



# Eight Steps To An ONLINE Business plan



When it comes to making a business plan, very often the most difficult part is figuring out where to start. So, commercebuild has developed a Sage online business plan template that will help you to create your very own business plan and move to, or improve online sales! This plan will help you to focus on key parts of your business to ensure that you have considered all necessary processes and components of an online business before you make your digital transformation. This will ensure that you make your transformation into the digital world with confidence, knowing that you have considered everything you need to and that commercebuild is right by your side. We all know that the world is increasingly heading further into the digital realm, so you need to be prepared to make that digital transformation!

Your business plan should not just be used to get your business up and running, it should be a document that is used in the day-to-day running of your business. Make it your own! We've created this template as a guide to help you get started, but feel free to make it your own with graphs, charts, images, and anything else that helps you to express your vision of what you hope to achieve with your business.

[Let's get started](#)

# 1. Executive Summary

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Your executive summary should be an overview of your business plan and tell your team what they can expect from your business plan. It should highlight **what your business intends to do online, how you plan to transition online, and how you will make it a success**. Try to keep it short as it should only be a summary of what's yet to come.

**Tip: You may find it easier to come back to your executive summary once you've written the rest of the plan.**

## Things to Include:

- A description of your business and why online sales matter
- Your mission and vision statements
- A brief history of your business
- A description of your products and services
- A brief explanation on how you plan to be successful when you move online
- Your online business goals

# 2. Your Business

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You should be clear in this section about exactly **what your business does and where you see your business in the future**. Be specific. Your aim here is for your reader to have a clear understanding of what your business does currently, using your Sage ERP, as well as how and **why you plan to move online**.

**Tip: Keep this section short- no longer than a paragraph or two. You don't need to go into details about finance, competition, audience, and market as these will be covered later in the business plan.**

## Things to include:

- The history of your business
- What does your business do and offer?
- What makes you different in the market?
- Outline if you're currently have any online marketing or eCommerce activity

# 3. eCommerce Business Goals



This section lays out the **goals of your company**. You need to demonstrate in this section **what your goals are, how you will achieve them, and how success will be measured**. You should ensure that you have **multiple goals and objectives** and show how your short- and medium-term goals will help you to achieve your long-term goals. The rest of your business plan centers around these goals.

**Tip: Your business goals should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based). Keep your goals ambitious but make sure they are still achievable.**

## Things to Include:

- SMART Goals- All your goals should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-based
- A combination of short, medium and long-term goals for your business. You should also explain how the short- and medium-term goals will help you to meet your long term goals
- The clear goals and objectives of your eCommerce business
- Some but not all financial and sales goals
- How do you intend to measure your success?

Short-term goals	
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?

Mid-term goals	
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?

Long-term goals	
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?
Write your goal here	How will you achieve this goal?



## 4. Market Analysis



Your market analysis serves to provide an overview of the **current eCommerce market** for your industry to **identify a gap that indicates an opportunity** and need for your business. This section should **demonstrate the need for your business within the current and future market** and will act as the foundation for your marketing and sales plan.

**Tip: Demonstrate that you have done your research of your eCommerce competitors and have an in-depth knowledge of the digital market**

### Things to Include:

- Size and key demographics of your target market
- Current trends in the eCommerce market
- Gaps in the market
- Customer targets
- How your business can successfully fill those gaps
- Key competitors
- eCommerce Software (commercebuild, Shopify+, WooCommerce)

## 5. Audience and Market

In this section, you will include information about **who will be buying your products and/or services**. This should be based upon research to **demonstrate that there is a demand for what your business will be offering** and to **show that there will be enough demand to allow your eCommerce business to meet your goals**. You will need to talk about **how you plan to move your existing customers online**.

For example, **what struggles might you face** when trying to move your customers from placing orders via the telephone to placing orders online? Do you have a tech savvy customer base? **How will you overcome these issues?**

**Tip: You should demonstrate that you have researched your target audience, that you are aware and have considered their historical contact, and discuss any potential future changes that could affect your business.**

### Things to include:

- Research on your market/target audience including historical context, current, and future projections
- Demographics of your target audience- include things such as their age, gender, lifestyle, income levels
- Size of the target market
- Motivations of the audience
- How will you reach your prospective customers?
- Will your customers be switching from another competitive or will you be creating a new demand?



## 6. Key Competitors

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This section is where you will demonstrate to the reader that you have done your research and that you have knowledge of **who your eCommerce competitors are**. You should also provide details of **how you plan to challenge your key competitors** and how you can ensure that **your customers will choose you over your competitors**.

**Tip: Try to include evidence from the research you have conducted, including details of your competitors' eCommerce marketing strategies.**

### Things to include:

- Research, including any facts and statistics about your competitors
- You should also include competitors, strengths, weaknesses, and any opportunity you have to exploit their weaknesses and grow your customer base
- What features do your competitors not offer as part of their eCommerce platform?
- Demonstrate that you have done your research and use figures where possible

## 7. Marketing

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In this section, there should be a real focus on **how you plan to get your customers to use your new eCommerce webstore**.

### Things to include:

- The features that your webstore offers
- How will you incentivize customers to sign up for your webstore- which sales channels will you use?
- How you plan to advertise your new webstore
- What makes your webstore different from your competitors?
- How will you get the attention of your target market?
- Price- How much can you sell your product for?
- Timings of your marketing plan and how this will link with your sales goals



## 8. Finance

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This section should provide the reader with details of the financials and give them a **clear overview of key figures**.

**Tip: Ensure accuracy and consistency within your figures.**

### **Things to include:**

- Budget and set-up costs of your new eCommerce platform- You should include details of current costs as well as costs you will incur setting up your eCommerce site
- Sales figures, projections, and revenue (include how you have calculated this)
- Cash flow projections
- Forecast balance sheet
- Profit and loss summary
- Include previous performance figures and how your digital expansion will affect this
- Timelines of when costs will be incurred and when you plan to bring in revenue to offset the costs
- Source of funds

## **Congratulations on completing your online business plan!**

We hope that you have found this business plan template useful!

If you are looking to move your business online and would like to learn more about how you could implement a Sage-integrated Customer Portal or Webstore, in as little as 60 days, contact commercebuild to book a free demo!

**<https://commercebuild.com/contact-us/>**

To download a digital version of this business plan, please visit:

**<https://commercebuild.com/businessplan>**