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Going Global: A Guide to Building an International Business
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Part A. Setting up and Managing a Business Abroad
Chapter 4. Developing an International Business Plan

II. Checklists

[References](#)

§ 4:35. Checklist for preparing an international business plan

I. Executive Summary

- A. Briefly describe the company's business.
- B. Describe the significant features of the company's products and services.
- C. Describe the market potential for the company's products and services.
- D. Describe the financial goals of the company (e.g., reaching \$2 million in sales in the new market in two years, profitability in three years, and specified levels of sales and after-tax profits within four years).
- E. Describe the purpose of the plan and its relation to the attainment of the company's financial goals.

II. Company Description

- A. Describe the company's principal line(s) of business.
- B. For each line of business, describe the company's products and services.
- C. For each line of business and related product or service, describe the actual or anticipated customer base and its specific needs with respect to the types of products and services offered by the company.
- D. Describe the specific steps taken by the company to identify customer needs, including interviews, market surveys and research, or beta testing.
- E. For each identified customer base for the company's products and services, describe the company's distinctive competence or competitive advantage (i.e., why will those customers purchase the products and services of the company as opposed to those offered by competitors or substitutes).
- F. For each product or service, describe the profitability structure, including anticipated sales price, costs and profit margins.

III. Industry Background and Market Analysis

- A. Describe the industry or industries in which the company is active.
- B. Describe the size of each industry and the anticipated growth patterns over the next five to ten years.
- C. Identify the major industry segments that would have an interest in the company's products and services.
- D. Describe the business types that will likely be the major customers for the company's products and services (e.g., Fortune 100, 500 or 1000 companies or small proprietorships).
- E. Identify and describe any other major demographic or technological trends in the industry.
- F. Describe the actual or potential impact of regulatory requirements on the company's products and services.

IV. Competition

- A. Identify and briefly describe the major actual and potential competitors in each of the company's target markets.
- B. Identify and describe the major factors of competition in each target market.
- C. Candidly analyze how prospective customers will perceive the way the company compares with competitors with respect to each of the aforementioned factors of competition.
- D. Describe the steps that the company intends to take to exploit competitive advantages and/or reduce or eliminate competitive disadvantages.
- E. Describe the anticipated response of major competitors to the steps enumerated in Item D above.

V. Marketing and Sales

- A. Describe the company's overall marketing strategies and objectives (e.g., how is the company perceived in the

market and what are its goals with respect to market share).

- B. Describe the company's strategies with respect to distribution of its products and services (e.g., direct sales, independent sales representatives, distribution agreements with third parties, etc.).
- C. Describe the company's promotion strategies.
- D. Describe the company's pricing strategies, including anticipated changes as brand acceptance develops.
- E. Identify and describe the company's main "sales pitch" (i.e., the main messaging in its sales and promotion activities).
- F. Describe the company's strategies with respect to service and support of customers and distributors.
- G. Describe the company's sales strategies and activities (e.g., customer identification, sales staffing requirements and compensation, and sales goals and measures).

VI. Technology and R&D

- A. Describe the key aspects of the technology required for the company to operate its business.
- B. Describe the status of each element of the technology enumerated in Item A above (e.g., idea, prototype, small production runs, etc.).
- C. Describe the company's ownership and/or usage rights with respect to each key element of its technology.
- D. Describe the general status of technology in the company's main markets, including companies that have technology that is superior or equal to the company's technology.
- E. Describe anticipated trends in relevant technology over the next five years, including specific new technologies that might become commercially viable during that period and factors that might restrict their development or acceptance.
- F. Describe the company's key research and development activities and related milestones and risks.
- G. Describe how the results of the company's research and development activities will be used in the company's business (e.g., new products, new production methods, updated versions of existing products that meet identified customer needs, etc.).
- H. Describe the impact of regulatory approval requirements on the company's research and development activities.

VII. Manufacturing and Operations

- A. Describe the company's manufacturing and operations activities and strategies.
- B. Describe any significant agreements with third parties with respect to manufacturing.
- C. Describe any competitive advantage or disadvantage of the company with respect to manufacturing activities and the steps the company intends to take to exploit or eliminate such advantages or disadvantages.

VIII. Management and Human Resources

- A. Describe the management and organizational structure of the company, including all key foreign business units.
- B. Describe the company's recruitment, training and compensation policies.
- C. Describe the company's internal information management structure.
- D. In the case of a business plan used to raise capital, describe the skills and track record of the key managers and the company's plans for recruiting additional managers.

Notes:

This checklist includes an extensive list of questions and information that should be answered and provided in order to prepare a comprehensive international business plan. In some cases, the items will overlap, and the organization and emphasis will vary depending on the type of business and the purpose of the plan. However, working through these items should provide a good starting point. The drafter should allow sufficient time to thoughtfully answer each of the questions. In the plan itself, reference should always be made to independent research reports, as well as any other credible evidence to support the claims and strategies of the company.

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The Founding Director of the Institute is Alan Gutterman, who is the developer and author of Business Transactions Solution, a Thomson Reuters Legal Solution available through Westlaw Next. Alan is a well-known and widely respected legal and business counselor to entrepreneurs, emerging companies and investors. He received his law degree from Boalt Hall at the University of California in Berkeley and has also earned a PhD from the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge, where he was affiliated with the ESRC Centre for Business Research. He has been a partner and senior counsel at internationally recognized law firms where he has specialized in general corporate and securities matters, venture capital, mergers and acquisitions, international law and transactions, strategic business alliances, technology transfers and intellectual property. He has also served as the chief legal officer of a leading international wholesaler in the information technology industry headquartered in Silicon Valley. In addition to his work with the Institute, he is the Founding Director of the Growth-Oriented Sustainable Entrepreneurship Project (gseproject.org), which engages in and promotes research, education and training activities relating to entrepreneurial ventures launched with the aspiration to create sustainable enterprises that achieve significant growth in scale and value creation through the development and commercialization of innovative products or services which form the basis for a successful international business. More information about Alan is available [here](#).

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