



STRATEGIC & BUSINESS PLANNING FOR EVENTS

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STRATEGIC & BUSINESS PLANNING

Strategic and business planning is just good business. It is important for all event entities (and their events) regardless of size. The processes are aligned and their resulting documents (strategic and business plans) should be seen as tools for internal and (when appropriate) external use.

It is important to distinguish between the planning 'process' and the planning document that is created at the end. Many practitioners place as much emphasis on the benefits of going through the process as the final plan.

"In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable."

Dwight D Eisenhower

One way of looking at business planning is as the operational expression of strategic planning. The line between what content and how in-depth the content of a strategic plan and a business plan is will vary on a case-by-case basis.

THE USE OF THE TERM STRATEGIC AND BUSINESS PLANNING IN THIS DOCUMENT

In pure terms strategic planning is normally associated with an entity's strategic direction. However, it is often useful in the events sector to apply the same strategic thinking at the individual event level.

In some instances the entity (a Trust, an Incorporated Society, Association, Organisation, Council, or company) and the event are inextricably linked, such as in the case of an entity that exists to deliver a single event (for example, the World Masters Games 2017).

However, in other cases an entity may deliver multiple events (such as an event management company). In such instances strategic planning can be undertaken for a specific event. It is important that the strategic planning for an individual event aligns with the entity's overarching strategic plan.

This document applies the term strategic planning interchangeably to either the entity or event level. The word 'event' is used in the text.

The business plan is generally accepted to be focused more on the entity, while a business case is focused on a business opportunity. However, in an event's context many operators favour single event level business plans (that sit below the entity's overarching business plan). The term business plan is used in this document at either the entity or individual event level.

WHAT IS EVENTS STRATEGIC PLANNING?

Strategic planning is the process of envisioning, or 'casting out' to a desired point in the future, and then translating this future vision into roughly defined goals (or objectives) with a series of steps to achieve them.

Strategic planning is relevant if you are an events management organisation, an organisation set up solely to deliver one event or an organisation that uses events (to deliver on its wider strategy objectives). If you are the second example above, an event may be a strategic initiative within a much larger organisational strategic plan. Regardless of scale the core principles of strategic planning still apply.

In an event context you are looking at what you would like your event to be at a certain point in the future and then setting goals and steps that will help you reach this envisaged position. During the process the event as well as the operating environment in which it competes is taken into account.

Strategic planning helps to focus energy and resources, strengthen operations and ensure that stakeholders, volunteers and employees are working toward common goals. It helps to ensure everyone is 'swimming in the same direction'.

Importantly the process (through approaches such as workshops) can also enable differing ideas and

views to be canvased, considered and addressed in a productive way. A degree of healthy tension can be a positive aspect of the process so long as it is handled correctly and the rationale behind the final approach being adopted is clearly articulated.

Effective strategic planning also articulates not only where an event is going and the actions needed to make progress, but also how you will know if it is successful.

The Strategic Plan is a document used to communicate the key components of this strategic planning process (both internally and externally). Because the environment is always changing strategic plans should be seen as living documents that can be updated both as priority need requires and as part of specified regular review and renewal processes. They should be developed and maintained in the context of longer-term horizons – typically ranging from 3-10 years (Figure 1).

WHAT IS EVENTS BUSINESS PLANNING?

Business Planning is a process of creating, communicating and implementing a more ‘operational roadmap’ to guide your actions, policies and decision-making. It should align with the strategic plan and assist in its implementation (Figure 1).

A business plan is simply the document (or set of documents) which lays out the resulting directions, actions and implementation schedule. It is typically focussed on your short term ‘operational’ horizon (1-3 years) unlike the typically longer-term Strategic Plan with which it aligns. Business Plans are typically created to guide the internal operations of an enterprise, and would typically:

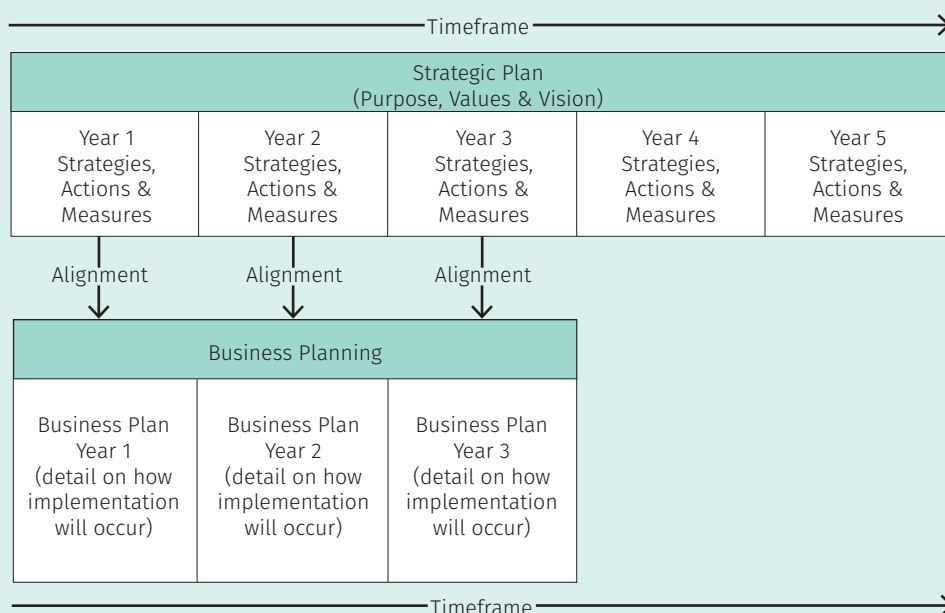
- summarise its operational and financial objectives for the near future (usually one to three years), and to
- show how these objectives will be achieved and monitored.

It provides a ‘roadmap’ to guide actions and is continually modified as conditions change and new opportunities and/or threats emerge. While it should be fundamentally targeted at guiding regular operations, it should also be adaptable to account for new opportunities and challenges, and for use as a marketing or advocacy tool (if applicable).

It is important to note that Business Plans can vary significantly in their content and depth depending on their purpose, although some key principles apply throughout.

Variations of business plans are commonly adapted on a case-by-case basis to support seeking new investment, partnerships, or resource and funding bids.

Figure 1: Strategic Planning and Business Planning Relationship.



WHY DO STRATEGIC AND BUSINESS PLANNING?

For medium to large events strategic and business planning is often mandatory. Entities operating these events are often required by partners (such as economic development entities, local and central government), banks and insurance companies to have robust strategic and business plans.

However, a common question asked by smaller event operators or entities is why should we undertake strategic and business planning? The simple answer is, can you afford not too (see Case Example: Event A)? Contrary to common perception strategic and business planning is scalable depending on the size and focus of your entity or event. As one practitioner stated:

“The biggest mistake is people see some huge formal business plan on the internet for a public sector entity and get put off. They think I haven’t got time for this and I don’t understand even half of what it’s saying. And anyway my business is only small. What they don’t see is that things can be scaled down and the importance of the process. The same is true of strategic plans”.

Commonly cited reasons for strategic planning include:

- Develops a common vision,
- Clarifies values,
- Increases organisation and stakeholder ‘buy in’,
- Identifies potential opportunities and barriers,
- Identifies key alignments and partners,
- Stimulates new approaches and greater ingenuity,
- Provides a framework that everyday operational decisions can be compared to,
- Answers stakeholder questions (often avoiding unnecessary questions),
- Develops a growth blueprint,
- Generates greater stakeholder confidence,
- Keeps you on track by enabling quick decisions to be made about ideas and opportunities that otherwise may distract you from your goals,
- Focusses energy and resources on key areas,
- Ensures that stakeholders, volunteers and employees are working toward common goals - ‘swimming in the same direction’.

Commonly cited reasons for business planning include:

In addition to the reasons outlined above business plans are:

- To define and practically apply good project planning and financial management practices in annual planning and day-to-day work,
- To provide logic and justification for prioritising different tasks and decisions over others,
- To systematically define tasks, logic, roles and responsibilities, strategic alignments (internally and externally), timetables, and budgets,
- To provide an opportunity for key players (such as boards, staff, stakeholders, and partners) to be consulted when setting key objectives and methods,
- To provide frameworks for developing:
 - evaluation strategies and metrics;
 - marketing strategies;
 - competitor analysis;
 - stakeholder analysis;
 - customer/ client/ user analysis; and
 - needs forecasting (demand, staff, and budgetary).

STRATEGIC PLANNING - KEY TIPS:

Note: some of the following tips will vary in relevance depending on the nature of your event / entity (public, private, private seeking public funding etc.).

- The planning process is the real purpose; the plan is just the communication of it. Take time to make the process as effective and valuable as possible. Remember it's not a race to produce a document,
- Consider the right number of people to participate. Avoid having too few or too many people. The number will depend on the size of your entity. A facilitator may be of assistance in some instances.
- 'Keep it simple' and try and summarise the plan down to a single A3 sheet. Be clear about your direction and priority outcomes,
- It's about the long term 'big picture', so don't fall into the trap of trying to be too detailed (summarising the plan down to a single A3 sheet helps with this),
- A good plan must be implementable or it's just a bit of paper. Don't be constrained, but equally give consideration to the resources required for implementation. You don't want to be totally unrealistic and set yourself up for failure.
- Don't be so constrained or limited by what you have done historically. Take the blinkers off so that you can at least see and evaluate a range of new business opportunities.
- Avoid jargon and focus on the entity's direction; with clear milestones that assist with tracking progress. Measure those things that you can control and have clear assessment processes.
- Think about outcomes, results and then activities. It's about what you are seeking to achieve before it is about what you will do.
- If your entity is seeking public sector financial support it's also important to articulate why your entity is a worthy recipient. In essence "we want your money so we can deliver the following benefits to the following people". You are laying the foundations for an investment proposition.
- Don't be introverted. It's not all about your entity, it's also about the environment you are operating in. What are the relevant market trends? What are our threats and opportunities?
- Understand your own mission and values and undertake an alignment analysis of your mission and values with those of your stakeholders,
- Don't be scared to consult with key stakeholders or advisors on your draft strategic plan. However, remember at the end of the day it's your entity's plan first and foremost.

BUSINESS PLANNING - KEY TIPS:

- Base your business planning process directions and scope on your strategic plan (the business plan is expressing the strategic plan),
- Consult on your plan both internally and externally; that is also consider key external stakeholders,
- Have built-in review and renewal processes,
- Identify key assumptions that the plan is based on (if these change be prepared to change aspects of the plan),
- Develop associated strategies and processes for key marketing, communicating, and evaluating functions as required.

CASE EXAMPLE : EVENT A

Event A was a small community event in regional New Zealand. It started as a family run event and grew over three years. Because the event organiser ran everything with assistance from his family and a small number of local volunteers “everything was recorded to memory”. As the event grew so did the requirement for capital. The organiser raised capital by extending a revolving mortgage on his house.

In year three the event progressed three fold in terms of complexity and capital cost. However, no strategic or business planning was undertaken. The event did not progress as it had been envisaged. Participant numbers were down, volunteers were fewer, costs increased and the weather was poor in the lead up to event day. In simple terms it was “the perfect nightmare”. The result was a substantial loss followed “by a near family breakup”.

Years on the event organiser admits that “if I had just paused and taken a few moments to do a strategic plan and a simple business plan some of my mistakes would have been clear as day”.

Key tips from this event organiser:

- “Never think that you are too busy to pause and plan properly”.
- “Challenge your assumptions and ask others around you what they think”.
- “Talk with your bank and insurance broker (about your strategic and business plan)”.
- “Even a simple high level plan is better than no plan”.
- “Join an organisation (an event organisation like NZAEP or business association)”.
- “Ask for help early on. It’s a lot harder after the wheels have fallen off the cart”.

CASE EXAMPLE : EVENT B

Event B is a small fishing competition in provincial New Zealand that was established to generate money for charities. Organisers reported that original event planning was a “little ropey” and strategic and business planning was seen as something “our banks made us do on the farm”, but not for our charity events. One year the event ran into problems that cost the organising entity financially. An interviewee stated that “this was the warning for us” and we had to lift our game. In subsequent years we have had strategic business plans “albeit that they are simple single page things, but that’s enough to keep us on track and avoid a few past stuff ups”.

Key Tip from this event organiser:

- Your plans don’t have to be complex, but you do have to have them.
- Don’t underestimate the importance of the process. Talking it over out loud with others helps.
- Don’t gloss over your event’s risks.

Note: Due to Commercial in confidence requirements, details of the event involved are not disclosed.

CASE EXAMPLE : QUEENSTOWN WINTER FESTIVAL - A FORMER FESTIVAL DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Simon Green, former Queenstown Winter Festival Director believes quality strategic and business planning is essential for an event like the Queenstown Winter Festival. Strategic planning needs to facilitate a constant reinvention of the event to stay relevant and ahead of participant expectations. Every festival / event should be viewed as a new product with a new business plan.

"It's important that you don't buy into your own hype" and think you can roll out old planning approaches from previous years. You constantly need to develop new initiatives.

"The definition of insanity in the event game is doing the same old thing and expecting the same result."
Simon Green, former Festival Director.

One of the first questions you will be asked by a journalist is 'what's new and different this year?' You should be asking yourself the same question when going through your planning processes. Your strategic plan must support change and your business plan must be at the sharp end of implementing that change.

Key Tip from this event organiser:

- Develop plans that support change,
- Invest the time in strategic and business planning,
- Take advice from those outside of your organisation,
- Never think that you have it all worked out and can roll the same old business plan year on year.
- "Don't fall into the trap of becoming lost in your own event". This is why external perspectives are vital.

WHAT'S UNDERTAKEN IN A STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS?

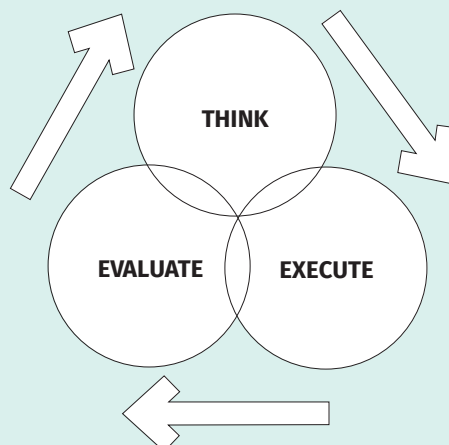
There is no formal right or wrong way to go about the event planning process. Stages in the planning process will vary depending on approach. Each stage is also not necessarily sequential and overlap and interconnection is the norm. However, in very general terms it can be thought of as a three steps:

1. **Think** - about your opportunities, threats, capabilities, goals and vision for the future,
2. **Execute** - the development, design, communication and implementation of your plan,
3. **Evaluate** - how successful you have been and keep exploring how to improve.

Source: Sport New Zealand, Planning in Sport.

The event strategic planning process does not really end as evaluation and optimisation is ongoing (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Generic Strategic Planning Process – Think, Execute and Evaluate



The tools used in the “Thinking” stage of the process can be varied and depending on fit. They may include:

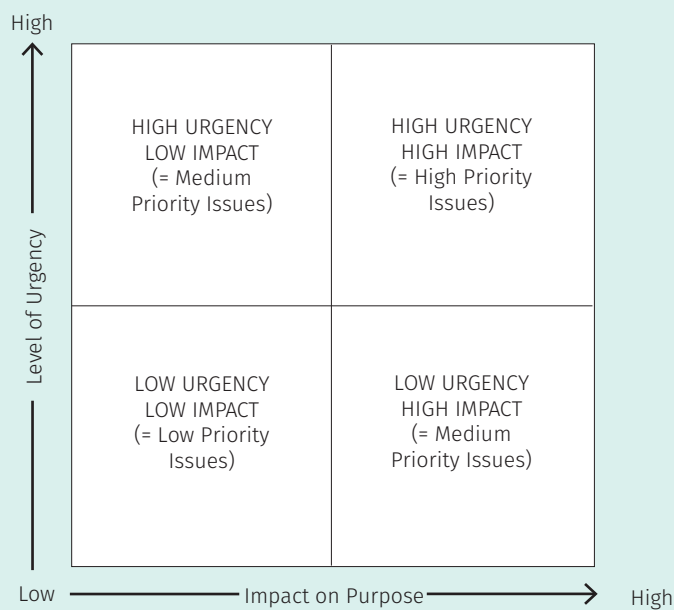
- Stakeholder engagement,
- Environmental analysis (“PEST” – Political, Economic, Social and Technological environment),
- Customer and Market Analysis,
- Current Performance and Capability Analysis,
- Benchmarking,
- Business Model Canvas,
- SWOT analysis.

Resources on these tools are outlined in the appendix.

After the ‘thinking’ stage is completed attention is turned to determining the strategy and its outcomes during the ‘execute’ stage.

Identifying and prioritising strategic outcomes can be done in many ways including the use of a range of matrices. For example, one approach would be to use the different strategic outcomes identified and place them on an urgency / impact matrix. This will enable you to prioritise and focus on what you do first (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Example Urgency / Impact Matrix



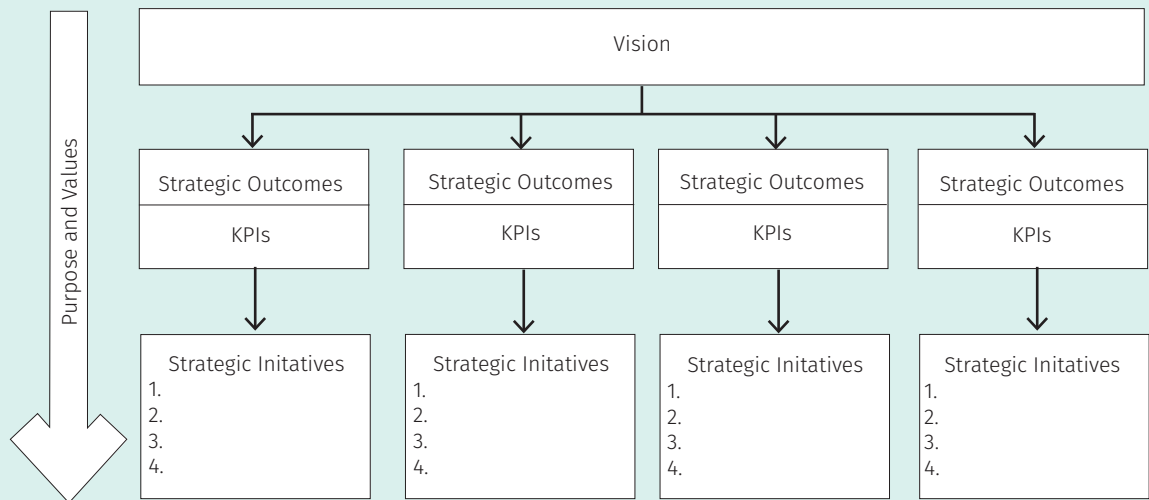
Once the strategic outcomes being focused on have been selected you will then need to consider initiatives to address them. It is important to remember that more than one initiative is likely to exist (you will have more than one potential ‘solution’ on offer). Some initiatives may be ruled out by resourcing constraints although you should always challenge these constraints to see if alternatives exist. For example, a partnership, a new investor, budget relieving value in kind (BRVIK) sponsorship, reprioritisation of activities, or external grant funding may overcome some event resourcing constraints.

Some of your initiatives are likely to require assumptions to be made. For example, that you find a joint venture partner or receive a certain degree of grant funding for an event. If you make assumptions do not forget to record them in your plan.

Successfully achieving a single strategic outcome may be dependent on multiple initiatives. These initiatives should be measurable and contribute towards achieving the outcome they support. The initiatives should be expressed in more detail in your business plan.

The strategic plan will have a structure that develops out from its vision, below which will sit a series of strategic outcomes with associated key performance indicators (KPI’s) and actionable initiatives. The purpose and values will run through each component (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Strategic Plan Structure



For example, an event may have the vision to become the largest and most high profile multi-sport event in New Zealand. A strategic outcome could be to have the largest participant base within the event’s fifth year. The key performance indicators linked to this may be to have two thousand participants in the event’s first year and 50% growth year on year after that. The strategic initiatives linked to this may be to develop a social media presence amongst the target demographic and to develop and implement an online and print media campaign to achieve a constant profile in niche publications.

The ‘evaluate’ stage involves demonstrating that an action / initiative has been carried out and then testing if evidence supports that it has contributed to advancing its associated strategic outcome (and in turn the overall strategy). This is aided by setting measures against particular strategic outcomes. For example, a 10% increase in event attendance, an 8% increase in visitor satisfaction, or a 5% increase in secondary event income. Performance against these measures can be assessed through the analysis of primary or secondary data (such as focus groups, questionnaire surveys or financial analysis). These measures can be presented in many ways including using a balanced scorecard approach (demonstrating a mix of financial and non-financial measures and results).

WHAT'S IN A STRATEGIC PLAN?

Strategic plans in their full form generally include a common series of headings, reflecting a fairly consistent set of key themes.

Executive Summary

- The big picture summary targeted at quickly getting your key messages from each section of the plan to your internal and/or external target groups.

Mission Statement

- Your own statements about your vision and purpose (as an entity or as an event). This can be quite brief.

Goals and Outcomes

- Brief goals and outcomes (unless explanations/justifications/value evidences are included).

Analysis Summary

- This summarises the key research (and evaluation tool) findings from the strategic plan process. You may touch on issues such as:
 - internal staffing and structures;
 - costs and revenues;
 - clients/ customers/ users;
 - stakeholders/ partners/ funders;
 - competing and complementary enterprises/events;
 - broader economic conditions in your sector;
 - population demographics;
 - activity participation, demand, and preferences,
 - SWOT analysis.

Strategic Outcomes and Supporting Initiatives

- High level summary of each strategic outcome (and its supporting key performance indicators)
- High level summary of the initiative/s that support each strategic outcome.

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy

- High level monitoring and evaluation strategy with proposed measures for tracking implementation and gauging success.

Review and Refinement

- State the provision for both scheduled and issue driven review and refinement processes.

Note: A full strategy as outlined above may extend to numerous pages. However, it should be able to be reduced down to fit on a single A3 page. A generic template for this purpose is attached.

SUMMARY STRATEGIC PLAN FOR: XX Multi Sport NZ Ltd
FOR THE PERIOD: 2017/18 to 2019/20

OUR PURPOSE IS: To provide New Zealanders of all ages the most incredible multi-sport experience.

OUR VALUES ARE: Fun and excitement in a safe environment

OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE IS: To become the largest and highest profile multi-sport event in New Zealand

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS VISION THROUGH THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC OUTCOMES AND INITIATIVES

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 3	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 4	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 5	STRATEGIC OUTCOME 6
<p>Strategic Outcome; to have the largest participant base within the event's fifth year.</p> <p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To develop a social media presence amongst the target demographic <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a 10% increase in event attendance 	<p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>OUR MEASURES ARE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">

REVIEW DATE: May 2018

WHAT'S UNDERTAKEN IN A BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS?

The business planning process is designed to give life to the strategic plan. The process itself can be varied in approach depending on requirements, but it must address all of the outcomes and initiatives set out in the strategic plan.

In simple terms an entity's activities can be divided in two:

1. business as usual activities and;
2. those associated with key (often new) initiatives.

The business planning process needs to carefully address key (new) initiatives as they can be forgotten when the demands of the entity's usual business intensify. People often have a tendency to "slip into the routine of doing what they have always done".

A business planning process can incorporate the following kinds of steps:

- Separate the 'business as usual' and 'new key initiatives' (from the strategic plan).
- Identify the key high level initiatives (as stated in the strategic plan) to be addressed during the year.
- Then add greater detail around how you will implement the initiatives.
- Agree on what will be measured and how this will be done over the course of the year.
- Allocate resources to implement the prioritised initiatives.
- Prepare the financial plan (that sits within the business plan) that includes:
 - Budgets (annual operating budget),
 - Cash flow forecasts (by month),
 - The identification of financial risks (risk areas and the risk periods of the year).
- Develop and review the draft business plan. This can be done both internally and externally.
- Extend the plan throughout all levels of the entity (for example into individual work plans).

SOME TRAPS TO AVOID:

- Don't make the plans so detailed that they become incomprehensible and are not used. A plan should be scaled appropriately to the size of your entity and its activities.
- Consider summarising key sections and using an appendix in your plan.
- Don't be scared to ask for help. If you are a charitable organisation grant funding is sometimes available to assist in obtaining professional assistance. You can also access a range of resources online to assist you. See www.generosity.org.nz to search a database of funding opportunities in your region.

WHAT'S IN A BUSINESS PLAN?

There are numerous Business Plan templates and no one-size-fits-all. The following example is a generic Business Plan Template derived from EventScotland.

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

< insert event title >

< document title ie “..... Business Plan 2016” >

< insert version no >< insert date >

< insert event logo/brand >

< insert contact details >

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

CONTENTS PAGE

Executive Summary

1. Background & History

- Event Management/Experience
- Event History

2. Event Overview

- Vision and Mission
- Key Outcomes/deliverables
- The Event
- Target Market
- Stakeholder involvement and benefits
- Delivery mechanism

3. Development Plan - Going Forward

- Strategic Development
- SWOT analysis

4. Event Requirements

- Facilities
- Services
- Production
- Legal & insurance

5. Marketing and Communications Plan

6. Financial Plan & Considerations

- Income and Expenditure Projections
- Economic Impact Estimation

7. Management and Business Controls

- Event Action Plan Template
- The Business
- Monitoring and Evaluation of outcomes
- Risk factors

8. Appendices

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The executive summary should be concise and should contain an overview of the following:

- What the event is,
- The event's vision and mission,
- Its objectives,
- When and where it will take place,
- Why the event has been developed,
- Who the event aims to attract (the market),
- What the key benefits of hosting the event are – to the community, sector, stakeholders, etc.
- Who developed the event and Business Plan,
- Statement as to the estimated event income and expenditure,
- Business Plan review (i.e. plans for monitoring and updates),
- What the main sections of the Business Plan are.

TIP: Remember some people will be reading your event business plan at speed (such as potential funders). This section must be short and concise. The executive summary is often best written last after you have written the other sections.

1. BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

This section should include information on:

Event Management/Experience – outline who you are and what your relevant experience and track record is.

Event History – is this the event's first year; where did the idea come from; have there been similar events; has it previously been staged elsewhere; what kind of event is it; who does it attract?

TIP: If potential funders, investors or gatekeepers (such as Council staff) are likely to see your event business plan make sure you sell your experience. Where you lack expertise and intend to contract the expertise into the organising team, say so. If you know who you will use, name them. People are seeking reassurance that you can deliver.

2. EVENT OVERVIEW - CURRENT YEAR

This section should set out plans for the 'live' event year:

Vision - A short statement that describes, in broad terms, the event's long term aim.

Mission - A more detailed statement which provides detail on how the vision will be delivered.

Key Outcomes/deliverables – Targets/Objectives - This is an opportunity to define and communicate the objectives and deliverables of the event. These should help to deliver the vision and mission. Set timescales and identify who each action will be led by (i.e. which organisation/individual). They need to be clearly set out and should follow the SMART principle: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Based:

The Event – describe the event and its various elements in more detail. Give an overview of the intended event content/programme and any new developments.

Target Market – give an outline of the existing audience/spectator/participant profile (if there is one)

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

and state targets for growth and development (you should go into more detail in Section 5).

Stakeholder Involvement and Benefits – describe the involvement and benefits each stakeholder should expect (event partners, public funders, sponsors, supporters, host venue/city, the local community, etc.). Make sure you state where the event and stakeholder strategies align and fit together.

Delivery Mechanism – explain how you are delivering the event. For example, are you using your own staff, contractors, volunteers or a mix?

3. DEVELOPMENT PLAN - GOING FORWARD

This section should present an outline of how the event will develop over the next 3–5 years.

Strategic Development – with your vision and mission in mind, outline your key objectives and how they will be delivered and developed beyond the current year; set timescales and identify who will lead each action (i.e. organisation/individual).

SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique event in calendar • Point 2 • Point 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for weather to affect programme • Point 2 • Point 3
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To grow into new markets and invite in different age groups • Point 2 • Point 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clashes with other events taking place in the local area • Point 2 • Point 3

TIP: Much of the text required in Sections 2 and 3 (above) should have been developed when you undertook the strategic planning process. You should be able to lift information from your strategic plan.

4. EVENT REQUIREMENTS

This section should outline what is required on an operational level to deliver the event.

Facilities – what facilities are required in terms of public utilities, accommodation (on and off site), catering, communication, other technology (such as timing equipment for sporting events) and transport?

Services – what services will be required and who will provide them: medical, police, fire, traffic management, health & safety, security, media, etc.

Production – detail the production equipment required such as power, fencing, staging, sound, lighting, vision, heavy plant, etc.

Legal & Insurance – consider the implications of contractual arrangements and the necessary insurance required to cover all aspects of the event. Consider underwriting, copyright, possible need to adjust your governance structure.

TIP: Be realistic about what is required to run your event and seek advice from specialists. Think about what is essential for running a safe and successful event and what is just 'nice to have'. Remember that high level advice can often be free or gained at low cost. See the NZAEP website for suggestions on where to find advice and ask your peers if they are prepared to review what you have developed.

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

5. MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION PLAN

Details of how to construct an effective marketing and communications plan can be found on websites such as:

<http://www.majorevents.govt.nz/resource-bank/marketing-communications>

6. FINANCIAL PLAN AND CONSIDERATIONS

This section is crucial. You need to show that the event is financially viable and achievable.

We recommend that you use the 'Annual Budget Template' below. If this is not possible, we recommend that you include, at a minimum, the following:

Income and Expenditure Projections – present detailed event budgets and cash flow projections for the period of the plan.

Economic Impact Estimation – the additional income that holding the event will bring to your area/economy.

***TIP:** Don't deceive yourself and massage the numbers to make them fit when they can't. Look at what you think the 'real' costs for your event will be. Some things can be cut back on, while others simply can't. Try and validate your figures and the assumptions that underpin them. This validation may include examining past income and cost figures, internet searches and discussions with suppliers. Think carefully about the impact the value of each line item will have on the success of the event.*

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

ANNUAL BUDGET TEMPLATE				
	Total Budget Value 2009/10	Total Budget Value 2010/11	Total Budget Value 2011/12	Notes
INCOME				
Local Authority Funding				
Scottish Enterprise Funding				
Other Grants/Public Funding				
Amount requested from EventScotland				
Trusts/Foundations				
Sponsorship				
Ticket Sales				
Merchandising – Trade site fees / Hospitality / Programmes				
Other Income				
TOTAL INCOME				
EXPENDITURE				
ADMINISTRATION				
General Administration				
General Insurance				
Travel & Accommodation				
Staff Salaries & Fees				
Management Fees				
Other Administration Expenses				
SUB TOTAL ADMINISTRATION				
EVENT COSTS				
Event Evaluation/Bid Costs				
Sanction Fees (if appropriate)				
Facility/Venue Costs				
Other Production Costs (Plant, Equip. Hire, Crew, Security)				
Health & Safety				
Event Insurance				
Ceremonies				

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

	Total Budget Value 2009/10	Total Budget Value 2010/11	Total Budget Value 2011/12	Notes
Entertainment/Artistic Programme (fees and costs)				
Hospitality				
Cost of Merchandising				
Travel, Accommodation & Services				
Communication (Radios etc.)				
Other Event Expenses				
SUBTOTAL EVENT COSTS				
MARKETING AND PROMOTION EXPENSES				
Advertising				
Design Fees & Print Production				
Direct Mail/Distribution/Display				
Internet				
Promotions				
Market Research				
Ticket Production				
Other Marketing & Promotions Expenses				
SUBTOTAL MARKETING AND PROMOTION				
TOTAL EXPENDITURE				
CONTINGENCY (10% OF TOTAL EXPENSES)				
TOTAL EXPENSES + CONTINGENCY				
SURPLUS / DEFICIT				

Note: The contingency can start at 10% and reduce as your planning becomes more advanced closer to the event being held (as risks should have been reduced over time).

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

7. MANAGEMENT & BUSINESS CONTROLS

In this section you need to show that you are set up to manage the event appropriately.

Event Action Plan - set out a clear timetable covering all aspects of event delivery

Event Action Plan Template															
Event Name:															
Event Date:				Plan updated on:						Version:					
Activity	Responsibility	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	Status
Update Business Plan		■													■
Sterring Meetings		■		■		■		■		■	■	■	■		
Marketing					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Agree Objectives		■													
Engage Designer						■									
Designs Approved								■							
Print Ready									■						
etc.															
Press						■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Engage Press Officer						■									
Agree Milestones						■									
Long Lead Research							■								
Launch										■					
Features Placed											■	■	■		
On Site Photo-op													■		
etc.															
Fundraising		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
List and insert milestones															
Programming		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■						
List and insert milestones															
Production		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
List and insert milestones															
Licensing and Legal		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
List and insert milestones															
Health and Safety		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
List and insert milestones															
Monitoring and Research													■	■	
List and insert milestones															
On Site												■	■		
List and insert milestones															
Live Event													■		
List and insert milestones															
Take Down /De-rig													■		
List and insert milestones															
Reporting														■	

EVENT BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

The Business – describe how you will keep track of the business; describe the management and administration systems that will ensure the smooth running of the event.

Other Records – explain the other systems you will put in place to monitor progress of each operation; when you will do it, who will do it, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Outcomes - how will you measure objectives and outcomes against levels of achievement (marketing, budget, etc.) and how will you provide reports?

Risk Factors – identify key risk factors (e.g. with respect to your objectives, programme, finances, operations, reputation, legal, audience, health and safety, etc.). Show how you will manage and mitigate risks and provide an initial risk assessment (see risk management module).

***TIP:** Don't be scared to confront potential risks and explore mitigation options. Think about the level of risk you or your organisation feels comfortable with. Ask this as a direct question: How much risk are we prepared to accept? Factor in the cost of any mitigation options into your event's business plan.*

8. APPENDICES

These may include appropriate documents such as:

- Additional financial information,
- A site/venue map,
- Previous research and economic impact information,
- Any relevant policies e.g. Equal opportunities; Health & Safety; Sustainability)
- Ethical practices,
- Code of practice/staff briefing document.

HANDY ONLINE REFERENCE SOURCES

Handy online reference sources

These give access to a varied mix of templates and tips. Most are focused on business planning although these can be used as Strategic Plan guidelines as well, remembering the key distinctions between the two. There are many more sites online, with many also including real examples of different plan types. There are also commercial services or templates available.

NZ Major Events Website – Bid Feasibility Page and Questionnaire pages

<http://www.majorevents.govt.nz/resource-bank/bidding-for-major-events/bid-feasibility>

<http://www.majorevents.govt.nz/resource-bank/bidding-for-major-events/document-image-library/event-bid-feasibility-questionnaire.pdf>

Events South Australia – Business Plan Template

http://www.tourism.sa.gov.au/assets/documents/ESA_Business_Plan_Template.pdf

Event Scotland - Event Business Plan Page and Template

<http://www.eventscotland.org/>

<http://www.eventscotland.org/resources/downloads/search>

Business.Govt.NZ – Business Planning 101 - business planning tools (including SWOT)

<http://www.business.govt.nz/starting-and-stopping/business-planning-101/business-planning-tools>

NZ Trade and Enterprise – Planning for success (useful template and DIY guide)

<https://www.nzte.govt.nz/en/export/planning-for-success/>

Business.gov.au – Business plan template and Guide

<https://www.business.gov.au/Info/Plan-and-Start/Templates-and-tools/Business-Plan-Template-and-Guide>

WorkflowMAX – Small Business Tips, Tech and Treats page

<http://www.workflowmax.com/blog/try-this-simple-8-step-strategic-plan-template-for-small-business-owners>

Online Learning for Sports Management – general resources (small fees apply)

<http://www.leoisaac.com/templates.htm#StrategicPlan>

ANZ Biz Hub – online tool going through the steps of a typical basic business plan

<https://bizhub.anz.co.nz/resources/business-plan-template-action-plan.aspx>

Top Nonprofits - Guide to Creating Mission and Vision Statements

<http://topnonprofits.com/mission-statements/>

GETTING ASSISTANCE

If you would like further assistance with strategic and business planning, then consider searching members of NZAEP on www.nzaep.co.nz, or emailing info@nzaep.co.nz to receive names of consultants or suppliers who may be contacted for further information on their services.

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