





**Organic  
Agriculture  
Innovation  
Platform**

**Author:**

Petar Lazarov, Macedonia Export, DOO



**Graphic design:** Tomislav Avrosievski

**Edited and published by:**  
Forum CSRD



Bul. Partizanski odredi, 6-mezanin  
1000 Skopje, North Macedonia

[www.forum-csrd.org.mk](http://www.forum-csrd.org.mk)

e-mail: [forumcsrd@forum-csrd.org.mk](mailto:forumcsrd@forum-csrd.org.mk)

telephone: +3892312100



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## Introduction

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This handbook is part of an educational package aiming at the training of farmers of North Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia and Bulgaria. It has been developed within the framework of the project “Organic Agriculture Innovation Platform”.

“Organic Agriculture Innovation Platform” is a project funded by the European Commission’s Erasmus+ Programme (Key Action 2 - KA 204 - Strategic partnerships for adult education) and it brings organizations from different countries partnering together to develop new innovative resources to the benefit of the citizens, more specifically farmers, adult education providers and local CSOs working in the field of agriculture and environment. Educating adults about organic food production is the focus of this partnership project. Forum CSRD (North Macedonia) is the lead organization partnering with Serbia Organica (Serbia), Eko Zadar (Croatia), Bulgarian School of Politics “Dimitry Panitza” (Bulgaria), Macedonia Export (North Macedonia) and Good Earth (North Macedonia).

The handbook will provide basic knowledge about development of a brand plan, why it is important and what are the main elements of a brand plan.

It will be useful for the providers of a course on organic agriculture, and the farmers who want to brand their product, but first they need to have a clear understanding of what developing a brand requires before they get started.

## BRAND PLAN vs. BUSINESS PLAN

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Basically, a lot of people think that Business Plan is something different from Brand Plan. However, in most areas that are covered by each tool, they overlap. All the basic elements of a Business Plan, from setting a long-term vision / mission and goal, through analyzing the situation (internal and external), to creating a development strategy and directions of the company, are also contained in the Brand Plan (strategy). However, in the Brand plan, a little more emphasis is given to the positioning and development of the brand concept, i.e. architecture.

Brand Plan is a document that defines your business (idea or concept, product or service), what you want to do and contains ways to achieve it. The brand plan contains everything that is important to your business / business structure, the description of the products or services you offer and plan to offer, your potential customers, development potentials and finances. It also contains all the guidelines for brand development, creative and specific promotional / communication activities for brand promotion.

A brand plan is “putting on paper” everything that matters to your overall development and success in realizing the idea and its development.

Business / Brand plan consists of 3 elements:

1. **COMPANY VISION** – long term objectives and goals of the company/brand. What the brand wants to achieve.
2. **MARKET ASSESSMENT** – screening the current situation (internally from Company perspective and externally from market perspective)
3. **CHOICES OF DEVELOPMENT** – the main strategic directions and tactics of developing the business and how to achieve the defined vision of the company/brand.

## WHY THE BRAND PLAN IS IMPORTANT

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The brand plan contains many important questions that you, as a future entrepreneur / marketer, need to know how to answer. The only way to deal with almost any possible difficulties that may arise on the way to the realization of the idea is to learn to respond positively during the process of writing and completing the business / brand plan.

Every business idea looks good in the beginning, but the brand plan is here to help you and show you if you are in the right direction when implementing the idea.

Reasons why a brand plan is needed:

- Direction indicator (long-term goal)
- Attracting and retaining customers

- The best use of resources
- Better decision making
- You are ready to face the challenges
- Competitive advantage - you do what you know best
- Business expansion

## WHY IS YOUR BRAND IMPORTANT?

Your brand is important, because today anyone who wants to buy something from you or wants to hire or visit you, first goes to GOOGLE and checks you or your company. Your brand is essentially your reputation. Every activity or communication with the end consumer includes or is associated with your brand. The brand is your face, your professional ID card, something that helps you send a clear and consistent message.

Today, it is very easy to reach a large audience, using the latest technological trends and tools. But when it comes to brand / branding, quantity is not the main goal. The main goal of each brand is to reach as many customers as possible, but in a way, that will get closer to them and touch them emotionally. The main idea of every big brand is to achieve "Brand Love" with its customers. This is the highest level that a brand can reach in the minds and hearts of customers. This means that if your brand is not available in a store, instead of the buyer buying an alternative, they go to another store in order to find the product there.

Branding, in contrast to sales, says, "It's better to be first in the mind of the customer than first in sales."

## WHAT IS BRAND?

**A BRAND is a name, logo, mark, or design that marks and separates products (or services) from each other. That's the character of the company. A brand is trust, passion, belonging, action, security, value.**

**The main goal of the brand is to establish an emotional relationship with the client.**

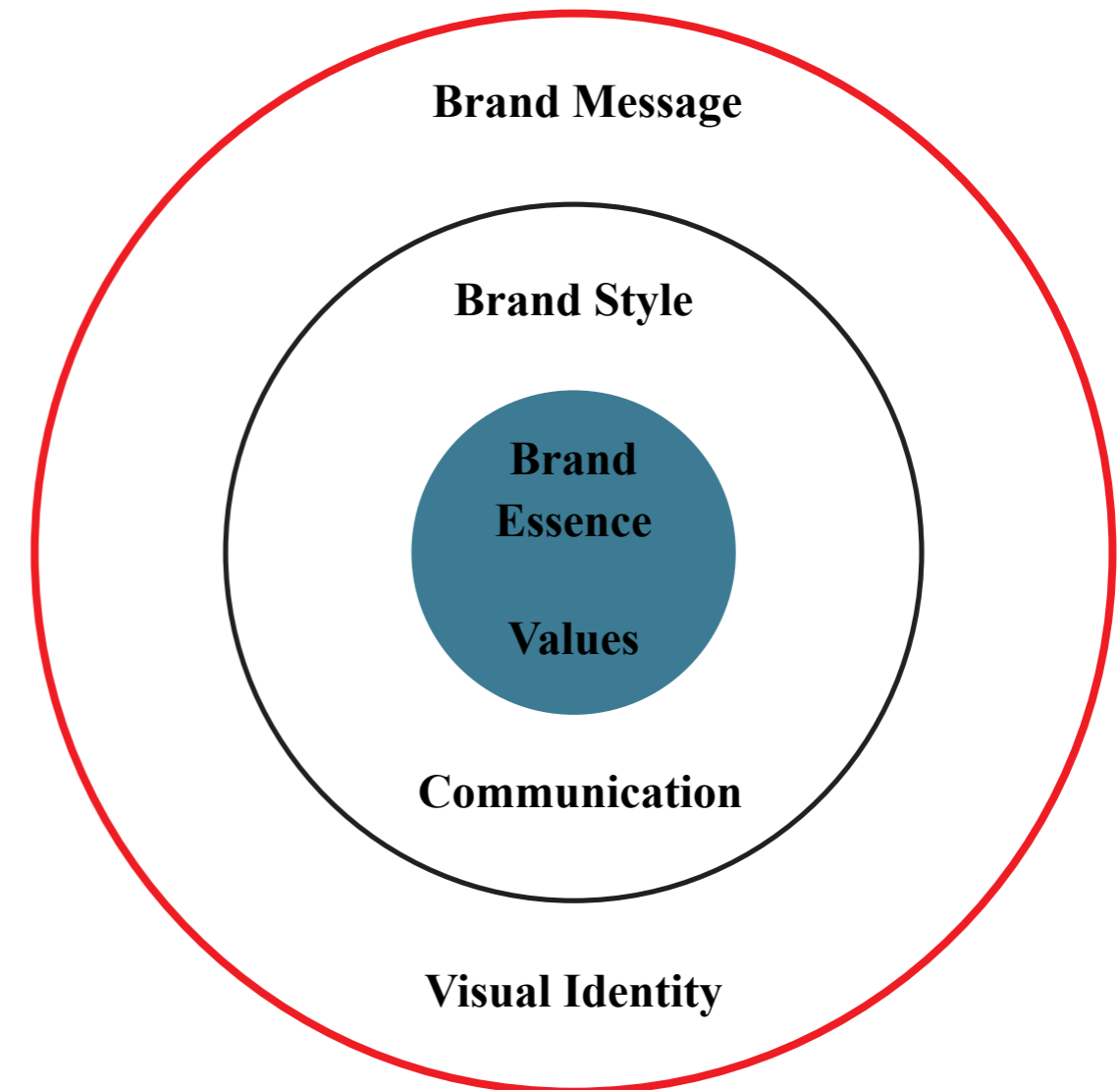
In general, everything is a brand. Every product and service is a brand. The difference in each brand is in the question "what kind of brand is it?" What are its features, characteristics and values? When a brand develops, it identifies with any person or character. And depending on the brand's values (the values you want to equate with it) and the way you communicate those values, it will depend on what your brand will be like, and how people (customers) will perceive you. **Brand Value** is the reward that the client is willing to pay more, just to be associated with that brand.

*"Harley Davidson may be the best brand in the United States. Coca-Cola is also a good brand, but I haven't seen anyone tattoo it on their body. "*

*Ralph Wagner, Harley Davidson*

Prof. Kotler has postulated that in today's context, branding is marketing. While marketing is all about satisfaction of consumer needs through a product or a service. Branding takes it to the next level by giving the product or service a distinctive name/personality.

"Customers do not buy cosmetics. they buy hope" - Charles Revson of cosmetics major Revlon. In these days of product parity where no consumer can differentiate two brands in a blind test, perception is driven by intangibles. These intangibles could be driven by many elements of the marketing mix-the brand mix.



Once the Brand Plan and brand concept / positioning are developed, the brand's creative or visual identity (packaging, design) is developed. Then, through the various promotional channels, the final customers are communicated, ie the message that the brand wants to send with the customers is communicated.

What makes the BRAND big?

1. Superior product
2. Continuity in the offer
3. Clear positioning
4. Integrated brand communication
5. Sustainability

## MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE BRAND PLAN

### 1. INTRO

Before going any further with the preparation of the Brand Plan each of the participant must answer WHY (purpose) do you start this business / develop the brand?

- What is the core reason for starting this business, not mentioning the profit/financial side of it?
- Is the company/person/producer ready for branding?
  - Do you have the team?
  - Do you have the know-how?
  - Do you have the finances for developing (promotion) of the brand?

#### Purpose:

Why do we exist?

Write your purpose:

source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

EXAMPLES:

- **San Diego Zoo:** To become a world leader at connecting people to wildlife and conservation
- **IKEA:** To create a better everyday life for the many people.
- **Special Olympics:** To transform communities by inspiring people throughout the world to open their minds, accept, and include people with intellectual disabilities and thereby anyone who is perceived as different.

### 2. COMPANY VISION

#### VISION

The Vision has to be clearly defined in order to show the direction of development of the business (brand). The Vision should incorporate the long term goal of the company/brand, the purpose of existence and directions in which the brand should be developed.

The definition of the Vision, has to merge 2 aspects of the business / brand. From

one side it should give a specific, tangible, regional or numerical aspect of the business and the other should be more abstract, intangible. (ex. Peace in the world).

Mistakes that can be made and should be avoided:

- Do not write short history of the company
- Not to be boring
- Not too long
- Not to hide the truth
- Not emotional



Vision:

What future do we want to help create?  
What does the future look like?

Write your vision:

Source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

EXAMPLES:

- **Alzheimer organization:** A world without Alzheimer.
- **Uber:** Smarter transportation with fewer cars and greater access. Transportation that's safer, cheaper, and more reliable; transportation that creates more job opportunities and higher incomes for drivers.
- **Caterpillar:** Our vision is a world in which all people's basic needs, such as shelter, clean water, sanitation, food, and reliable power, are fulfilled in an environmentally sustainable way and a company that improves the quality of the environment and the communities where we live and work.

## MISSION

The mission of the company/brand shows how you are going to execute and deliver the vision you defined. It represents the basic directives of doing a business and how will it be developed. It should be connected with:

- The goal of the company
- Strategic activities
- Focus on the employees, processes, education, technology etc.
- Company culture

Most important is that the mission should be realistic and implementable.

Mission:

What are we here to do?  
How do we create that future?

Write your mission:

Source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

EXAMPLES:

- **American Express:** Everyday working hard to make American Express the biggest brand for services.
- **NIKE:** Do everything possible to expand human potential.
- **Dropbox:** We're here to unleash the world's creative energy by designing a more enlightened way of working.
- *Bad example:* „AVON mission is focused on 6 basic pillars/goals, where reaching them is the main company goal.” This is stated in AVON mission statement, but also explained in details with 300 words, from competition strategy, increase of the company value, fight for breast cancer, and many other aspect of the work. It is too long.

## VALUES

Company (brand) values, also known as corporate values or core values, are the fundamental beliefs upon which your business/brand and its behavior are based. They are the guiding principles that your business uses to manage its internal affairs as well as its relationship with customers. Once set, your core values need to be firm and unwavering — a mandate rather than a suggestion. They should affect every aspect your business, from employee benefit packages and workplace culture to marketing

strategies and customers service.

Keep in mind that company values should be more than stated values; they must be practiced values. If your company doesn't follow through on the values it claims to hold, you can't expect your hypocrisy to go unnoticed — or unanswered — by consumers. Employees, likewise, will notice if your company isn't living up to its values statement, which can damage morale.

This is what people should remember about your business. Make sure these values are carried out in everything you do.

## Values

How will we conduct ourselves in support and pursuit of our mission, vision, and purpose?

Look at your logo and write down five values that your logo (will) stand/s for:

EXAMPLES:

Source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

### Whole Foods

1. We Satisfy And Delight Our Customers Our customers are the lifeblood of our business and our most important stakeholder. We strive to meet or exceed their expectations on every shopping experience.
2. We Promote Team Member Growth and Happiness. Our success is dependent upon the collective energy, intelligence, and contributions of all of our Team Members.
3. We Care About Our Communities And The Environment. We serve and support a local experience. The unique character of each store is a direct reflection of a community's people, culture, and cuisine.
4. We Practice Win-Win Partnerships With our Suppliers. We view our trade partners as allies in serving our stakeholders. We treat them with respect, fairness, and integrity

### GOALS

The goals of the business/brand should define the steps on how to realize the mission of the brand, and the results that you like to achieve with the planned and organized activities of the company. The goals are primary directions for further development of the company.

The objectives are most important factor for realization of the defined activities and means for controlling the efficiency of work of the company.

The objective in terms of time frame can be separated:

- Short term goals (1 year)
- Mid term goals (1-3 years)
- Long term goals (3-5 + years)

The objectives can also be:

#### General

- Quality of life of the employees
- Survival of the company
- Development of the company

#### Specific

- Increase the market share of the company by (x%)
- Increase of the Social responsibility
- Setting up a promotion plan for increasing the image of the company

### Goals/objectives

What are your company objectives?

Write down 3 long term, 3 mid term and 3 short term goals:

## 3. MARKET ASSESSMENT (analysis of the current situation)

### 3.1 EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

In the external analysis segment, you evaluate all the external factors that influence the business/brand. It covers general markets analysis and competition analysis.

#### 3.1.1 Market Analysis

Analyzing the market means analyzing all the trade numbers, countries and the other opportunities on the defined / specified market, for the defined products/services.

Some questions that can help you analyze the market:

- What is the current sales/supply of the specific product on the market (local/international)?
  - Export
  - Import
- What are the market trends (sales/production) in the last 3 years?
- What is the region with the biggest potential?
- Market trends in general regarding the specific products?
- What are the main barriers for entering that market?
- (when you have a specific market) What is the total import/export for the specific market?

When analyzing the markets, you should put emphasis on:

#### 1. Market trends of the products/services you offer, on the market you analyze.

When you make trends analysis you must dig as deep as you can and learn about everything connected to your business. The trends are important to know in order to understand better the development of the market and position better the products you like to promote.

Some sources of information that you can use:

- World and EU statistics organizations
- Chamber of Commerce
- Customs
- WTO
- Trade Map
- <https://globaltradehelpdesk.org/en>

Depending on the export strategy and the products you like to promote, when assessing the trends and numbers of trade, the assessment should be separated for:

- World trends
- EU trends
- Regional trends
- Specific market trends
- Domestic market trends
- Sales channel (specific region) trends

#### 3.1.2 Market Research

One of the most important tool that you can use in order to collect more information about your business, product, brand etc. is to conduct a market research (qualitative or quantitative). You can do it with the customers, buyers, partners, distributors, associates, fans or any other representative sample, depending on the type of product or model of work.

Market Research, according to Kotler the father of Marketing, is a “systematic planning, collection, analyzing and reporting specific data and information relevant for certain marketing situation that is affecting the company”.

The importance of market research:

- Understand the needs of your customers
- Understand the market
- Understand the industry/sector
- Understand the surrounding / competition
- Identifying the business opportunities
- Understand better your business

Main mistakes that the SMEs are doing in regards to the market research:

- Think it is too expensive
- They make only desk research (info you can find only on the net)
- Listen only to the closest friends and collaborators and make decision upon that research
- Think that only the large corporations are doing it



The first step you need to do is to identify the TG (target group or the representative sample that you will be analyzing). It is also called, market segmentation. MS means division of the market on smaller homogenous segments. This way you can understand better the market, consumer and adapt your product on their needs.

Some tips for making better market segmentation:

- Define the market / industry you like to focus
- Defining the segments depending on the characteristics and motive of the consumers
  - Characteristics:
    - Region (city, region, state)
    - Demographics (age, sex, nationality, profession, social status, celery etc.)
    - Psychological (lifestyle, personality)
  - Motive:
    - Benefit (ex. The product can increase profit, cut cost etc.)
    - Utilization
    - Terms of purchase

Steps of effective market research process:

1. Define the goal of the research and the information you like to collect
  - a. Clients
  - b. Market
  - c. Competition

2. Define the representative sample you will use:

- a. Who will you ask (TG)?
- b. How many reps.(number)?
- c. What is the demographical, regional, psychological traits?
- d. Location of the research

3. Choose the method

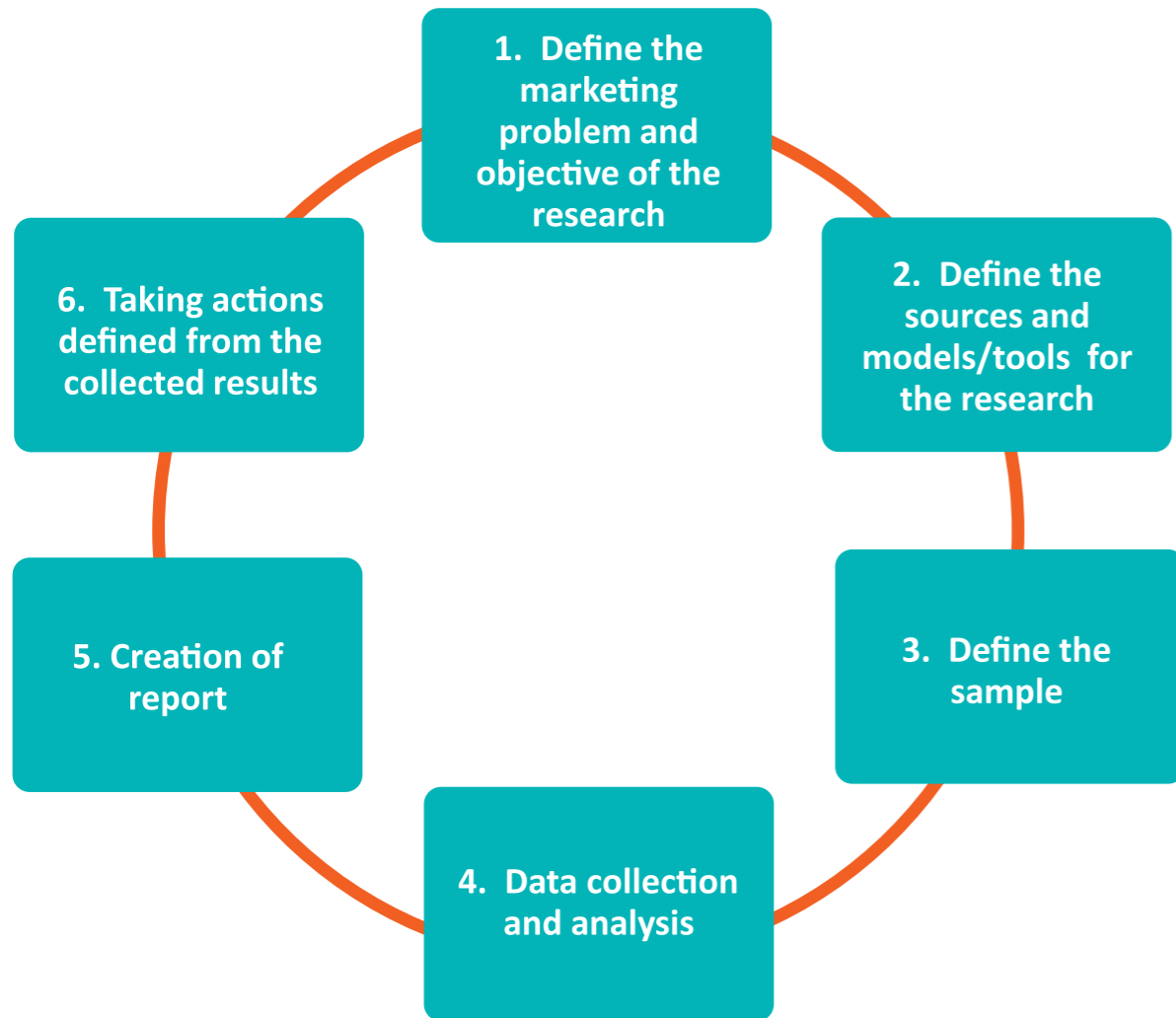
- a. Primary – focus groups, telephone interview, mail, personal, e-research, market visit, etc.
- b. Secondary – internet and using only available reports, magazines etc.

4. Collection and analyzing of the information

5. Creation of a report

6. Taking actions according to the results from the research

Market Research Cycle



Example of a short survey:

**RESEARCH**

*For improving the customer service and increase the customer satisfaction*

Respected buyers, we undertake this questionnaire in order better to understand your needs and wishes, in order to react faster and offer you better solution for you. Your feedback will be of a great help for us.

Thank you in advance!

**QUESTION:**

1. **Sex**            M            F
2. **Age**            up to 18y.    18-30    30 – 45    45 +
3. **How often do you buy products in the market?**
  - Every day
  - Once a week
  - Several times a week
  - Once a month
  - i do no go to the market
4. **Where do you live?**
  - Near the shop
  - In the region
  - Just passing by
5. **When I buy, the amount of my bill is app.:**    100d.    200d.    500d.    1000d
6. **What type of products do you buy regularly in the market?**  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. **What can we do better in order to satisfy your needs?**  
\_\_\_\_\_

Task

Each of the participants should prepare a short questionnaire with list of questions, connected to the product/service they offer:

**3.1.3 Competition**

One of the main elements of the external analysis is the make a competitive analysis with the other brands / products existing on the market. This will give you input on your competitor’s strengths and weaknesses, way of doing business, benefits, characteristics and other information that will help you position your brand and business better.

Most important elements of a competitive analysis:

- Who are the biggest competitors on an international, regional and domestic level?
- What is their market share?
- What is their price policy /level?
- What is the quality level?
- Which sales channels they use?
- What is the type / model of distribution they use?
- What is their TG (target group)?
- What is the packaging design?

- What benefits, features, advantages have their products?
- What is their USP (unique selling proposal) and the main differentiation factor from the others?
- What is their innovation?
- What is their capacity?

Identify who you’re competing against so that you can better differentiate your brand.

**Competitive Analysis Template**

Task: fill in the fields for each competitor

Features	Brand 1	Brand 2	Brand 3
Competing brands			
Brand Heart (purpose, vision, mission, values)			
Brand look/feel			
Value proposition			
Tagline			
Core products / services			
Customer personas			
How they talk about their customers			
Marketing channels			
Advertising channels			
Sales channels			
Revenue			
Strengths			
Weaknesses			
Similarities			
Differences			

Source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

## 3.2 INTERNAL ANALYSIS

The internal analysis actually shows the company current status / situation, from every aspect of the business model. In this part, you do not put what you like to do, but what is the real situation at the moment. The elements that cover the internal analysis are:

### 3.2.1 Market presence

What is your market share/presence at the moment?  
What regions do you cover?  
Do you sell on the domestic or export markets?  
Which one?  
What sales channels do you use?  
Are you a start-up or existing business?

### 3.2.2 Production capacity

Here you need to define the current production capacity of the company. It can be defined by daily, weekly, monthly or yearly capacities. If you produce different products, it is necessary to mention the production capacity for each product.

If you are a service company, the capacity can be presented through number of client you can serve, number of offers to handle etc.

### 3.2.3 Organizational Structure

It is very important to visually present the current company structure in a scheme. From CEO, down to the end of the line. Define the sectors, define the responsible managers and all the positions in the company. If they have defined job responsibilities, it should also be included in the document.

### 3.2.4 Product Portfolio

Define and separate the product categories, technical characteristic, features and benefits. Separate them in regards to the size, packaging, quality etc. In this segment it is necessary

to make a good differentiation of the product portfolio, in order to create easier positioning strategy in the future.

Divide the product portfolio according to:

- Type of product/service
- Size / packaging
- Profit maker / Volume builder / image product
- Divide by sales/profit
- Divide by sales channel
- Separate by profile of consumers

### 3.2.5 Supply of raw materials

Important element for production oriented companies. Here you define:

- Sources of supply of raw materials
- Alternative sources for supply
- Model of supply (processes)
- Timetable of supply
- Correlation between the price of raw material vs. end price
- Yearly supplies

### 3.2.6 Quality Control

This section is connected to the process of production and management the quality control system. From input of raw materials and other necessary materials, to releasing the end product on the market. In this part you should put accent on:

- How do you control the quality of the raw materials?
- How do you control the quality of production?
- How to control the quality of the product before entering the market?

**3.2.7 Marketing and Sales activities**

In this section, you write down all the sales and marketing (promotional) activities that you do at the moment in order to promote and sell your product.

When defining the current M&S status, it is important to mention the sales channels, the sales strategy that you are using at the moment, region of work, tactics, but also the core promotional strategy/approach you use and all the elements / activities from the communication plan – a plan of actions that help the sales process.

Main elements that need to be covered:

- Main sales and promotional approach
- Team (structure of the S&M team and responsibilities)
- Sales channels
- Promotional channels
- Promo activity plan
- Pricing position (pricing policy)
- Promotional budget

**4. SWOT ANALYSIS**

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After collection all the necessary information from the internal and external research, you need to create a SWOT analysis document. It is consistent of 2 parts, analyzing the internal factors and the external factors that influence the business. The main elements of the SWOT analysis are:

- 4.1 Strengths
- 4.2 Weaknesses
- 4.3 Opportunities
- 4.4 Threats

***S – Strengths (internal factors)***

In this part, you mention all the strengths that your company/product has compared to the other competitors, or anything that can be defined as advantage, from an internal perspective. Some questions that you need to cover when defining the Strengths:

- 1.1.1 Is there any unique value that your company has compared to the competitors?
- 1.1.2 Why the consumer will choose you instead of the competitor?
- 1.1.3 Are there any products/services that the competitors cannot copy?
- 1.1.4 Is there any advantages from technical, organizational, production side that is advantage compared to the others?

***W-Weakness (internal factors)***

Same as the strengths, here you mention all the disadvantages and weaknesses compared to the competitors or the market. It is very important to be honest and objective about your weaknesses. Knowing your weaknesses, will help you better position the business and think of ways how to overcome those weaknesses.

Some questions that you need to cover when defining the Weaknesses:

- 1.1.1 What are the operations or procedures that need to be strengthen?
- 1.1.2 What and how is the competition working better then you?
- 1.1.3 Is there any danger that the company needs to be aware of?
- 1.1.4 What are your weaknesses from technical, organizational, HR or other aspects?

***O – Opportunities (external factors)***

This is external factor. It is connected with the opportunities that the surrounding, economic environment is offering. Here you can see the potential for developing the business. It can be connected to the global or local economic factors, technical factors and other political or general trends.

Some questions that you need to cover when defining the Opportunities:

- 1.1.1 What are the main opportunities of the market you are working on?
- 1.1.2 Are there any new trends on the market?
- 1.1.3 What are the opportunities on short, mid and long term?



**T – Threats (external factors)**

Also, external factor. If the opportunities were defined as some positive actions and factors that affect the business, the threats are the negative influences of the surrounding on the business. Knowing these threats, will help you plan better your business and be prepared if something goes wrong.

Some questions that you need to cover when defining the Threats:

- 1.1.1 What factors are limiting the development of the business? (competition, market, consumers...)
- 1.1.1 Are there any changes in the consumer behavior?
- 1.1.1 How much does the technological, political and economic factors threat the business?

**EXAMPLE:**

SWOT	Opportunities					Threats				
	Climate conditions	Diaspora	Infrastructure			Big competition	Change of consumer behavior	COVID 19		
<b>Strengths</b>	Strong team									
	Knowledge & experience									
	Big Network									
<b>Weakness</b>	Hard on adaptation									
	High price									
	Old technology									

**5. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CHOICES OF DEVELOPMENT)**

This is the most important part of the brand/business plan. Here you put everything you think is the best way how to achieve your vision and long-term goals.



**A – Market Assessment (External / Internal Analysis)**

**B – You Vision and long term goals**

**C – How to get there (choices of development)**

The Development (Brand) Strategy consists of giving directions and changing the current position of the company from every aspect of the work. You analyze how you can make changes in the most important parts of the business that influence the achieving of your goals. It is covering the 3-major aspect of work:

- a. Market Strategy
- b. Organizational Strategy
- c. Marketing Strategy

**a. Market Strategy**

The market strategy generally focuses on the main strategic developments of the brand / company on the existing market. What is the main strategic approach, the phases of development, market segment coverage, sales channels and definition of the TG (target groups). The main elements of a Market Strategy are:

- **Main development strategy:**
  - What is the main strategy that you will use in your work. Some examples:
    - Marketing oriented company or Production oriented company – are you going to develop your brand or be a PL (private label) company, meaning that you will only produce for other companies under their own brand.

- Follow the leader strategy – with this strategy you position your brand/company next to the leader. You should offer either better product (features/benefits) or the same product, but with lower price. Your intention is not to beat the leader, but to be second in sales and second alternative in the minds of the consumers. You choose this strategy when you like to take share of the market from the leader.
- Change the Game - This style is reserved for when there is no market category for what you do. You are the first of your kind and you get to invent your market. This strategy should be used when your strengths don't fit you into an existing category or if a new need has emerged that isn't served by any existing market categories.
- Reframe the Market - This style of brand positioning reframes an existing market in new terms. It makes the benefits highlighted by previous market leaders irrelevant, or frankly, boring. You would use this if your product or service features an innovation or advancement that was previously unattainable, or if there has been a recent shift or change in the market needs or expectations.
- Niche strategy – this is a strategy where you choose not to fight on the mainstream market, where all the big competitors are, but find a specific niche market. A niche market is the subset of the market on which a specific product is focused. The market niche defines the product features aimed at satisfying specific market needs, as well as the price range, production quality and the demographics that it is intended to target. It is also a small market segment.

○ *What are the phases of development* – here you divide the long-term strategy into shorter phases.

- How will you start / launch the products (short term period)?
- What will you do in phase 2 (mid term)?
- What will you do on a longer term period?

• **Main focus markets / sales channels:**

- In this part, you focus on the sales and the area where you will first start promoting and selling the products.
  - Is it going to be only in the local market (surrounding), or national (the whole territory)?

- Are you going to go international (export)?
- What sales channels will you use:
  - Mainstream market
  - Niche markets
  - Direct to retail approach or through distributor
  - On-line sales
  - Door-to door
  - Other channels

• **Target Groups (TG):**

- In this part, you need to identify your audiences to understand how your brand can speak to their unique needs. Once you define the TG you need adjust the whole business in terms of meeting their needs and crossing their path of movement.

Personas Template

Features	Persona 1	Persona 2	Persona 3
<b>Name</b> Name this persona appropriately so that your team can reference it in future conversations.			
<b>Age</b>			
<b>Sex</b>			
<b>Relationship status</b>			
<b>Job title</b>			
<b>Location</b>			
<b>Salary</b>			

<b>Heroes</b> Who do they look up to in their profession, industry, or life?			
<b>Work goals</b> What do they want to achieve for their company and for themselves?			
<b>Favorite drink</b>			
<b>Favorite music / Podcasts</b>			
<b>Favorite TV/movies</b>			
<b>Favorite books</b>			
<b>Clothes</b>			
<b>Transportation</b>			
<b>Interests/hobbies</b>			
<b>News/websites</b>			
<b>Mentality</b> What do they secretly want? What are they looking for? How do they want to be perceived?			

<b>Pain points</b> What persistent obstacles/challenges do they face?			
<b>How would they hear about your company/brand?</b>			
<b>How do they think your product/ service solves their problems?</b>			
<b>What might make them hesitant to use your product / service?</b>			

Source: <https://www.columnfivemedia.com/>

b. **Organizational Strategy** – in this segment you define all the things you need to change, from organizational point of view, in order to get closer to your vision. You focus on the aspects of work that need to be improved or changed in order to achieve the goals, that are in correlation with:

- *Increase of the capacity*: in this part, you focus on implementing activities that will increase your capacity. If you previously, in the assessment phase, allocated that in order to expand the business, you need to increase your production capacity, you have to focus on the actions that can change that. However, if you have unfulfilled capacities, then you do not have to take any actions here.
- *Cutting cost*: what are the areas of work that can be changed in order to cut the cost and lower the expenses? Sometimes, you do not need to increase the profit, but only by cutting the expenses, you can affect the profit.
- *Certification*: the certificates are important for several reasons.
  - Good production / work practice – they help us strengthen up the business and the way we operate the internal processes.
  - Increase of credibility of the product/service and the company in general
  - Certificates as a mandatory element of doing business. Some products and services require certification as a mandatory element if you like to sell them on the market. Especially, if you like to go international (export).

If any of these aspects is important for you and your business you have to think of means how to implement all the necessary certificates.

- **Training of employees:** allocate the most important people and skills that they need to have, and organize trainings for them in order to strengthen their knowledge and productivity. In terms of the trainings, it should be a complementary part of the business and implemented continuously in the daily work.
  - if you are launching your own brand, and like to focus on Marketing oriented strategy, your team **MUST** be continuously educated in terms of branding, marketing and sales.
  - **Job Descriptions:** it is very important to define all the specific responsibilities of each employee, especially the most important ones. Prepare a job description paper for all of them.

### c. Marketing Strategy

The Marketing Strategy gives:

- Directions in which the company/brand should be developed in terms of the marketing mix
- Defines the main promotional tools and channels
- Focus for the employees in the implementation of the activities
- Better preparation for the company in launching innovations
- Measurement of the effects of the implemented actions
- A systematic approach to the business

The Marketing Strategy is covering the Marketing Mix elements plus, the Brand Architecture:

- **Product** – what will you change in your product portfolio (type, size, options, flavors etc.) in order to satisfy the needs of the customers?
- **Price** – what is your pricing policy?
- **Placement** – what will your distribution (Value Chain) model be like?
- **Promotion** – What is your general promotion strategy and what are the main promotional activities (Communication/Promotional Plan)?

These 4 main elements or tools are known as the 4Ps in Marketing. Their combination is called the Marketing Mix, and their purpose is to focus and obtain maximum level of satisfaction of the needs of the consumers. Every company, based on these elements, is creating

its own marketing mix that will assure best positioning of the brand on the market, and attraction of larger share of the customers. The whole business will depend mainly, especially if you are launching a brand, on these elements of the marketing mix and the Brand architecture.

#### • Product Portfolio

You need to define your products and portfolio that will be launched on the market. It is very important to define the specifications, advantages and benefits of your product/s. Additionally, define the quality level, sizes, packaging etc. Other important aspects of the product portfolio:

- I. What is the purpose of your product/service and what are the main benefits?
- II. What is the process of production and how it affects the whole business? What are the phases of production?
- III. Who is responsible for the quality control of the production process?
- IV. If there are subcontractors, who are they and what is their role?
- V. What technology you use, and what are the opportunities or limitations in production?

Additionally, the product portfolio can be divided into several different groups:

- Differentiation of the products according to interest and focus:
  - **Primary** – main product that will be of most interest for the company (ex. Coca-Cola)
  - **Secondary** – next to the leader, but with smaller focus (ex. Fanta)
  - **Tertiary** – additional product/s that are launched as support to the other 2 categories. It can be a specific extension. (ex. Fanta Shokata).
- Differentiation of the products according to sale volumes and profit:
  - **Volume builder** – the category/product that makes the biggest volumes in sales.
  - **Profit maker** – it can be smaller in sales, but they have the biggest profit margins. It is usually an exclusive product/line.
  - **Image builder** – you launch this category of product, not with the intention to make big sales or profits, but to increase awareness of your products within your TG. (Ex. GORSKA Cannabis).
- Differentiation of the products according to social status / sex:
  - Female / Male / Kids
  - Economic / mainstream / high end product
  - Local / regional / national

**Exercise: Product Portfolio**

Please describe the characteristic of your product/service in the first column and for the competition in the second column.

	Your product/service	Competitors product/service
Product (eg. cold pressed juice)		
Type of product (eg. aronia juice)		
Product appearance (eg. Intensive dark red color)		
Product quality (eg. first class organic aronia juice)		
Product characteristics (eg. cold, refreshing, with aronia pieces)		
Product functionality (eg. healthy and refreshing)		
Services (eg. offering a drinking straw with the juice)		
Brand name		
Packaging (eg. 212 ml glass packaging)		
Warranty (eg. fresh juice that should be consumed in specific period of time)		

Additional analyses:	
Which characteristics are considered as basic for your product according to your consumer?	
What characteristics are missing by the products that are currently on the market? How can your product make up the differences?	
What are the main benefits of your products compared to the competitors?	
What is the competitive advantage of your product?	

• **Price Policy**

In this part, you have to define your pricing policy. What is the price level that you will position your products/portfolio:

- Same as the leader
- Above the leader

- Below the leader
- Or, if it is a new product category on the market, you need to position the price accordingly to the alternative competitors.

Also, you need to define the cost structure of your product:

- COG (Cost of goods): what is the cost for production of the products?
- Additional expenses: packaging cost, logistics, warehouse etc.
- Profit margin: define net profit margin
- Promo margin: allocate the promotional budget cost
- Distribution cost
- Retail price
- Other cost elements (discounts, credit notes etc.)

**Exercise: Pricing model**

What are advantages or obstacles when it comes to the process of creating the price? Which strategy is the best for you?	
	Advantages and disadvantages of your product
Additional cost	
Primary price	
Competition price	
Sale price	
Skimming	
Discount	
Psychological price	

Define the advantages and disadvantages for each aspect of creating the price of your product/service in the first column, and in the second column define the extent of each aspect that is implemented by your competitor?		
	Advantages and disadvantages of your product/service	To what extent do competitors use this policy?
Payment period		
Discount		
Seasonal discount		
Product/service package		
Price flexibility		
Different prices for different target groups		
Different prices for different sales channel		
Quantity discount		



Wholesale prices		
Discount for payment upon delivery or in advance		

Additional analyses:		
How does the market respond to price changing?		
Compare your prices with the prices of the competition.		
Does your price define your business as special and needed?		
How will the price of your product have better balance between the price and quality, compared to the competitors?		

• **Placement / Distribution**

In this part, you need to define the model of distribution that you will use:

- Will you use your own distribution network?
- Will you use external distribution house?
- Will you use on-line sales channel? How will you deliver the products to your TG?
- What are the sales channels that you will use and how will you execute the delivery to the end consumers?

**Exercise: Distribution Model**

In the first column, state how your product will be distributed and how the competition does it.		
	Your product/service	Competitors product/ service
Direct sales		
Through agent/middleman		
Market coverage		
Reserves		
Transport		
Logistics		

Additional analysis:	
What is the best way to sell your product? Is that your competitive advantage or disadvantage?	
How is your market coverage plan differing from the competition? Is this your competitive advantage or disadvantage?	

• **Promotion**

In this part, you define your main promotional strategy. What are the main promotional tools, channels and approach that you will use to promote and spread the word about your brand, within your customers. Also, you need to define the USP (Unique Selling Proposition), meaning what is your key factor/benefit/advantage in comparison to your competitors. Once you define your USP, you use all the promotional channels to send a consistent message about your advantages and benefits. Additional elements of the promotional plan:

• **Media that you will use**

- Traditional media (TV, Radio, Print etc.)
- BTL (promotions, samplings, events, etc.)
- Non-traditional media (innovative channels, unique channels etc.)
- Digital Media (social media)
- Trade Marketing (activities that are focused on promotion of the products in store / retail - sales promotions, discounts, buy 1 get 1 free, gifts, shelf branding etc.)
- Other media channels
  - The message that you like to send to the consumers
  - The budget that you have for the promotional activities
  - PR (public relations)

**Exercise: Promotional Model**

In the first column describe your promotion or how you plan to perform it, and in the second, how the competition does it	Your product/service	Competitors product/ service
Word of mouth		
Advertising on electronic media		
Print media advertising		
Guerrilla		
Public relations		
Direct sales		
Promotional discounts		

Additional analysis:	
Which promo activities are best for your market and target group	
How can your promo strategy give you an edge over the competition?	

• **Brand Architecture**

Brand Architecture is a system that organizes brands, products and services to help an audience access and relate to a brand. A successful Brand Architecture enables consumers to form opinions and preferences for an entire family of brands by interacting or learning about only one brand in that family.

An established Brand Architecture is an important guide for brand extensions, sub-brands and development of new products. It will also provide a road map for Brand Identity development and design, and remind consumers of the value proposition for the entire brand family. It also provides the maximum brand value by fully leveraging both corporate and sub brands.

**Master brand:** A top-level corporate brand that encapsulates other branded products and services.

**Brand extension:** a product or service launched by a known brand name, where the extension is in a different category than the brand's other products or services.

**BRAND ARCHETYPE**

There's just something about the brands we connect with. We have an affinity with them that's hard to put your finger on. It's as if we know them. In some cases, it's as if we love them. What is it that attracts us to these brands? Why do we welcome them into our family or show loyalty towards them? That is the **Brand Archetypes**.

When properly identified, brand archetypes will reflect the personality of brands and services to better align personality type with specific customer personas. As it applies to brand, this idea of archetypes is fairly universal and may be particularly effective as an orienting tool for brand managers looking to focus the efforts of their team.



**TASK:**

Define your Brand Archetype.  
(the best way is to make combination of 2 or maximum 3 types of personality types from the chart above)

**Brand Messaging**

Articulate your value proposition, tagline, and messaging pillars to help content creators tell a consistent brand story.

- **Tagline:** A tagline is defined as “a catchphrase or slogan, especially as used in advertising, or the punchline of a joke. The purpose of a tagline is to create a positive, memorable phrase that sticks in your customer’s head and helps them identify your brand and your marketing message.
- **Value proposition:** A value proposition tells prospects why they should do business with you rather than your competitors, and makes the benefits of your products or services crystal clear from the outset.

**Brand Messaging Template**

Tagline

Value proposition

Brand Messaging Pillars



Supporting point

Supporting point

Supporting point



Supporting point

Supporting point

Supporting point

Example:

Tagline

*Modern Basics. Radical Transparency*

Value Prop

*At Everlane, we want the right choice to be as easy as putting on a great T-Shirt. That's why we partner with the best, ethical factories around the world. Source only the finest materials. And share those stories with you - down to the true cost of every product we make. It's a new way of doing things. We call it Radical Transparency.*

Brand Messaging Pillars

Pillar 1	Pillar 2	Pillar 3
EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY	ETHICAL FACTORIES	RADICAL TRANSPARENCY
<i>All products are designed to last.</i>	<i>We find the best factories in the world.</i>	<i>You deserve to know how much clothes cost to make.</i>
<i>We source the finest materials.</i>	<i>We build personal relationships with them.</i>	<i>We reveal the true production costs of our products.</i>
<i>We focus on timeless design.</i>	<i>Each factory is given a compliance audit.</i>	<i>We remove the traditional markup.</i>

Brand Voice

Identify your brand voice to humanize your brand and communicate consistently through all content.

Brand Voice Questionnaire

1. When people interact with our brand, how do we want them to feel?

For example, a security company that wants to be perceived as a trusted protector would use a confident and reassuring voice.

2. What adjectives would we use to describe our brand?

Choose 3-5 adjectives. For example, a toy brand might describe themselves as playful, silly, and adventurous.

3. What does our competition sound like?

Think about ways you can differentiate yourself through your brand voice.

4. What is another brand with a voice we love?

Don't emulate them directly, but identify how and why their voice resonates with you.

5. If our brand were a celebrity, who would we be?

For example, a hip luxury suit brand might describe themselves as George Clooney's younger brother.

**6. How do we want to talk about ourselves?**

Think about your brand messaging, what you want to convey, the type of language you use, etc.

**7. Who do we NOT want to be/what do we want to avoid?**

Identify buzzwords you hate, phrases to avoid, etc.

**Visual Identity**

Design an effective and comprehensive visual identity that communicates who you are. A brand is the face of your company. It is the first interaction point between you and your consumers. Thus, having a brand identity is imperative to make the business stand out and memorable for the people.

**Visual Identity Checklist**

<p><b>Logo</b></p> <p>Design a logo that reflects your brand personality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure logo design works for web and print.</li> <li>• Test that it renders well at small sizes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Illustration</b></p> <p>Use illustrations to visually enhance, not overwhelm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose a single style.</li> <li>• Keep it simple.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Colors</b></p> <p>Curate a simple but flexible palette.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose 1 main color, 2 primary colors, 3-5 complementary colors, and 2 accent colors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Iconography</b></p> <p>Focus on simplicity and clarity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double check that icons render clearly at small sizes.</li> <li>• Make sure the image is relevant to the subject.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Typography</b></p> <p>Select type that works as an extension of your logo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify a primary, secondary, and tertiary typeface.</li> <li>• Consider mixing serif and sans serif.</li> <li>• Test for legibility in print and on screen.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Data Visualization</b></p> <p>Design for comprehension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid clashing patterns (use color instead).</li> <li>• Don't over-illustrate or use 3D charts.</li> <li>• Order data intuitively (alphabetically, ascending, or descending).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Photography</b></p> <p>Use consistent, cohesive visual styles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure imagery is high quality and high resolution.</li> <li>• Be mindful of inclusive representation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Web Design &amp; Interactivity</b></p> <p>Focus on creating the best user experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider accessibility.</li> <li>• Design for mobile.</li> </ul>

**6. ACTION (COMMUNICATION) PLAN**

After defining the general directions of development of the brand / company, you need to determine the activity / communication plan – a plan of activities for promotion and attraction of potential consumers on the market. Creating a clear communication plan, based on previous deep understanding of the need and interests of the consumers, is of essential part for every development of a brand. It will help the company/brand send the right message or activation message, that will stimulate the buyer/consumer transform his/her need into purchase.



**Exercise:** Define the activities of the communication plan

ACTIVITIES	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9	M10	M11	M12	BUDGET (EUR)

**Examples of promotional activities:**

- Social Media campaigns
- Radio promotion
- Sales discounts (New Year/Easter/X-mass...)
- Trainings of the staff
- Gifts for the customers

- Buy 1 get 1 free
- Redesign of the packaging
- Branding of the shelves / stores
- Prize game
- Development of promo materials (booklets, leaflets, posters, web etc.)
- PR campaign
- Recommendations campaign

**7. FINANCIAL PLANNING**

The financial part is the last part of the business / brand plan. It is very important, since it shows the financial justification of the business or brand development. You can have the best strategy, best branding, best packaging, but if the numbers do not cross (income vs. cost) you will not have a business.

In order to achieve this, you need to analyze these parameters:

- **Income statement** – An income statement is a financial statement that shows you how profitable your business was over a given reporting period. It shows your revenue, minus your expenses and losses (1 year).
- **P/L (profit – loss)** – what is the track of the financial means (income/cost) for certain period of time (1 year)
- **Balance sheet** – A balance sheet is a financial statement that reports a company's assets, liabilities and shareholders' equity. The balance sheet is one of the three (income statement and statement of cash flows being the other two) core financial statements used to evaluate a business.

Defining these parameters will help you analyze your business from financial point of view. For that reason, you need to put accent on every detail of them.

i. Cost

**1. Fix (cost that are not subject to change when the amount of work is changing)**

- a. Rent
- b. Credit
- c. Other

**2. Variable (cost that are dependable on the amount of work)**

- a. Salary
- b. Amortization of the machines
- c. Office supplies
- d. Other

ii. Income – all the income that is coming in the company from sales of the goods.

The biggest problem in defining these parameters is that, the costs are overrated, and income is exaggerated.

**Examples/exercise:**

**Directing costs**

	M.1	M.2	M.3	M.4	M.5	M.6	M.7	M.8	M.9	M.10	M.11	M.12
Water												
Communal hygiene												
Telephone												
Electricity												
Accounting												
Forwarding cost												
Gas												
Insurance												
Rent												
....												
<b>TOTAL</b>												

**Salary**

	M.1	M.2	M.3	M.4	M.5	M.6	M.7	M.8	M.9	M.10	M.11	M.12
Salary 1												
Salary 2												
Salary 3												
Salary 4												

Salary 5												
Salary 6												
Salary 7												
K-15												
<b>TOTAL</b>												

**Total costs**

	M.1	M.2	M.3	M.4	M.5	M.6	M.7	M.8	M.9	M.10	M.11	M.12
Total Directing Costs												
Total Salary												
<b>TOTAL</b>												

**Profit**

	M.1	M.2	M.3	M.4	M.5	M.6	M.7	M.8	M.9	M.10	M.11	M.12
Client 1												
Client 2												
Client 3												
Client 4												
Client 5												
Client 6												
Client 7												
<b>TOTAL</b>												

**Gross income**

	M.1	M.2	M.3	M.4	M.5	M.6	M.7	M.8	M.9	M.10	M.11	M.12
Total income												
Total expenses												
<b>SUM = Gross profit</b>												