

# Transatlantic Business Plan Project

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## *Purpose*

The project has two key goals:

1. Students use the knowledge from this project to develop a transatlantic business idea and gain a deeper insight in customer needs and business opportunities.
2. Students learn how to write and communicate an e-business plan and work in international groups.

## *Description of Final Group Project*

The major project involves identifying an idea or business concept. A [schedule of activities](#) for the project is given below. It is absolutely essential to adhere to the schedule in order to successfully complete this assignment. It is recommended that the group members allocate the work among themselves equitably, and monitor individual performance to ensure the completion of the project on time. Group members will rate each other on a [standardized group peer evaluation form](#) and turn in these evaluations to the Professors along with the final group project report on the last day of classes or as assigned on the course schedule.

As can be seen from the schedule that follows, once members have been assigned to groups, they should immediately explore the organizations that they would be interested in studying, obtain access to at least two organizations, and turn in a list of the names of the organizations in the order of their preference. When the organization approved for study is indicated by the Instructor, the group should right away conduct unstructured and structured interviews with as few people in the organization so as to get an idea of their user needs and develop brief specifications or requirements for their project. This should lead to the development of a e-business plan which will be implemented in the form a commercial web site.

*An ideal project is one in which the client presents a business proposition that is potentially amenable to a E-commerce solution to a team and seeks their help. The team in consultation with the professor and client, establishes the user requirements and develops a e-business plan, designs and implements a web site, and presents them to the clients and to peers in the class. The clients can accept the business plan and web site in the light of the fact that this is a class project and, if they so desire, can hire appropriate consultants to set up a full-fledged venture.*

Once the interviews and preliminary data gathering is completed, a business plan for the project should be written per the [guidelines](#) provided below. This will be followed by a web site implementation. Use one of the free storefronts and/or web hosting services to set up your site. The web site will essentially involve building a prototype that addresses the various components of the proposed e-business plan.

There will be a presentation of the final group projects lasting 20 minutes followed by a ten-minute question and answer session. In addition to the professor, the presentation will be [evaluated by peers in the class](#). The peer evaluation would reflect members' assessment of the e-business plan and related web site design. Groups are welcomed to invite their sponsor(s) from client organizations to attend the presentations. In preparing your presentations, please review my thoughts on making an [effective presentation](#).

### Evaluation

All project work, that is, the business plan, web site implementation and presentations must be originally performed by the group members. Any infringement of this rule will automatically result in the assignment of a failing grade for the project. Higher grades will be earned for a well written business plan that addresses a real market need, team dynamics, and most importantly, has the potential for future development. Reports will be evaluated for content, clarity, logical presentation, and appearance. Pay particular attention to grammar, spelling and punctuation. The total grade for the project will be split up between the written business plan (60%) and the presentation (40%).

### Project Schedule

Suggested Schedule of Activities/Reports for Final Project	
Week	Activities/Reports
2	Form groups and submit member information (2-3 members).
4	Groups provide a short proposal to the instructors of the institutions they are actually studying at. This proposal shows the idea, the work breakdown structure and the timeplan for the project. A short empirical feasibility study should be included within the project.
4	Advisors approve the proposals.
5	Groups start their work.
6	Review <a href="#">online resources</a> for developing e-business plans. Check off with Advisors.
7	Complete writing E-business plan. Obtain informal critique from Professor and sponsor.
8	Presentations of Group Projects in a virtual session. (Guidelines for presentation will be provided).

### E-Business Plan Guidelines

Please submit two copies of the final project report. The business plan should not exceed 20 double spaced pages exclusive of appendices, figures and references. Use a 1.5" margin, a 10 point font, and number all pages. One copy will be returned with feedback and grade. The detailed sections required for the final report are listed below.

Both the style and the substance of the business plan influence the way it is received. Perhaps the most important element of your business plan is the Executive Summary, in which the plan's main points are emphasized. The summary is likely to be the first section potential investors read, meaning that it is your chance to make a good first impression. Beyond that a business plan could include the following sections: Cover page, Table of contents, Executive summary, Company Background (History-if any, Mission and Future Strategy), Market (competitive analysis), Products/Services (Here is where you describe your product or service and what makes it special and attractive or What is your e-business concept?), Sales and promotion (This is your assessment of how you intend to carry out your marketing plan -- how you'll reach your customers and sell to them), Finances (Here is where you detail your past results, if there are any, and your expectations for the future), Appendices (charts and tables, if applicable), Web Site Design and Implementation Plan (How does this web site achieve your business planning objectives? What will you include? What is your development plan?).

For more details on writing each of these section, please visit one or more of the online [business planning resources](#) provided below. At a minimum, we highly recommend reviewing the [BizPlant.Com Virtual Business](#) resource and some of the sample business plans developed by

students at various universities. Please be sure to cite which resources you utilized in creating your plan and web site.

*Criteria for the judges decision*

1. Written Business Plan (see above) count: 60%
  - a. Business Idea
  - b. Customer's benefit
  - c. Unique selling proposition
  - d. Team Recruiting & Development
  - e. Market & Competitors
  - f. Marketingplan & Sales
  - g. Business Organisation
  - h. Project plan & Realisation
  - i. Chances & Risks
  - j. Financing
2. Presentation of the BP project count: 40%
  - a. Presentation
  - b. Argumentation
  - c. Persuasiveness
  - d. Questions and answers

*Developing Business Plans Online Resources*

- Jill Andresky Fraser. "[Do I Need to Plan Differently for a Dot-Com Business?](#)", Inc.com. [Accessed: August 29th, 2000].
- Audra Mulhearn. "[The Case, and the Plan for your Virtual Company,](#)" Inc.com. [Accessed: September 12th, 2010].
- "[Start-up](#)" - Inc.com. (A number of useful articles).
- Walsh, Brian. "[Building A Business Plan For An E-Commerce Project,](#)" *Network Computing*. [Accessed: August 29th, 2010].
- Small Business Administration (Federal Government Agency). [The Developing Business Plans: The Roadmap to Success \(Business Plan Outline\)](#).
- [Basic Guide to E-Commerce \(Doing Business Over the Internet/Web\)](#)
- [Dot.Com Countdown-7 steps to Business Launch](#)