showing growth, the Helsinki metropolitan area has a 75% higher rate than the national average of food and beverage sales per capita rate. (Suomen Kauppakeskushdistys, 2019.) Meaning that the residents living in the metropolitan area spend substantially more than the average person in Finland.

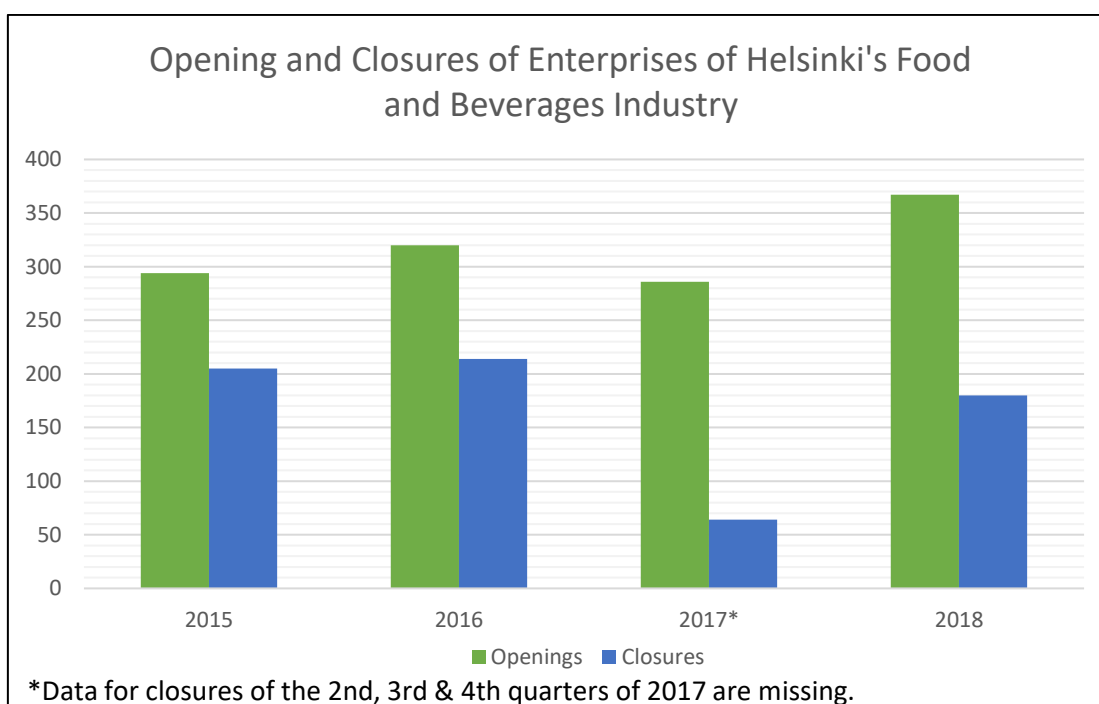


Figure 1 Column chart depicting the number of new restaurants opening and closing yearly in Helsinki (Statistics Finland 2020)

Based on the column chart, figure 3, the amount of enterprises opening exceeds the amount closing yearly, showing that there is sufficient demand to sustain additional businesses. This shows an opportunity for the case company to enter the market. In 2018 the number of closures compared to new enterprises opening is significantly less than of previous years as shown in figure 3. Note that there was a data base error in 2017 leading to a proportion of data to be missing for the enterprises in the food and beverage industry in Finland in 2017.

The case company Viet Balo Oy is coming forward with their concept of establishing an eatery providing a multitude of south east Asian cuisine, geared towards easing the constriction of time for consumers, so that the consumers may be able to allocate their time to daily tasks other than food preparations. As a start-up Viet Balo Oy struggled with finding a place to lease in high traffic areas. Case company Viet Balo Oy is a Vietnamese Asian fusion food business. They aim to open shop in the Helsinki, Espoo or Vantaa regions in the Greater Helsinki region in 2020. In order to achieve this goal, the case company would require financing from financial institutes and a premises to set up their eatery, both tasks require a well-made business plan to make the process easier.

As a new start-up the case company is yet to create their business plan and it is regarded as a main priority as the business plan can be utilized for setting a company's goals and organization as well as facilitate acquiring finance via loans. The objective of constructing the business plan is beneficial to the internal operations of the company by recognizing competitors, customers and financial details along with forecasts that better prepare the company upon establishment.

Having a business plan is one of the core steps towards owning a successful company, anyone interested in entrepreneurship should know the how-to of a business plan as it provides a deeper insight into the business idea and concept that the entrepreneur sets out to build. With a successful well-done business plan from the start, companies can benefit greatly as it showcases how the business idea will work and with the plan entrepreneurs can present it to investors or use it as an organizational guide to start out with. Start-ups often generate more jobs in the market and induces innovation, leading towards a better economy and society. To succeed with a start-up one must carefully plan as well as acquire finances and this thesis will strive towards being a coherent guide towards a successful business plan which will help with the process of developing a new company or improve an existing one.

1.2 Thesis objectives and research questions

The objective is to help the case company understand how to appeal to their customers through customer segmentation and the market research will provide a better understanding and base for the company to work on their target market. By producing a business plan for the case company, it can begin to construct an overview of itself and its external environment. This would prepare the case company to enter the market. The thesis can also be a useful tool for entrepreneurs and students looking to establish their companies,

since the work provides a guideline to help form a business plan for several reasons such as to internally examine the company to further improve certain aspects or to gain investments from financial institutes or investors.

This thesis will contain certain aspects from LAB University of applied sciences' learning modules, regarding entrepreneurship, marketing as well as a case company analysis in terms of feasibility of ventures for the business plan and research proportion. The general idea is to make a functional business plan to help the case company acquire financing through bank loans and acquire a start-up loan guarantee from state-owned financing company, Finnvera.

Research Questions

The main research question for this thesis is the following:

- **How does a business plan contribute to the success of a start-up in the food and beverage industry in the present-day Greater Helsinki region?**

To help answer the main research question a series of sub-research questions are developed in order to examine the main question more closely and provide information for the sectors in the business plan.

The research sub-questions are:

- What role does a business plan have in the formation of a restaurant startup?
- How will the case company gain a competitive advantage in the restaurant industry in Greater Helsinki?
- To what extent is there demand in the market for this type of restaurant?
- What are the success and risk factors involve?

By referring to these questions for the research, it will lead the author towards a better understanding of the food and beverage industry along with what is required of the business plan and how the business plan can serves its purpose for the case company. The primary research portion will refer to the sub-questions as a guideline to the formation of the interview question to best ensure that the research questions are answered and reflected in the actual research.

1.3 Limitations

All research methods have limitations, in this case the research method is semi-structured interviews and the choice of questions along with a variant of probing questions may

transfer issues towards the reliability and dependability of the data obtained. To overcome this the research must be done with careful considerations along with clear documentation of what was done throughout the research and during the interviews, providing transcriptions of the interviews from recordings is another essential task along with providing the sets of questions for the interviews. Consistency is required such as similar behavior regarding the interviewer's appearance, opening comments and approach. Procedural and resource matter, in terms of consistency and time is one of the limitations. Both primary and secondary sources used has their own limitations, certain sources might be outdated, or online sources could possibly be unreliable. To overcome these, when it comes to printed sources, preferably newer editions are used, and online sources are only used when they are deemed reliable.

The sample size for this research is respectively limited and small, the snapshot nature of the study is only relevant for the geographical area (Greater Helsinki region) and time being the present Spring 2020. A reflection will be made towards the end of the research paper in the conclusion segment of how the limitations have exhibited themselves, to what degree is the findings generalizable, to what degree has the actual research explored and justified itself.

1.4 Research approach and data collection

The choice for research approach is either inductive or deductive. Both are valid approaches to research; the deductive approach focuses on the development of a theory and then subjects the theory and hypothesis through rigorous testing. The deductive approach often benefits most from using a highly structured methodology which makes it better suited for quantitative research. Whereas the inductive approach is to start developing a theory or solution through qualitative research, with the purpose of gaining a broader view of the situation. With the inductive approach the researchers' tasks is to make sense of the interview data and analysis. The results would then lead towards a formulation of a theory or solution to the research. (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016, 144-147.)

For this thesis, the inductive approach will be utilized to gather data via qualitative methods. Theories and analysis will be obtained from books for the business plan guidelines and structures. Primary and secondary data will provide information to better understand the industry, consumers and the overall market in the food and beverage sector.

This work will implement qualitative methods mainly, however some primary data obtained from interviews may yield quantitative data which will be interpreted and used to ensure

that the scopes of research itself is balanced by the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data. (Better Evaluation, 2019.)

Exploratory research is the approach that is chosen for this work. The research intends to explore the research questions and objectives to provide an array of options and a basis for the case company to utilize and continue their ventures from. (Research Methodology, 2020.) The usage of this approach is to gain an overall better understanding of the current situation in the restaurant industry and which approach Viet Balo Oy should consider based on the findings and analysis.

Data collection

Secondary data

Over the past decade the amount of potential secondary data has grown with increased accessibility and such data could prove to be beneficial to the research in terms of answering certain inquiries in constructing a business plan and setting up businesses. Organizations often collect a large volume of data to support their day-to-day operations such as payrolls, business transactions, purchases and sale queries.

Throughout this research, mainly document secondary data will be utilized alongside primary data obtained from interviews. Document secondary data are usually readily available online such as web-based material and printed sources such as books and magazines along with non-text materials. Non-text materials include videos, pictures, drawings and non-text content of webpages. By utilizing different types of data, it would facilitate the process of comparing the data obtained from both methods, and findings can be placed in a wider context. The usage of both primary data and secondary data can be used to triangulate findings based on both types of data sources. (Saunders et al., 2016, 318-320.)

Primary Data

By utilizing semi-structured interviews there are certain advantages compared to other methods of interviews, the amount of questions in a semi structured interview gives the session focus on the topic examined, questions tend to be more complex and open ended allowing interviewees to speak their mind, and lastly the order of questions or probes can vary depending on the response received leading to a more coherent session rather than the participant having to repeat themselves or getting confused about the flow of the interview session. Adequate preparation should be made before conducting the interviews. Firstly, the researcher should be knowledgeable about the research topic to ensure that the flow of the interview is achieved, developing interview themes through the formation of

questions could promote credibility. This is because it informs the interviewees about the information that the researcher is interested in such as a brief on the research itself and what it is examining and to gain consent for the interview.

When conducting an interview:

- Approach questioning the participants with questions that are phrased clearly; avoid using theoretical concepts and jargon.
- Neutral tone of voice along with the use of open questions to avoid bias throughout the interview. Double-barrel questions that are long questions made up of multiple questions within one should be avoided.
- Instill confidence by adjusting the appropriateness of your appearance at the interview, keeping the sessions among participants consistent by wearing similar clothing.
- Location of the interview is another to focus on, ideally the interview will take place in a stress-free and undisturbed setting so that participants can freely answer questions without restraint.
- Critical incident technique, participants are asked to describe in detail a critical incident or number of incidents that are relevant to the topic. Critical incident is defined as an activity or event in which the consequences are clear to the participants that they have a definite strong answer regarding the effect. This technique is usual when asking about the participant's activity regarding the topic at hand such as setting up their business in the beginning.

(Saunders et al., 2016, 401-407.)

Collection of primary data

Every interview will be voice-recorded upon receiving consent from the interviewee. Notes will be taken throughout the interview to maintain focus and provide a better base for probing questions. Contextual data is collected after the interview, these data includes:

- Location and setting
- Date and time
- Background of the participant (with or without disclosing their identity, anonymity)
- Impression on how the interview went, with regards to the sufficiency of data obtained

Following such routines after interview sessions helps to control bias and produce reliable data.

Table 1 Advantages & Disadvantages of interview voice recordings (Saunders et al., 2016, 413)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allows the interviewer to maintain focus on questioning and taking notes throughout the interview ▪ The ability to re-listen to the interview for data analysis purposes ▪ accurate and unbiased record provided (raw data in form of recordings) ▪ Direct quotes can be derived from the recordings ▪ Permanent record for future references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ May cause the interviewer to lose focus on the questions and focuses on the recording equipment instead ▪ The act of recording the interview might cause constraints on responses. ▪ Technical issues will be a possibility ▪ Time required for transcriptions of recordings

If in the case that the interview was done in a different language than the research's language the time required to transcribe and translate will be even more since the translation has to be coherent with the meanings implied in the original language. To combat this, all interviews in this research will be done in English.

Sampling

Generally there are two main types of sampling techniques, one being probability sampling which samples the participants in a way that they become a representative group for the population of the area being studied, in this case the sample should reach a sufficient size for the findings to achieve generalizability. The other type is non-probability sampling, this technique does not focus on the generalizability of the sample but rather the logical relationship between the selected sample and the purpose of research and topic. For this research the non-probability sampling will be used since the case company is interested in certain information regarding their business for future references as well as valuable data that is relevant for the formation of their business plan and tactics. Minimum sample size recommended by Saunders et al for semi-structured interviews is 5-25. In this research there will be four expert interviews and approximately 3-5 consumer interviews. (Saunders et al., 2016, 297.) The expert interviews are divided into two categories, one being experts on leasing of premises in high traffic locations in Greater Helsinki region, the other being

experts from the restaurant industry. The consumer interviews are a purposeful sample based on the customer segmentation of the case company.

1.5 Research design and ethical consideration

The qualitative method in this work will implement the use of interview methods mainly using semi-structured interviews. The reasoning behind utilizing interviews is that the data obtained often provide a deeper understanding of the topic. By choosing semi-structured interviews as opposed to open narrative or structured interviews, it mitigates the weaknesses of alternative types of interviews. These weaknesses being the potential bias of a series of leading questions present in structured interviews, and the risk of overwhelming and unnecessary data from the narrative interview method, since semi-structured consist of both close and open-ended questions.

The usage of the research interview is a purposeful conversation between the interviewer and the interviewee(s), the general idea is that the interviewer would establish context i.e. provide a summary and background information to the participants so that they understand the subject. After the context is formed the structure of the interview in the case of semi-structure interview would include concise and unambiguous questions. By utilizing interviews efficiently as a research method, it would provide the research with the benefit of gathering valid and reliable data that are relevant to the research questions and objectives throughout. (Saunders et al., 2016, 388.)

Interviews can be categorized based on levels of formality and structure:

Table 2 Types of interview (Saunders et al., 2016, 390-391)

Structured interviews	Uses standardized questionnaires based on a pre-determined set of questions, usually with pre-coded answers. Such interviews are used to collect quantifiable data.
Semi structured interviews	Utilizes themes and key questions to be covered, the usage of themes could vary between interviews with a specific organizational context that is in relation the topic with possibilities for comments and open discussions.
Unstructured, In-depth, Narrative interviews	The use for this method is when the researcher seeks to explore in a general idea/topic, there is no pre-determined questions, the interviewees are given the opportunity to talk freely about the topic and topic area.

The aim of using semi-structured interviews is to gain insight from potential consumers regarding their preferences to strengthen the basis of the market potential for the case company. (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013.)

The advantages of utilizing semi-structured interviews is that the method provides an additional opportunity throughout the interview to “probe” answers meaning that the responses provided by interviewees can be examined further or built upon. Inquiring further on the reasonings for certain responses adds significant depth to the data obtained. Though certain disadvantages/limitations might ensue with this method as it will generate more data to transcribe and analyze, and the duration of interviews may exceed the amount originally planned.

The data collection method will be recorded audio files of the interview sessions and written transcriptions.

Ethical consideration

“Ethics refers to the standards of behavior that guide your conduct in relation to the rights of those who become the subject of your work or are affected by it.” (Saunders et al 2016, 239).

This work will follow the guidelines of The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity revised version 2017. By utilizing the guidelines, it ensures that the research does not violate the code of conduct such as usage as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism.

Research practices should be based on fundamental principles of research integrity. The principles are the following:

- Reliability: ensuring the quality of research, reflection on the design, methodology, analysis and use of resources
- Honesty: the development, undertaking, reporting and communicating of the research is done in a transparent and unbiased way
- Respect: there is due respect given towards research participants, society, cultural heritage and environment
- Accountability for the research from the idea to the publication, management, organization as well as wider impacts.

(The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, 2017, 4.)

All participants should agree either verbally (recorded) or written that the use of data is permitted, or else the data will not be disclosed.

Interview participants will be anonymous meaning their name and personal information will not be disclosed. The business interviewees and their respective company will be named, however confidential business details will not be disclosed. These are done with compliance to the safeguards mentioned in section 2.4 page 6 of the European code of conduct. See appendix.

1.6 Thesis structure

The structure of the work is made up of 7 chapters which is depicted below in figure 2.

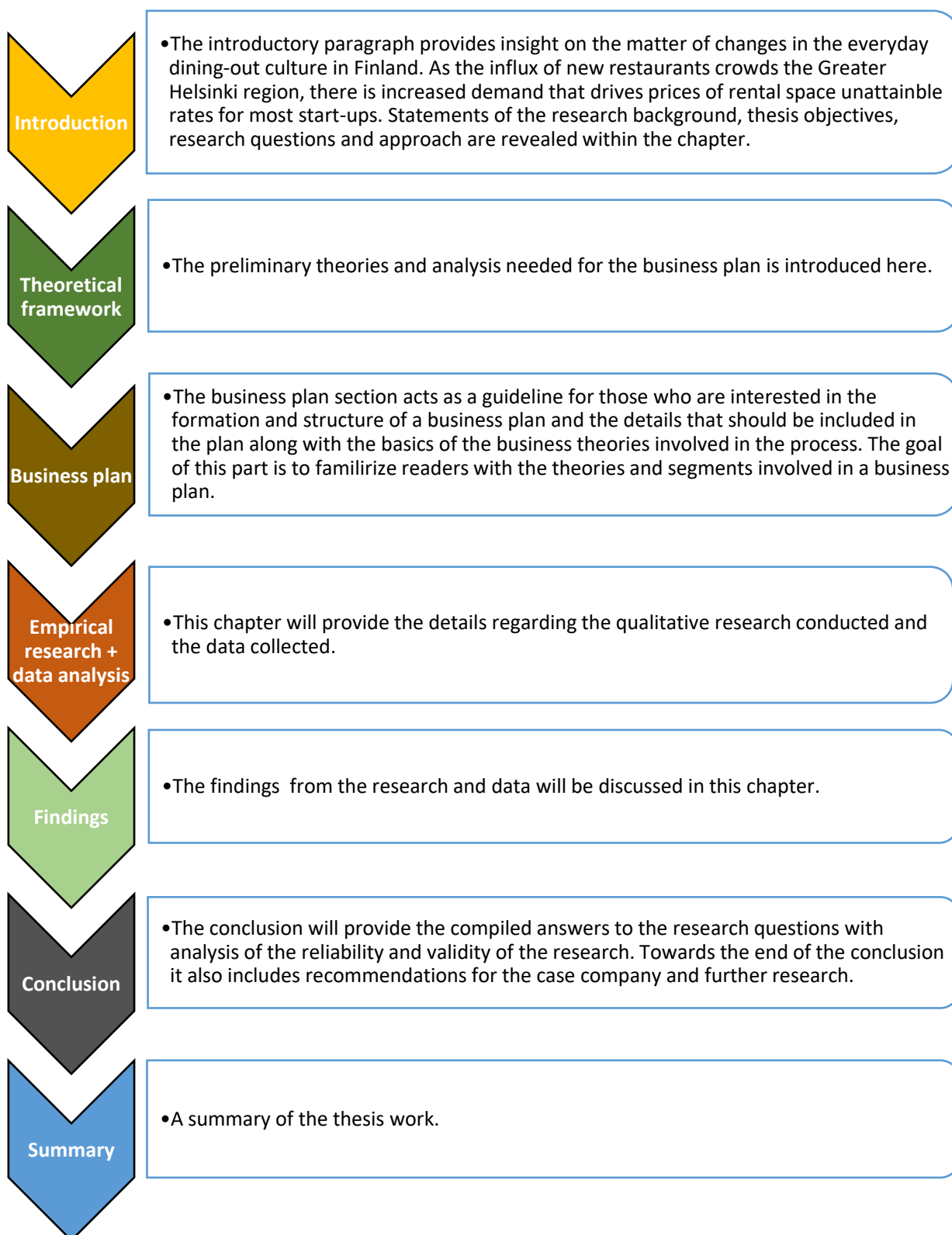


Figure 2 Thesis structure

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework will be structured around secondary research for information relating to starting up a company and guidelines on how to form a viable business plan for the case company.

The collection of printed and digital sources used throughout the thesis work includes secondary data on theories and analysis methods which are:

- SWOT analysis
- Marketing research
- Market analysis
- Market segmentation
- Marketing strategy & mix

2.1 Theories and analysis

Theoretical sources will provide a base and familiarize the application of the analysis towards market research and a clear approach for the case company to design their marketing and operation framework.

SWOT analysis

“An overall evaluation of the company’s strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T)” (Kotler, and Armstrong, 2018, 47).

The SWOT analysis is a part of strategic management which is a further division of strategic planning. Strategic planning is a tool to help a company to be more productive by guiding the allocation of resources to attain goals. Strategic management is a process of continuous creation, implementation and evaluation to help the company reach its objectives. It consists of analysis, decision making, and actions that a company uses to differentiate and foster its competitive advantages. (Gurel, 2017.)

This is an analysis of the company’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The strengths and weaknesses are internal factors of the company, internal factors can be changed by the company. Whilst opportunities and threats are external factors, a company cannot change external factors, but they must be aware of the external factors that can affect the business so that they can respond appropriately. The goal of this analysis is

to match the strengths of the company to the opportunities available while trying to minimize the threats and tend towards the company's weaknesses. (Kotler et al, 2018, 47.)

Possible Strengths and Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Brand + Company reputation • Channel management • Costs • Customer loyalty • Distribution • Economies of scale • Financial resources • Forecasting • Human resources + management • Leadership • Location • Product/service quality • Technology • Product/service differentiation
Possible Opportunities and Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitors • Existing/new market • Natural disaster (example: Covid-19) • Area growth • Oversaturated market • Barriers to entry

Figure 3 Possible factors in SWOT (Gurel, 2017)

Figure 3 depicts the possible items in a SWOT analysis, the list helps to form an idea of what are internal and external factors. (Gurel, 2017.) The analysis can help the company assess their current position to better plan future ventures, by e.g. finding out what weaknesses and threats are interfering with the company's plans. This tool can be used to assess the company overall or take a more specific look at certain products, ventures or strategies.

SWOT analysis provides a general overview and presents the overall solutions, the analysis rarely goes into the details or specific issues. It can serve as a road map and acts as a guide to narrow down generalization to be more specific. The analysis is normally always based on the current situation of company or business venture which gives it a snapshot nature and needs to be continuously updated. By utilizing a SWOT analysis, it provides more opportunities to focus on the positives and negatives of the analysis factors. (Gurel, 2017.)

Marketing research

Marketing research is generally done systematically, starting with an initial design, then data collection, then analysis collected data and finally applying the data to the relevant

marketing situation for the company. With the marketing research the company can better assess the market in terms of potential, market shares and measure the effectiveness of pricing, products, place of distribution and promotions. This part can either be done by the company itself or outsourced. Though some companies might choose to simply purchase existing data to analyze or add to their own research as a secondary source. Marketing research can be done using methods of data collection such as surveys, focus group interviews, individual interviews or data obtained from website tracking on customer preference, buying behavior/patterns and time spent on specific sites etc. (Kotler et al, 2018, 130.)

It is normally preferable to conduct primary research as the data yielded would be more useful and relevant to the situation, however this method is time consuming and requires resources. Depending on the scope of the primary research, it might not have enough validity and reliability due to for example, the sample size and representativeness. Secondary data has the advantage as being more accessible, but the data might not always be a great fit for the intended purposes. The issues of being up to date is an apparent weakness for secondary data as well. (Cameron, 2018.)

Market segmentation

All consumers in the market can differ regarding their wants, resources, locations and purchasing behaviors. Since different groups in the market exist, the practice of market segmentation is used. Through market segmentation companies can divide consumers, based on their likeness and attributes in purchasing, into separate groupings (i.e. segments) to better target their needs.

Table 3 Possible characteristics for market segmentation of consumer markets (Kotler et al, 2018, 213)

Major segmentation variables (Consumers)	Characteristics examples
Geographic	Countries, regions, climate, urban, rural, neighborhood etc.
Demographic	Age, gender, marital status, income, ethnicity, profession, education, generation etc.
Psychographic	Lifestyle, personality, interests, hobbies etc.
Behavioral	Occasions, habits, usage rate, brand loyalty etc.

As depicted in Table 3, market segmentation involves dividing the market into categorical consumers who have different characteristics in which separate marketing strategies might be more effective. By differentiating different groupings of consumers, the company can market both more effectively and efficiently to better catch the attention of consumers. (Kotler et al, 2018, 212.) The division of the market can either be done overall or companies can choose exactly where they will be operating then thus pinpoint further as to what consumers exist in the specific market they will operate in and then apply segmentation to the consumer groups present.

The advantages of market segmentation can provide more cost efficiency for promotions, the other majorities of the market can be left unaffected by the promotions for the target segment. By excluding other market or target segments present, the company would be losing potential income. Potential income lost can be seen as an opportunity cost to the methods of segmentation chosen. The ideal approach is to take all customers and market segments into account and then proceed with target segment promotions. (Silva, 2017.)

Marketing Strategy & mix

Marketing strategy is the marketing logic of which the company aims to create customer value through the formation of profitable customer relationships. The target customer segments which is derived from market segmentation, of which the company chooses to serve by effectively differentiating and enhancing the value proposition of their products and services. The marketing strategy serves as a guide for companies to design a coordinated marketing mix which is commonly addressed as marketing 4Ps since the factors of the marketing mix are product, price, place and promotion. (Kotler et al, 2018,74-79.)

The 4Ps are considered as standard, at a deeper level the marketing mix could be 7Ps. The other Ps in the 7Ps mix is people, process and physical evidence. The fifth factor is people. People in the marketing mix refers to the workforce and how they relate to customers and interact with them, the people in the marketing mix puts emphasis on customer service which could either benefit the company or on the contrary be damaging to the company's image and brand overall. Process is the sixth factor, which refers to the process that the customer is treated and served. The act of providing customer service by ensuring that the customers have a pleasant experience and both in physical businesses and online businesses. The seventh factor is physical evidence, which can be referred to the appearance of the establishment or the employees. Intangible products such as

services could be the interior of the establishment or the outlooks of the employees, for tangible products it could also be packaging. (Stimpson and Smith, 2015, 431- 433.)

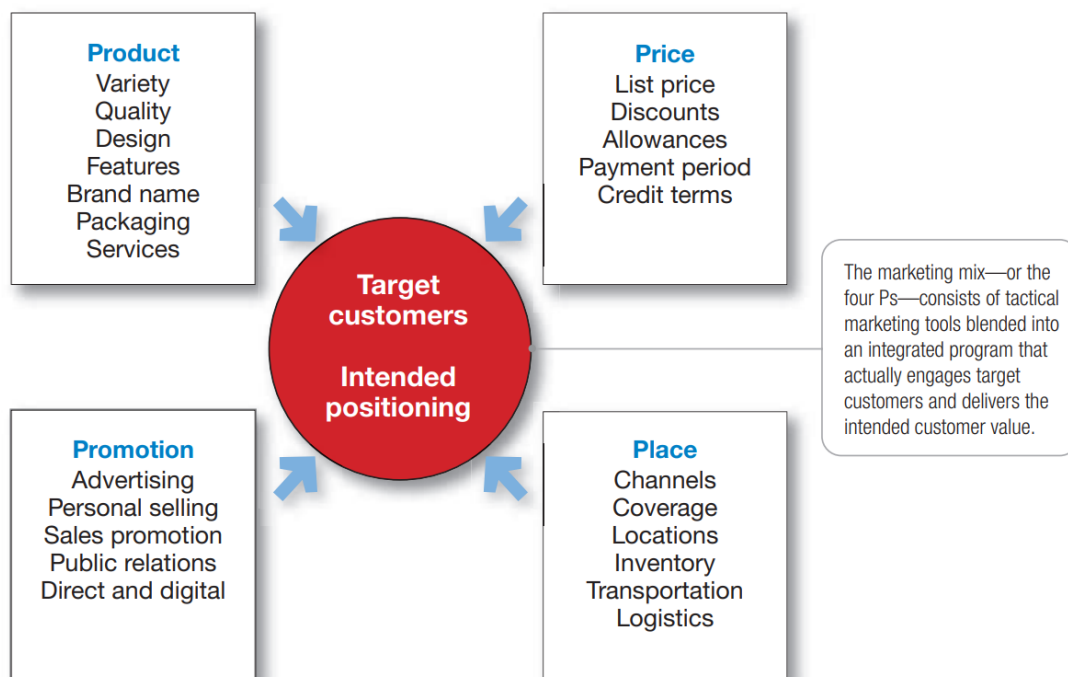


Figure 4 The four Ps of the marketing mix (Kotler et al, 2018,78)

The marketing mix 4Ps consists of everything a company needs to engage customers and bring customer value as shown in figure 4. An effective marketing campaign is the careful planning of the blending of the mix, thus aiming to deliver everything at just the right point. Note that the 4Ps takes the company's point of view. If the 4Ps is from the consumers point of view then it would be 4As instead which is respectively acceptability (product), affordability (price), accessibility (place) and awareness (promotion). The 4As measures the willingness of the consumers overall towards making a purchase based on the offerings, at what price levels, convenience of the location and whether the promotions have reached the consumers.

3 BUSINESS PLAN

The definition of a business plan by Al Coke

“A business plan is a consolidation document that defines the parameters of how a business operates. It communicates strategic direction as well as specific goals, methods of achieving the goals, and the management development activities needed to reach the vision. It is a master document that serves as an umbrella for all events taking place within the company.” (Coke 2002, 26).

3.1 Purpose

The purpose of a business plan can vary depending on the types of business plan and who the intended audience for the plan is. Business plans are usually most beneficial to start-up companies to effectively communicate their business ideas to future partners and investors. However, business plans can also be formulated for established companies to further reach their goals for development and additional new ventures. (Finch, 2016, 4.) For the case company Viet Balo Oy, they require a business plan to further focus their ideas and business concepts as well as utilizing the plan to obtain capital for their business.

To acquire additional capital for business ventures in Finland Finnvera is a company worth looking into. Finnvera is a specialized financing company that is state owned. Their operations include financing for the start, growth and internationalization of enterprises. The Finnvera loan can be applied for by small and medium sized enterprises (SME). The initial process before any negotiation begins is to fill out an electronic application with a business plan attached for the financing company to conduct a business analysis. In the case that the company is seeking a guarantee from Finnvera then the application for the guarantee is done by the financing institute that the company is in contact with. (Finnvera, 2020.)

3.2 Business plan structure

The sections included in a business plan varies from business to business. Usually, the segments presented in the plan would be a mix of the following:

- Summary (i.e. executive summary)
- Introduction to the business idea/venture
- Business background
- Product and services

- The market
- Operations
- Management
- Proposal
- Financial background (Trading to date, Forecasts)
- Risks
- Conclusion
- Appendices (Website, product plan sample)

(Finch, 2016, 19.)

Since there are many sections in the business plan it is easier and better to form chapters from the sections and categorize the information throughout the business plan.



Figure 5 Major chapters in a business plan (Pinson, 2008,20)

3.3 Executive summary and organizational plan

The executive summary is typically left to be done last since it summarizes everything that is included in the business plan. The reason for the executive summary to be presented first is to give the reader a general idea and search for specific qualities in the plan that interests them.

In a business plan it is recommended to start with the organizational plan which consist of the identification along with background of your company. Firstly, work on answering why the company wants to start the business and what they are providing. Show an understanding of the skills and what the workforce is lacking in perspective, the overall professional pros and cons. The self-evaluation list can serve as background material or become part of the final plan depending on its content. If the objective of the business plan is to achieve a loan, then it will have to cope with the banker's ideals. These typically includes:

- Cash flow sufficient for loan payments (for an existing business)
- Owner/partner information, e.g., who has a track record of profitability in similar operations (for a new business)
- A well-made business plan and strategy
- Financial reserves and collateral to face unexpected problems and fluctuations

“Your potential customers will exchange their money only for the conviction that you are giving them their money's worth.” (McKeever, 2016).

Sometimes customer value isn't pinpointed enough when building a business, the first parts of the business plan refers to the company, the idea, background and products / services is so that the company can get the point across that they are completely aware of what is offered from their part as well as pitching the reasoning why the products and services would be beneficial to the surroundings/society. Use the organizational plan to describe the business and claim your pitch based on the understanding of the firm the type of business that the company is building. (McKeever, 2016).

Identify the problem that the company is trying to solve with the business and write out the description of the problem that the business solves for the consumers. To form the base of business plan and state the vision and mission for the business through the organization plan chapter. (Coke 2002, 88.)

The vision statement itself can be short and straight to the point but the vision itself can be lengthy when explained. The vision statement is written in the plan itself whereas the longer vision is captured in the narrative of the plan as part of the company's recorded history. (Coke 2002, 88.) The mission can be stated in the beginning. However, what you seek to achieve by setting on your mission through analysis of the current market and operations should be in the body of the plan.

For the next sections of the business plan the key words for the narrative is who, what, where, when, why and how. The reasoning for this is to keep the objectives of the business plan intact, using the key words the business plan can cover the problem for party of interest (who), the offerings that the business is providing (what), the location of the business (where), the hours that the business will operate (when), making use of the business' strengths while minimizing weaknesses and threats (why) and finally present the distribution methods and channels of the business (how). (McKeever, 2016.)

General business questions :
These questions apply to most small businesses. If some of the questions aren't relevant for the company in question, simply skip it.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What problem does my business solve for my customers? 2. Who the business' typical (target) customer? 3. How will the business communicate with the target customer? 4. What products and/or service will the business provide? Are there any products or services the customers may expect the business to provide that isn't in the planned offerings? 5. Where will the business be located? 6. Where will the products for the business be bought from? 7. What will be the operating hours for the business? 8. Who will be part of the workforces and how their salaries be paid? 9. Who will handle critical tasks such as selling, ordering , bookkeeping, marketing and shipping? 10. How will the business be advertised and promoted? 11. What are the competitions' strengths and weaknesses? 12. How is the business different from the competition, through the eyes of the customers? (Consumers' perspective)

Image 1 General business questions (McKeever, 2016, 36)

By having the answers to the inquires in the general business questions by Mckeever, it helps to dictate the focus of the plan towards the needs of the intended audience and to accurately show and explain the points you aim to make.

After achieving the overview of the nature of the business by stating the company's mission and vision, then go through the business model that being, the model of doing business by which a company can sustain itself while operating and how it works to do so. The strategy should include both short-term and long-term objectives. By establishing a plan of action designed to achieve the goal/mission the company can then better focus on its objectives. If the company have any strategic relationships, then it would be beneficial to add it and explain how the relationships will benefit your company. (McKeever, 2016, 36.)

3.3.1 SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis enables the company to evaluate its strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O), and threats (T). Strengths includes the internal capabilities, resources and positive factors that attributes to the company to help achieve company goals and objectives. Weaknesses include the internal limitations and negative factors that might hinder the company's performance. Opportunities consist of favorable situational factors or trends that could be utilized towards the advantage of the company. Threats are unfavorable factors and trends that might hinder the company's performance. The strengths and weaknesses are considered internal factors that the company can further develop. Whereas opportunities and threats are external and situational factors. Generally, the goal of conducting a SWOT analysis is to match the strengths and opportunities comparably and strive to overcome weaknesses and minimizing threats. (Kotler et al, 2018, 80.)

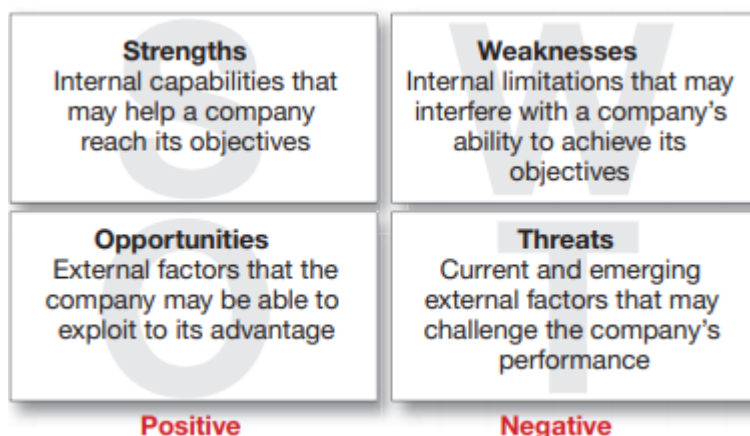


Image 2 SWOT analysis (Kotler et al, 2018, 80)

Conduct a SWOT analysis of your business and use the analysis to examine the internal and external factors to your business. (Pinson, 2008,32) The SWOT analysis for the business is part of the organizational plan section. The reason for having the SWOT analysis to show that careful considerations regarding the business have been thought of. With each part of the SWOT an explanation of how the strengths can be used for example as competitive advantage, how exactly is the company working towards resolving weaknesses during operations and minimizing the apparent threats against the business.

3.3.2 Products and services

This part is for a detailed description of your products and offerings. When describing the business' offerings refrain from assuming that the reader is familiar with the products/service. By describing the offerings carefully, you can efficiently sell the idea by generating values, enthusiasm and excitement towards the offerings. Once the intended reader is familiarized with the offerings, they are also primed for the upcoming chapters of the business plan which includes the marketing, operations and financial strategies.

When writing the section of your products and services, describe the attributes of your products/service such as the accessibility, convenience, innovativeness, and unique selling points. Present evidence and reasonings that the company has for providing such features. Include the range of the offerings and other offerings which might be introduced later. Factors such as delivery, ecommerce, prices, establishments, interior décor, location and layout should be mentioned and further explained in terms of visualizations and distribution. Include a short paragraph description that evocatively describes the experience of your customers, effectively sell that imaginative image. Follow up on current trends and incorporate into your products and offerings such as sustainable packaging and locally sourced resources.

Identify your target market and describe the benefits that the company provides, how the offerings address the need of the target market. Additional illustrations such as a features and benefits table to show the beneficial relationship is recommended. (Lawrence & Moyes, 2004.)

3.3.3 Administrative plan

This section of the organizational plan explains how the business is put together administratively, addressing the setup and functions of the business in an efficient and cost-effective aspect. The administrative plan is a vital part of the business plan. The background of the company and its offerings and the marketing plan are too, a crucial part of the plan, however the company also requires an administrative plan to ensure the company's operations are well managed. The administrative plan consists of personnel, daily operations, management of channels, outsourced operations such as accounting and management of funding.

Approach the following sections in this part of the plan in terms of revenue and expenses, the way the sections relate to the decisions made. When making the financial plan the sections in this part can be carried over. Include projections of how many employees,

daily hours, wage rates and the revenue margin increase expected with additional employees. The leasing of the premises, including associated costs such as utilities, insurances, improvements/changes, in the case of expansion for a bigger premise explain the effect of the added space have on the revenue and costs. Marketing costs, website development costs and the benefits that it will generate. (Pinson, 2008,37)

Include a description of your company type and structure. Explain why it advantageous to the business, name the owners or corporate officers, highlight their strengths and weakness that they compensate for each member involved. Include resumes/CVs of said partner in the business plan. After determining the capabilities of those involved including the amount of time they are committing to the business, management and personnel can be established. Ideally an organizational chart can be drawn to visually show areas of responsibility and personnel in charge. For example, the chart could identify the personnel in charge of marketing, product manufacturing, accounting etc. Note that some businesses fail due to hiring too many too soon while others fail when they became too successful too fast and thus are not organizationally ready. The business plan is one of the keys to responding to issues promptly to keep the business operating smoothly.

By identifying both best-case scenarios and worst-case scenarios with realistic solutions to combat unexpected issues such as when sales projections have not been met, how will revenue be generated to support the business in that case. Most small business start out with the business owners taking part in the majority of the work; however, it is still beneficial to have a hiring plan ready for the future. In the hiring plan list the type of employees needed, qualifications, salary and when the hiring might take place. This will benefit the financial assumption towards cash flow. (Pinson, 2008,38-40.)

Normally the accounting and legal department of a business can be overwhelming. It is recommended to consider outsourcing this part of the operations if the personnel are not entirely confident in this fields of business as it can cause complications in the long run if done incorrectly. Therefore, unless it is in the current personnel's expertise it is best to outsource such functions. Especially if there is not a clear understanding of the accounting, taxations and legality of the country the business is planning to operate in.

In the beginning phases of a start-up it is best to seek options such as outsourcing the accounting and legal sectors of the business to third party companies. Outsourcing can be more than a tool to reduce costs and thus improving organizational focus. It opens the opportunities of acquiring new capabilities, fundamental strategic as well as structural change. (Linder, 2004, 52.)

Legal sectors require basic things such as having an insurance policy in place before operating as Murphy's law will prevail and it is impossible to estimate what exactly will happen. Security measures should be introduced in the beginning, and protection in place for intellectual property. Include these considerations in the business plan and the list of companies that certain operations will be outsourced to. (Pinson, 2008,42.)

3.4 Marketing research

Marketing primarily deal with customers, by engaging customers and managing profitable customer relationships. The two main goals of marketing are to attract new customers by promising superior value and to maintain current customers by delivering value of satisfaction from products/services. (Kotler et al, 2018, 28.) Marketing research provides the data needed to better understand both the target customer and market. With data on the preferences and behavior of the target segment, promotions can be made to be more effective towards target market and customers.

The marketing section of the business plan defines the components of the marketing strategy chosen. Whilst writing the marketing plan the details of market analysis such as identifying the target market, the competitive analysis and the opportunities that emerge based on the review of the market. After the market analysis is made then the marketing plan starts with addressing the following:

- Target market
- Channels & Communication strategy
- Value proposition
- Ecommerce
- Sales strategy
- Competitive advantage.

By covering the basis above for the marketing plan the components that arises will represent the full spectrum of marketing possibilities.

Market analysis

The concept of exchange in business and customer relationship combined with the set of actual and potential buyers of a product/service is defined as a market. (Kotler et al.2018, 33.)

The market analysis is one of crucial parts for start-ups as it helps to reduce risk when by helping to understand customers and market conditions, thus providing a better chance to developing viable products/services. The market analysis enables entrepreneurs to avoid excess time and resources towards a product/service before determining that it is viable in the current market. Ensuring that customers are willing to pay for said products/services. Especially in the case that the business is seeking funding, the data yielded by the analysis will give the business plan facts and hard numbers to back it up making it more viable. (Kerr, 2020.)

Table 4 Market analysis sections

Industry Description	Outline the current state of the industry overall, where it is heading, relevant industry metrics such as growth, size, trend and cycle.
Target Market	Establish a clear understanding of the target market from the beginning, since not everyone is part of the potential market so, it is important to indicate who exactly will be the most likely to frequent the business.
Competitive analysis	This section is dedicated to investigating the competitors of the business. Providing a base to see who the business will be competing against and what can be learnt from these competitors.
Projections	Projections in the case of start-ups are essentially educated guesses. It is crucial to be thoughtful in the process of projection to avoid exaggeration of the estimation.

Table 4 shows the sections included in the conduction of market analysis. Industry description shows the investors that you know what kind of industry the business is trying to enter also that you have the knowledge and have done your preparations beforehand.

The prospects of establishing a target market is to be able to narrow down who exactly the marketing budget is directed to and attract loyal customers who would promote and further recommend your business. The details of the target market should include user personas, characteristics, demographics and psychographics when available. By investigating the target markets' interests and buying habits; it will be easier for the company to peak the target groups' interest and needs. Determine the market size and what the potential customers are willing to spend annually on products/services that the company aim to offer thus getting an idea of just how big the potential market is for the business.

By conducting a competitive analysis in the market analysis, it will show that the company acknowledge that there are other players in the market and provide a chance to showcase how the company can overcome the competition by dissecting their strengths and weaknesses.

“Competitive analysis is done by identifying key competitors; assessing their objectives, strategies, strengths and weaknesses, reaction patterns and selecting which competitor to attack or avoid.” (Kotler et al, 2018, 542).

The components of competitive analysis should include:



Image 3 Components of Competitive analysis (Kotler et al, 2018)

Competitive advantage is defined as

“An advantage over competitors gained by offering consumer greater value”. (Kotler et al, 2018,542).

After completing the competitive analysis with the components mentioned above in image 3, the basis of is examined and can later benefit the competitive advantage section in the marketing planning stages in the business plan.

Projections in the market analysis section should include estimated examination in market share, pricing and gross margin. The market share includes estimation of how much the potential customers spend in the market industry and how much of the market the current

business idea can attract. Explain these projections using a bottom up projection based on marketing and sales efforts which would enable to reach these potential customers. With pricing and gross margin, the idea is to lay out the pricing structure and explain why the pricing is done respectively i.e. to be more attractive in comparison to competitors etc. Gross margin refers to the difference between the cost of production and sales price. (Kerr, 2020.)

According to Kotler et al, companies nowadays are operating in a fierce competitive marketplace and companies should move on from the product-and-selling philosophy to a customer-and-marketing philosophy. To win in today's market, companies must become adept in both the managing of their offerings and manage customer relationships.

To gain a competitive advantage over your competitors is to differentiate yourself from them. By analyzing both yours and the competitors' strengths and weaknesses; to compare how your pricing is relative to the offerings and how the business would differ. If the competition is strong then do not overlook that fact but rather figure how your business can adjust or use the popularity of the competitor as a strength. (McKeever, 2016, 194.) By differentiating the business from competitors, it provides the basis to show and market where the difference is, such as quality of options, service or superior products.

3.5 Marketing plan

Marketing, the process by which companies engage customers, build strong customer relationships, and create customer value in order to capture value from customers in return. Definition of marketing by Kotler et al. (Kotler et al, 2018, 29).

The marketing plan will pave the way for the business venture; by developing a good marketing plan it would guide the business to reach the target customers effectively. The marketing plan is where the data from the market analysis can be utilized and how the marketing plan will fit in that particular market structure. The source of information based on the idea of the products/service; consumer interviews/survey along with SWOT analysis would provide the data needed for this part.

The sections in the marketing plan includes:

- Target market strategy
- Channels strategy & Ecommerce
- Marketing strategy & Marketing mix
- Communication & Sales strategy.

3.5.1 Target market strategy

Market segmentation reveals the business' market segment opportunities. By evaluating the various customer segments present, deciding how many segments the business will serve best. (Kotler et al, 2018, 221.)

Target market: *"A set of buyers who share common needs/characteristics that a company decides to serve."* (Kotler et al, 2018, 222).

By utilizing the target market strategy, which is done by distinguishing the direct customers; describing their characteristics, needs, benefits by presenting how the business products/services fulfills the needs and solve the problems in the customer acquiring what they want. Provide evidence based on your consumer research that they understand the benefits and the likeliness that they will purchase what the business is offering. Reflect and provide explanations on how and why the consumers will overcome their current brand loyalty to existing competition. If the business is prepared to move into different customer segments in the future, provide evidence as to how and why the new customer segments will be interested in the offerings. (Lawrence & Moyes, 2004, 14.)

Selecting the type of marketing that suits the current market segment, the choice between undifferentiated marketing (mass marketing) or differentiated marketing, the methods differs that undifferentiated marketing treats all the market segments as a whole and the marketing program will appeal to all potential buyers. Whereas differentiated marketing strategy is when the firm designs separate marketing campaigns/offers to each targeted segment. The strategy can be further narrowed down to concentrated (niche) and micro-marketing (local/individual) if the company is more specific in its target segments. (Kotler et al, 2018, 221-223.)

3.5.2 Channel strategy & Ecommerce

Distribution channels are vital to a marketing plan, it describes how the products/services can reach the customers. Potential channels include distributors, wholesalers, retailers, and e-commerce depending on the business. In most cases for small business the multi-channel distribution approach is highly likeable. Multichannel distribution is operating a distribution system in which one firm would set up multiple marketing channels to reach one or more customer segments. (Kotler et al, 2018, 362-366.)

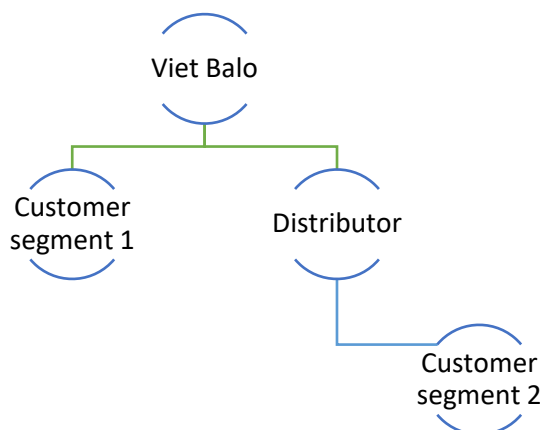


Figure 6 Multichannel distribution: Viet Balo

Above is a depiction of how a simple multichannel distribution would work. The company (Viet Balo) would provide directly via physical location, website e-commerce to customer segment 1, and with the additional distributor they can provide to customer segment 2 through a mobile application and delivery thus reaching more segments of customers. Marketing channels contribute to the overall customer value delivery network, each channel adds value for the customers. Companies should provide the marketing channels objectives in terms of targeted levels of customer service, different segments want different levels of service, based on the objectives the company can decide which segment to serve via the best channel in each case. (Kotler et al, 2018,366-369.)

E-commerce can be regarded as an additional sales distribution channel or for some companies, while other companies may treat it as the sole distribution channel to customers. The availability of making a purchase online is more sought after nowadays. The psychology behind online ordering for food as an example, is that it is more convenient for the customers to explore the menu options rather than falling back on their “safe” choice which is a selection of dishes that they’ve had before. Orders made over the phone are often easy to order dishes with limited questions asked regarding other items on the menu. With the option of online ordering the customers can look over the entire menu, thus being more willing to try more items on the menu with options of additional add-on. Online orders are often larger than usual since the customer would be more enticed into ordering a few side dishes and possible dessert options as well. Adding visuals and descriptions to the e-commerce part proves to be more appealing as customers can form an expectation of what the food would be like. (Cohen, 2017.)

3.5.3 Marketing strategy & Marketing mix

The main goal of marketing is to create value for the customers and build profitable customer relationships, by applying marketing strategy which is the marketing logic that the company uses with the goal of creating customer values and profits. With segmentation the company identified their customers and how they will serve the customers through differentiation and positioning. By establishing the marketing strategy, the company can then design a marketing mix based on factors that the company can control, thus introducing the marketing mix also known as Marketing 4Ps as these controllable factors are product, price, place and promotion. Marketing mix is the set of tools that the firm utilizes to implement the marketing strategy. (Kotler et al, 2018,38.)



Figure 7 Marketing mix (4Ps)

The marketing mix is aimed at matching the value proposition by creating a satisfying market offering that is the product, decision on pricing of the offerings, availability of products/services in terms of location or venue, and finally the promotions required to present an enticing campaign aimed at reaching target consumers. The blend of the marketing mix elements should transform into real customer value and distribute the offerings to make them available. By developing customer value, it will lead to satisfied customers who will make repeated purchases in the long run. Through this process the marketers would practice customer relationship building, management to further strengthen customer satisfaction. (Kotler et al, 2018, 54-55.)

Pricing strategy can be either based on focus groups and interviews judging how much consumers are willing to pay, or it could be based on competitive analysis and position. Depending on what you are providing you can charge considerably more or less than competitors based on the offerings. In the case that pricing is less of the competitors, pay attention to your pricing flooring basically how low can you go whilst remaining profitable. To remain equal to competitors it is crucial to pay attention to their promotions and have quick and well formulated responses with your own offerings. (Pinson 2008,52.)

3.5.4 Communication & Sales strategy

Companies must engage consumers and communicate the value of their offerings, all communication must be planned and consciously blended in marketing promotions. Good communication is the crucial key element in everyday relationships as well as customer relationships and work towards building a profitable long-term relationship value. Companies should integrate a promotion mix, which consist of five tools.

Table 5 Promotion mix (Kotler et al, 2018, 425.)

Advertising:	Paid form of nonpersonal presentation and promotions. Example: print, online, mobile, outdoor billboards, bus stops etc.
Sales promotion:	Short term incentives to encourage level of purchases. Example: Discounts, bundles, coupons, events etc.
Personal selling:	Personal customer interaction with purpose of engaging customers, encouraging purchase and building customer relationship. Example: Sales presentation, incentive programs etc.
Public relations:	Build good relations by obtaining favorable publicity and building a good company image. Example: Press release, sponsorship, events, webpages etc.
Direct & digital marketing:	Promotions that engage directly with targeted customers to obtain immediate response and build lasting customer relationship. Example: Direct mail, email, catalogs, online, social media, mobile marketing etc.

Each of the category involves specific methods of promotion that are used to communicate with customer. The overall scope of marketing goes beyond these tools, every detail from the products, packaging, service and even logistics choices communicate to the customers, the promotion mix is the base for the company's primary engagement and

communication activities; the entirety of the marketing mix (4Ps) should be coordinated for the best impact.

Nowadays in the digital age consumers are swaying away from the traditional mass marketing strategies and focuses in more narrowly defined markets. The new age has made room for a more targeted, socially engaging marketing communications model. As the marketing communications scene changes, instead of simply creating and placing ads, marketers now must create, inspire and share brand messages. In the case of there being many communications channel it is vital that the company keeps their message clear and consistent thus practicing the concept of integrated marketing communications through consistent, clear and compelling brand messages. (Kotler et al, 2018, 439-441.)

At most basics of levels, companies should have at least a website showcasing the company's products and offerings as well as give a voice to the brand and distributing that brand through the website as a channel. Beyond brand websites companies should also integrate social media into their marketing mix. Websites should feature the social media pages, to engage customers to look further into the company and brand thus extending customer engagement. Besides having just content on the website, the site can be configured into an e-commerce channel for products/offerings including gift cards etc. Thus, providing more opportunities for customers to make a purchase. It is crucial nowadays to stay atop of trends and happening as to keep the brand relevant. Marketing campaigns could be planned around holidays themes or major events by applying real-time marketing, it will be more effective as the promotion is engaging customers in the moment. (Kotler et al, 2018, 47.)

3.6 Financial & Supporting documents

Financial documents are records of the present past, current and projected finances. This section will cover the financial documents that the business needs to consider adding to the business plan for financial prospects.

The following documents are beneficial to the business plan for a new business.

- Summary of Financial Needs
- Source and Use of Funds statement
- Cash flow statement (Budget)
- Three-year income projection
- Break even analysis

Additional documents for existing businesses seeking funds also includes the following:

- Balance sheet
- Profit and loss statement
- Financial history
- Financial statement analysis

Note that the additional document are for existing companies to seek funding and the company should have been operating for some time to produce the documents, whereas the financial documents required for a new business is the allocation of funds and projections for the business.

The first two documents that being the summary of financial needs and source and use of fund statement is written in paragraph form rather than presented in spreadsheets. The two documents are included in the business plan if the business is seeking funds. The projections documents are used to predict future profitability, projections are based on realistic research and reasonable assumptions. (Pinson 2008, 77-80.)

Summary of financial needs should include three types of capital.

- Working capital: Fluctuating needs to be paid during the business operating cycle. (Annual)
- Growth capital: Payment from profits over the period of years depending on loan period. Note that this is necessary if the business is seeking growth capital funds.
- Equity capital: Valuation of invested capital; ownership of shares. Is considered as net funds returned to investors if all assets were to be liquidated.

The capital types above serve as an outline for the summary. The paragraphs should provide information as to why the loan/investment is necessary and how much is required to accomplish the business' goals.

The source and use of funds should state the amount of money the business is intending to borrow with statements as to how the funds will be utilize along with supporting data to present to the lender. For example if part of the funds is allocated to marketing campaigns then it is necessary to state it and refer to the marketing section of the plan and that would explain the process of the advertising, with that done attach the advertising rate/costs sheet to supporting documents for reference. (Pinson 2008, 77-80.)

The source and use of funds statement should consist of two sections, the source (where the funding is coming from) and the use (where the money obtained will be allocated to). The source includes all the funding to the business and list where/who the money is coming from, which could include proceeds of loans, personal investment, proceeds of shares or more. The use or application of the money should state specifically where the money is being allocated to such as marketing budget, inventory, purchase of capital/assets, loan repayments, rent, rent deposit and more. (CFI Education Inc, 2020.)

Projected statements include three budget statement, three-year income projection, and break-even analysis.

The cash flow statement is primarily used for internal planning and provide an estimation of monetary flow into and out of the business during designated time period.

Pro Forma Cash Flow Statement

Business Name _____

Year: _____

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	6-MONTH TOTALS	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	12-MONTH TOTALS
BEGINNING CASH BALANCE														
CASH RECEIPTS														
A. Sales/Revenues														
B. Receivables														
C. Interest Income														
D. Sale of Long-Term Assets														
TOTAL CASH AVAILABLE														
CASH PAYMENTS														
A. Cost of goods to be sold														
1. Purchases														
2. Material														
3. Labor														
Total Cost of Goods														
B. Variable (Selling) Expenses														
1.														
2.														
3.														
4.														
5.														
6.														
7. Misc. Variable Expense														
Total Variable Expenses														
C. Fixed Expenses														
1.														
2.														
3.														
4.														
5.														
6.														
7. Misc. Fixed Expense														
Total Fixed Expenses														
D. Interest Expense														
E. Federal Income Tax														
F. Other Uses														
G. Long-Term Asset Payts														
H. Loan Payments														
I. Owner Draws														
TOTAL CASH PAID OUT														
CASH BALANCE/DEFICIENCY														
LOANS TO BE RECEIVED														
EQUITY DEPOSITS														
ENDING CASH BALANCE														

Image 3 Example of a Projected cash flow statement (Pinson 2008, 334)

The actual profits will depend on the balance between monetary inflow and outflow. This statement contains only actual transaction, excluding depreciation. Expenses such as

loan repayments, operating and fixed cost are accounted in this part. However, if these revenue projections are not met the business owners should include if possible, an additional source of revenue accounted to support the business. (Pinson 2008, 81-82.)

The three/year income projection is also known as a profit and loss statement as depicted in Image 3. Information for the three/year income projection can be developed from the cash flow statement along with the business and marketing analysis.

Overall, the first year's figure is derived from the total of income and expense items; the second- and third-year's figures includes the totals with projected trends in the industry. With the projections at the end of each year of the business operations compare the actual performance. (Pinson 2008, 88-96.)

The components to the financial section of the plan are the sales forecast and expenses budget. Without these two components it would be increasingly challenging to make the cash flow statement. The sales forecast projects the sales estimated to take place during operations. The sales forecast should be done first as a single day of operations then with the values obtained continue by multiplying the daily forecast with the operating days in a month, by doing so the forecast will be done for one month. Keep in mind that during operations the number of sales could fluctuate and having an additional fluctuation in sales forecast will provide a more realistic estimate. Expenses budget includes everything that is required to be able actually make the sales forecasts such as operating costs, fixed cost and variable costs should be included in the expenses budget. (Wasserman 2020.)

Finally, for new business it is vital to include a projection for a break-even analysis. Break-even is the point in which the business reaches where the cost matches with revenue, and the company has not yet made a profit but can cover all costs. The break-even point is often determined by a mathematical calculation and presented in a graph. In order to calculate the break-even point, the business would need three projections. (Pinson 2008, 98.)

- Fixed costs: The costs that remains constant whilst operating or even while not operating, such as rent for the premises, water and electricity and overall upkeep.
- Variable costs: The cost of goods combined with selling expenses; this cost can vary depending on volume of business. More sales volume equals more variable costs.
- Total sales volume: The projected sales revenue for the same period as the costs.
E.g. Monthly

Mathematically it can be derived using the methods in Image 4:

$$\text{B-E Point (Sales)} = \text{Fixed Costs} + [(\text{Variable Costs}/\text{Est. Revenues}) \times \text{Sales}]$$

Terms Used:

- a. Sales = volume of sales at Break-Even Point
- b. Fixed Costs = administrative expense, depreciation, interest
- c. Variable Costs = cost of goods and selling expenses
- d. Estimated Revenues = income (from sales of goods/services)

Example:

- a. S (Sales at B-E Point) = the unknown
- b. FC (Fixed Costs) = \$25,000
- c. VC (Variable Costs) = \$45,000
- d. R (Estimated Revenues) = \$90,000

Using the formula, the computation would appear as follows:

$$S \text{ (at B-E Point)} = \$25,000 + [(\$45,000/\$90,000) \times S]$$

$$S = \$25,000 + (1/2 \times S)$$

$$S - 1/2 S = \$25,000$$

★ **S = \$50,000** (B-E Point in terms of \$ of revenue exactly offset by total costs)

Image 4. Break-even calculation (Pinson, 2008, 98)

All the figures needed to calculate the break-even point can be found after making the three-year projection. By now it should be evident that the financial section of the business plan is built on the sector done previously in order to proceed.

Next is the break-even analysis presented in a graph form.

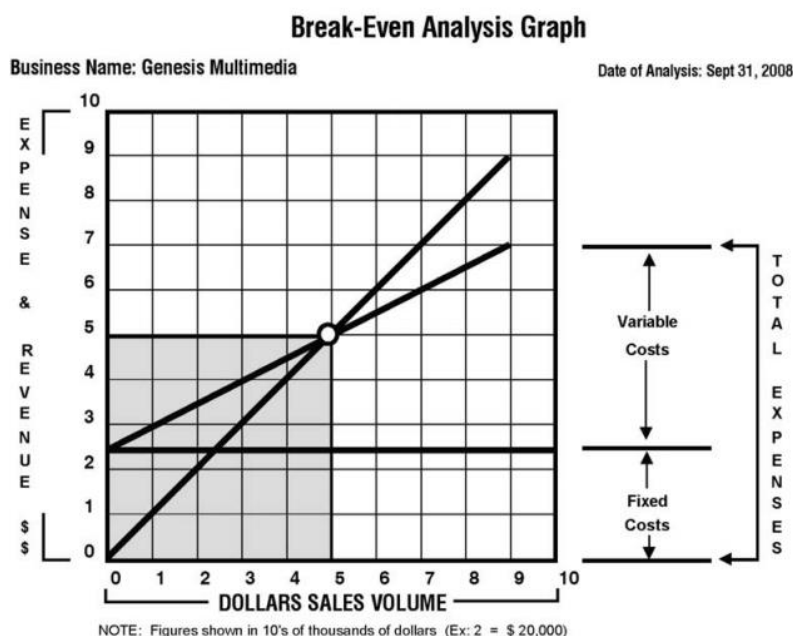


Figure 8 Break-even analysis graph (Pinson, 2008, 99)

To make/fill the graph on your own by Determining:

- Fixed costs for the time period needed. Illustrated in the graph as a horizontal line. E.g. 25 000 dollars
- Variable costs, if packing or logistics is involved then include cost of goods with variable costs of packaging, advertising, delivery etc. Draw variable cost line with from the start of fixed cost sloping upwards to the point where it meets with the total revenue.
- Total projected sales volume, the figure that represent total revenue. This can also be derived by multiplying units of products sold by sale price per unit. Note that for a service it can be calculated by multiplying billable hours with hourly rate. The line from zero sloping upwards through the point that describe the total revenue projected.

The break-even point is illustrated on the graph where the variable cost line intersects with the total revenue line. The triangle area below and to the left point of the break-even value represents loss and the other triangle above and to the right represents profits. (Pinson, 2008, 99.)

4 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter will describe further as to how the empirical research was conducted and the data analysis. The research for this thesis is done using the qualitative methods.

For this thesis, the data collection method was semi-structured interviews and is followed by the analysis of the data obtained.

4.1 Data Collection

The process of data collection started with the secondary data needed for research on the food and beverage industry then after examining the theories needed for this thesis the empirical data process started.



Figure 9

The figure 9 above shows the when the process started in late November 2019, along with the process to when the secondary data acquisition started following by the primary data collection and finally the data analysis examined towards the last stages of the thesis. The primary data collection took longer than expected. All the interviewees have agreed to participate beforehand however finding a time suitable was proven difficult especially for the expert interviews as participants needed to plan around their working schedule. The business plan for the case company was also made during the end of the process of this thesis.

For the thesis there is three separate sets of interview questions made. The three sets are the consumer interviews, premises expert interview and business owner interviews. The participant samples are quite small, there are four consumers, two premises expert and two business owners. The reasons for having three sets of interviews is to be able to gain different perspectives and recommendations for the business plan and to get a better grasp of how a business plan is beneficial to both the business and the premises rental experts. The consumer interviews' purpose is to provide the information on how the case company can gain competitive advantage with their current concept.

The interview questions were compiled based on the research questions and the sub-questions presented in chapter 1. By keeping the objectives of the questions in the mind the data obtained would be more relevant to the study. Each set of interviews contained a set of 11 main questions and occasional probing questions in the case that the answers were not thorough enough. Each interview question set has a short brief on the case company and the purpose of the interview in the beginning. The questions were sent before the interview is conducted so the interviewees are able to go through the questions and contact the author if the questions was too intrusive or that they would like to refrain from answering any of the questions due to any reasons. None of the participants refrained from answering any of the questions. The last question on every interview set is a recommendation question from the participants for the case company. This question allows the participants to comment and recommend from their perspectives. All interviews were conducted remotely due to the Covid-19 situation. The interview question sets can be found in the appendices proportion of this thesis.

4.2 Data analysis

With the obtained data and transcripts from the interviews the author has chosen to approach the data analysis section using thematic data analysis methods. Thematic analysis is generally used for qualitative studies and can be used in both inductive and deductive approach. Thematic analysis can be used for both larger and smaller set of data. The research approach for this thesis is inductive as mentioned in chapter 1. The author is looking at the whole data set for occurrence and reoccurrences in the data obtained. The reoccurrences can be used to establish themes from the data obtained. (Saunders et al., 2016, 579-585.)

Consumer data analysis

The consumer data contributes towards the sub-questions on the demand for a restaurant concept of the case company and the competitive advantage possibilities. Consumer 1 stands out from the set of consumers as he regularly orders delivery and dine out. With familiarity in for the central Helsinki area of the variety, though he acknowledge that the variety is plentiful in central Helsinki his opinions are that when it comes to a regular basis the offerings get repetitive as the restaurants offers their specialties only when ordering through third party companies such as Foodora and Wolt.

The remaining consumers 2,3 and 4 have similar dining out habits, they eat out once every week. They are price sensitive and do not uses third party delivery services for their meals. All agrees that the taste of the food is important along with the service. Consumer

2 is the only one that felt the variety of restaurants in central Helsinki was not enough and would like to see more exotic varieties such as African cuisine. Consumers 2,3 and 4 all check the reviews for the restaurants before visiting to ensure a good experience.

The dining out habits of the consumers is answered through the interview accounting towards consumers' behavior. The qualities of the frequent places are answered based on food, service and quality. Unique aspects that makes restaurants gain competitive advantages such as interior and menus. Generally, the missing aspect of a kid's menu is not an issue for these consumers, but since none of the participants have kids of their own the data is not fully reliable from a parent's perspective. Most consumers expect the price to match the quality of the food. The themes from the consumers' interviews are convenience, taste, specialty, and pricing.

Premises expert data analysis

There are two participants for this interview set, both oversee renting of premises to tenants, though their company's operations differ slightly. Both experts have similar opinion and requirements for the business plan. Due to the nature of expert 1's company's operations they often stray away from renting to start-ups since their contract is often fixed for a long term and the contract is established before the premises is ready often the contract is done 2-3 years prior to completion of a building. During that time range the start-up companies may not exist anymore. Expert 1 usually only considers start-up companies towards the finalization of the company's building plans.'

Both experts offer a clean space for the rental premises which is the usual when renting any premises as companies has to know what the interior and specifications of equipment are. The experts expect the that a business plan is well done before even considering the tenants. The requirements of a business plan according to the experts are:

- Accurate visuals of the interiors, kitchen and offerings of the restaurant business
- Background of company and owners
- Reliable financial planning that is realistic to the situation
- Clear implications of what the company wants with the business premises
- Explanation of what advantages the business and concept adds the building

According to the expert it would benefit greatly if the company can differentiate themselves from the competitors effectively to show that business plans to compete in a

healthy way with the other businesses in the building to ensure survivability of all firms. Carefully considerations of scenarios during operations in terms of cost and resources are necessary for the business to get a premises from these experts.

Questions regarding what a business plan should consist of, expected expenses, competition, risks, food and beverage industry growth, consumers, and recommendations were asked. The themes from the premises expert interviews are visuals, well-planned, differentiation, competition, and financial planning.

Business owner data analysis

The business owner interviews had two business interviewed. Business owner 1 operates a small restaurant with a similar concept as the case company. Business owners 2 operates a beverage concept in the Greater Helsinki region. Both the experiences of these businesses provide valuable data to the case company in terms of development of business concept, premises acquisition, contributions of a business plan, establishing demand, cost and risk factors.

Both business owners found their premises with ease. Business owner 1 in particular got the premises based their offerings and concept idea being different in comparison with their competitors for the rental premises at the time. Business owners 2 had connections which aided them with finding their first location. Both businesses attributed their success to their perseverance in business and belief in their offerings. Business owner 1 was among one of first to establish a Vietnamese restaurant serving authentic cuisine in Finland thus contributing to establishing for market for Vietnamese food. Business owners 2 saw an underdeveloped market for bubble milk tea beverages and decided to provide their products based on unmet demands.

The owners of both businesses have not developed a full business plan for their companies. Though both admits that having an established business plan will benefit them. Business owners 2 have done partially planning for their company with some financial planning and marketing planning which have benefitted them up to this point. Business owner 1 has more competitors who developed similar concepts afterwards, but since they have entered the market earlier on, they have an established consumer base compared to their competitors. Business 1 also provided information on the estimated cost of setting up a small restaurant and the necessary purchases that a business should have. The themes resulting from the business owners' interviews are concept, authenticity, costs, location and quality.

5 FINDINGS

In this section the themes resulting from each set of interviews will be further discussed. By examining how the themes can contribute to the research questions and sub-question and the case company. The objectives of each of the interviews set is accomplished. The primary data obtained combined with the theories and secondary data source as guidelines for the business plan compiles enough information to make an established business plan for the company.

Consumers

Consumer interviews resulting themes were convenience, taste, specialty, and pricing. Showing that consumers value convenience the most as most consumers frequent establishments that are nearby to their home even if the food is not special or particularly superior to other establishments.

The taste of the food that restaurant offers seems to be the key component to getting the consumers to return and make repeated purchases. Specialty in offerings is considered a strength and intrigues consumers to try the dishes but findings show that if the specialty items is the only offering that restaurant is providing at all times then the specialty items can get tiring, consumers have demand for a rotating menu as it gives them more reasons to return to the restaurant. Pricing levels of the establishment is important to most consumers if the food quality is not reflected in the pricing then customer value does not exist which will not generate revenue in the long run.

Premises experts

Premises experts are strict with the requirements that they have for potential tenants. An established business plan with good presentations is a must to be considered worthy of getting premises in shopping centers in Finland. The themes from premises expert interviews are visuals, well-planned, differentiation, competition, and financial planning.

The visuals required are necessary so that the leasing organization can get a better idea of what the business is and how they will fit in the entirety of the overall concept of the shopping centers in question. They would require the business to have interior designers develop the visuals to capture the essence of the business. The visuals of offerings are as important to consumers as it is to the premises leasing organization especially if the offerings are not common and is different than other restaurants. The business plan should be

well-planned to show them that the company has knowledge based on the market, industry and area they plan to operate in.

Differentiation from other restaurants is also important as the premises leasing organizations want there to be healthy competition in the shopping center to ensure the survivability of all businesses as they generate revenue from the leasing contracts and would prefer reliable long term contracts. Financially planning should be done based on realistic values and take into consideration of fluctuating variable costs that might happen during operations, since not all expectations and estimations can be made accurately. The leasing organization wishes that the firm can survive in both good and bad scenarios whether it is too successful and need additional employees or how the costs can be covered during slower months, where the money to support and start the business would be coming from.

Business owners

The interviews conducted with business owners and their experience operating in the food and beverage industry provides insight for the case company to benefit from as a start-up. The themes derived from the interview sessions with business owners are concept, authenticity, costs, location and quality. Both businesses started their operations with no business plan, even though they believe that a business plan would have benefitted them they did not have the specific guidelines or resources to make one themselves. Business owner one has established their company in 2016 as a start-up with little information on the potential market and managed to achieve success overall though it comes with challenges that a business plan may be able to assist if they had one.

Challenges such as financial planning, formation of a clear concept and outsourcing options for accounting and knowledge in the legal sectors were exhibited in both businesses. These particular factors are and should be accounted for in the business plan. Business owners 2 had a partial plan and a template but the specific guidelines and resources were not found, they worked with the partial plans and felt that it did aid them in the operations of the business. Neither of the companies have applied for financing and the capital for their companies came from their personal savings.

Through operations the business owners learnt that having a concept is important in the food and beverage industry. With their initial concepts they have established their businesses in a new market aimed at providing offerings that are not common when they started business. The businesses claim that maintaining authenticity as being their unique selling point and recommends that the case company take authenticity into account with the offerings in the future. Business owner 1 gave estimations on how much it would cost

to establish a small restaurant which benefited the case company in their financial planning. Business owner 1 attributed their success to having a central location in Turku whereas business owners 2 disclosed that they would have been more successful if their location would have been more central. With reference to the consumer interviews which also mentioned convenience of the location to be a major factor. Both business owners put emphasis on the quality of their offerings and service as being the main factors for success.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this thesis will provide the answers to the research question and then the sub-questions. Based on theories, secondary data and primary data. The validity and reliability will be discussed. Recommendations to the case company will be provided to further develop their business plan. Suggestion for further research will be made at the end of the conclusion.

6.1 Answers to research questions

From the analysis of both secondary and primary data combined with theoretical data the research questions are presented. First the main research question then following with the sub-research questions.

How does a business plan contribute to the success of a start-up in the food and beverage industry in present-day Greater Helsinki region?

A business plan contributes to the success of a start-up in the food and beverage industry by providing the company with an established guide to:

- Follow the initial concept of the business
- Better understanding of the business' capabilities and hindering factors
- Operations
- Information on the market
- Type of consumers the business will be serving
- Marketing approach
- Management of distribution and outsourcing channels,
- Financial forecasts and planning

The business plan can contribute to the ease of finding a rental premise in the greater Helsinki region which is increasingly difficult currently or provide the opportunity for growth and expansion of the company later. Having a business plan is also an absolute requirement if the start-up is considering receiving any funding from the state or financial institutes. Without the contribution of a business plan a start-up's potential to grow and succeed is significantly less.

The business plan will provide as a base for the owners of the company to understand the specifics of their business and what it entails. By establishing a strong initial concept, the company can further tweak it whilst maintaining the core values of concept in the long run as the food and beverage industry is constantly affected by trends and growth. The analysis of the internal and external factors of the business provides the necessary information as to what strengths and opportunities should be embraced and possible factors that would hinder the business' growth or survivability in the long run. Operations and responsibilities of the owners can be set and referred to along with workforce management to avoid miscommunications and disputes. Necessary information on the market and industry to better understand and forecast the business. By knowing and targeting consumers based on their preferences and needs to create customer value and profitable relationship. The start-up can better understand and cater to the needs and wants of the consumers.

Effective marketing is particularly important in Helsinki as there are a lot of competitors present, a clear marketing plan combined with clever deliverance of value and offerings will capture the attention of consumers, leading to increase in sales and revenue. The distribution or provision of the offerings are important as a company should take advantage of different distribution channel. Management of outsourced jobs such as accounting, taxations and legal tasks to keep the company in proper working order.

Financial planning in a business plan is crucial to a start-up as unrealistic forecasts can be detrimental to the business and would not be able to operate efficiently or in worst scenario cease to exist at all if the costs are not accounted when the estimations have not been met.

Sub-questions

What role does a business plan have in the formation of a restaurant startup?

For the case company Viet Balo Oy, the company would not be able to go to operations without a business plan to acquire funding from financial institutes. The company needs the elements of the business plan such as marketing to be able to reach consumers in the highly competitive market in Helsinki as well as the financial documents to grasp the amount of capital needed to operate. The business plan plays a major role for the case company in Financial acquisition, without the business plan the company would not have gotten the funding from financial institutes.

How will the case company gain a competitive advantage in the restaurant industry in Greater Helsinki?

The findings show that to gain competitive advantage in the Helsinki the case company would need to be able to differentiate themselves from the competitors with their concept and branding. By focusing on the quality, authenticity and offering convenience to the customers. The case company needs to develop customer value to form profitable relationships, like in the case of Business owner 1, the customers were the main success factor which provided them with word of mouth marketing based on the deliverance of customer values.

To what extent is there demand in the market for this type of restaurant?

The demand for fast casual food concepts exists in the current food and beverage industry in Helsinki and customer demands for high quality and easy food is also present. Overall, the market in Helsinki welcomes more variety from the consumers and shopping malls perspectives.

What are the success and risk factors involve?

The success factors involved in a business plan lies in process of compiling the plan, the objectives must be reach in terms of accurately presenting the business and concept. A clear marketing strategy to reach consumers to be able to form customer relationship and deliver value. Effect analysis of the business' internal and external factors to better prepare the company during operations. A realistic forecast to ensure the business' chance of survival in the market. The risk factors lie in the failure of the business which could lead to financial loss affecting the owners of the company in the long term.

6.2 Validity and reliability

- Reliability: Refers to the level of replication and consistency of the research.
- Validity: Refers to the suitability of chosen measures used.

Reliability and validity are essential towards the judgement regarding the quality of the research. Both reliability and validity have internal and external aspects. Internal reliability can be achieved by ensuring consistency by having more than one researcher to observe and evaluate the extent to which they agree upon the data and analysis, other factors contributing to consistency is by taking notes throughout the process of the research. Though there is only one author for this thesis, there is a supervisor present to evaluate the data,

findings and the entirety of the research project, internal reliability is exhibited in this prospect. External reliability refers to whether the steps in data collection and analytic procedure would produce consistent findings if they are to be repeated.

Internal validity is established when the research successfully demonstrates a causal relationship between two variables such as a cause-effect relationship between event and outcome. External validity considers the transferability and generalizability and ponders whether the study's research findings can be generalized/transfer to other relevant settings, groups and situations. Validity is a common term in quantitative research, internal validity is achievable in qualitative research due to the in-depth nature of the method, theoretical relationships can be relevant to rich collection of data. External validity is often questioned when it comes to qualitative methods, since the samples are quite small and thus limits the generalizability of such studies. (Saunders et al., 2016, 202-206.)

Regarding the reliability of this research, food trends and consumer needs change constantly over time, operation of business and marketing research stays more less the same hence it is probable that reliability exists in this research.

The validity of this research is achieved in the terms of internal validity which shows that based on the findings from the research that the causes and effect of having a business plan is clear. Businesses do operate better and has more opportunities for growth when a business plan is present. External validity can be achieved if the sample size for the research is substantially bigger but due to limitations such as resources and time external validity has not been fully established.

6.3 Recommendation for the case company

With the provided business plan generated from this thesis the case company have been successful in procurement of financial funding, however the business plan can still be further developed once there is more data generated through the operations of the business. Updates on market analysis, marketing strategy and plan should be implemented in the long run, changes to the concept should be added to the plan along with more financial documents such as balance sheets, financial statements and more accurate forecasts can be made to the business plan for future business growth.

6.4 Suggestions for further research

The research was to gather the specific requirements to get a premises leasing contract, consumer data and insight from entrepreneurs operating in the same industry. The research can be done more extensively on each group. The specifics of the business plan regarding market analysis can be conducted as a completely different research on its own to develop a deeper understanding and outlook of the food and beverage industry in Finland.

The topic can be done for other companies in different industries to investigate whether the need for a business plan is regarded the same way. That would bring benefits to other companies, and those looking to enter a different industry than food and beverages.

7 SUMMARY

The purpose of the thesis was to produce a guide and a business plan for the case company. To better understand the specific requirement to obtaining a premises for the business, the success and risk factors of a business and gather consumer data the research questions were formed. The case company is interested in the food and beverage industry and market in the Greater Helsinki region which, secondary data was gathered for the business plan.

The first part of the study is the theoretical part, focusing on theories to be implemented in business plan. Theories required for the business plan is introduced in the theoretical framework. Secondary data is compiled with theories to produce the guide towards making the business plan and the theoretical framework was implemented in the business plan produced for the case company. The secondary data obtained contributed mainly to the business plan itself in the form of market analysis, competitive analysis and financial documents.

The empirical research starts with the preliminary research on the market, industry, competitors of the case company and financial documents needed to form the business plan. Primary research was focused on the premises experts, business owners and consumers in the same industry. A qualitative research approach was used to obtain data via interviews. The data is then analyzed and themes from the data were further discussed to provide the necessary information for the case company.

The research study found that the roles of a business plan is both for the company to use a guide whilst operating and as a tool to achieve funding through loans and can be used to better chances of getting a premises in high traffic areas and shopping centers. The study also found that consumers value convenience most when it comes to eating out.

A business plan was produced, and the case company was able to receive financial loans based on the prospects of the business plan. Recommendation are made to the case company on the prospects of updating their business plan in the long run.

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APPENDICES

- Researchers make proper and conscientious use of research funds.
- Researchers publish results and interpretations of research in an open, honest, transparent and accurate manner, and respect confidentiality of data or findings when legitimately required to do so.
- Researchers report their results in a way that is compatible with the standards of the discipline and, where applicable, can be verified and reproduced.

2.4 Safeguards

- Researchers comply with codes and regulations relevant to their discipline.
- Researchers handle research subjects, be they human, animal, cultural, biological, environmental or physical, with respect and care, and in accordance with legal and ethical provisions.
- Researchers have due regard for the health, safety and welfare of the community, of collaborators and others connected with their research.
- Research protocols take account of, and are sensitive to, relevant differences in age, gender, culture, religion, ethnic origin and social class.
- Researchers recognise and manage potential harms and risks relating to their research.

2.5 Data Practices and Management

- Researchers, research institutions and organisations ensure appropriate stewardship

and curation of all data and research materials, including unpublished ones, with secure preservation for a reasonable period.

- Researchers, research institutions and organisations ensure access to data is as open as possible, as closed as necessary, and where appropriate in line with the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable) for data management.
- Researchers, research institutions and organisations provide transparency about how to access or make use of their data and research materials.
- Researchers, research institutions and organisations acknowledge data as legitimate and citable products of research.
- Researchers, research institutions and organisations ensure that any contracts or agreements relating to research outputs include equitable and fair provision for the management of their use, ownership, and/or their protection under intellectual property rights.

2.6 Collaborative Working

- All partners in research collaborations take responsibility for the integrity of the research.
- All partners in research collaborations agree at the outset on the goals of the research and on the process for communicating their research as transparently and openly as possible.
- All partners formally agree at the start of their collaboration on expectations and

Viet Balo Oy is the case company for this thesis project. The company is a start-up, with the food concept of compiling various dishes from south east Asian cuisine into one constructive menu. Offerings can range from popular dishes such as sushi to lesser known national dishes like Hainanese chicken rice. As the business is a start-up, it would greatly benefit from your advice. Being a part of the consumer target group, the information regarding your preferences and demand is important to the case company.

1. Normally, how often do you get takeaway food and/or dine out?
 - i) On average how many times do you go in a week? A month?
2. Which are some of your go-to places for dining out? Go-to places for takeaway?
 - i) What are your reasons for choosing these particular places?
3. What is your opinion of the restaurant offerings in Uusimaa?
4. How can a new restaurant stand out in the present restaurant industry?
5. What should restaurants do to encourage you to dine out/takeaway more often?
6. What are the main aspects that you consider when selecting a place for dining out/takeaway?

Please check Viet Balo's menu before proceeding with the following questions.

7. How does Viet Balo's offerings compare to the current selection in Uusimaa?
8. Do you find the menu selection of restaurants restricting?
9. Do you feel that menu selection at cheaper establishments are not nutritious or well-rounded enough to properly replace an everyday meal?
10. In your opinion, would Viet Balo be able to appeal as a family friendly place to get your food from? i.e. Would your kids eat some of the dishes?
11. How often are you deterred from eating out due to high pricing?

Below is a preliminary menu of Viet Balo's Offerings

Viet Balo Oy is the case company for this thesis project. The company is a start-up, with the food concept of compiling various dishes from south east Asian cuisine into one constructive menu. Offerings can range from popular dishes such as sushi to lesser known dishes like Hainanese chicken rice. As the business is a start-up, it would greatly benefit from your advice. Currently one of the biggest issues is finding premises for the first location. Ideas of having a food truck as the first location have been thought of, though a physical sit in location is preferred. This interview session is aimed at: discovering information on what is required to get premises in high traffic areas, the costs and the risks involved when searching for a location.

Questions:

1. What do you recommend, in terms of documentation for example the business plan, a restaurant startup have before requesting a rental space from your company?
 - i) What does a good business plan consist of?
 - ii) Do you think a business plan is useful?
 - a. If yes: why?
 - b. If no: why not?
2. What are some of the most popular rental areas for restaurants, Helsinki, Espoo, etc.?
3. What sort of startup expenses should a restaurant startup expect when leasing a premise from you?
 - i) What is the most expensive element of whole set up?
 - ii) What are the less known expenses when setting up a new premise?
4. How much competition is there for restaurant premises? How many applicants do you usually have on your waitlist?
5. How do you select restaurants for your premises? What is the process like? E.g. policy based?
 - i) What qualities are you looking for? What are you avoiding?
 - ii) What sets restaurants apart from the general competition?
6. What are your biggest risk factors when leasing a premise to a restaurant?
 - i) How could a restaurant minimize those risk factors for you?
7. In your opinion, what are some of the most common causes of failure for new businesses?
8. How would a restaurant like VietBalo thrive in the current market conditions?
9. Would you say the number of new restaurants been increasing in the past 5 years?
10. What sort of consumers do you wish to attract? How do you group these various types of consumers (i.e. costumer segments)?
11. What are the recommendations you have for a startup company like VietBalo?

Viet Balo Oy is the case company for this thesis project. The company is a start-up, with the food concept of compiling various dishes from south east Asian cuisine into one constructive menu. Offerings can range from popular dishes such as sushi to lesser known national dishes like Hainanese chicken rice. As the business is a start-up, it would greatly benefit from your advice. This interview's goal is to produce information about your experience at the start of your business. The questions revolve around the difficulties you faced, how you addressed them and the lesser known details of starting a business.

Questions:

1. Could you tell us more about your restaurant and business concept?
2. How did you acquire your first location? What were the steps to acquire the location?
 - i) Was it difficult?
3. Did you have a business plan when you started your business venture?
 - a. If yes: How was the business plan useful to you?
 - b. If no: What were your reasons for not making a business plan? After starting your operations, do you feel that making a business plan would've benefitted you?
4. What risks did you consider before starting your business?
5. Who would you say are your main competitors?
 - i) How do you compete against them? What is your unique selling point?
6. What factors, do you believe, contributed to your business' success?
7. How did you decide on who will be your main customers?
8. Why did you believe there would be demand for your product and service?
9. Presently, what do you think are the major threats to your business?
10. Approximately how much money did you require to start your business?
11. What are the recommendations you have for a startup company like VietBalo?