YOUR BUSINESS MODEL

WHAT THIS IS

Your business model is not a business plan. It's not a pitch deck. It's the shortest honest answer to the question, how does this business create value and make money doing it?

Most business owners built their model by accident. They started doing things that worked, kept doing them, and called it a business. That's fine. But at some point you have to be able to see the whole thing clearly, describe it to someone else in under five minutes, and know which parts to change when the market shifts or the business grows.

This document is meant to be updated. If you fill it out once and never touch it again, you've already missed the point. Set a reminder to revisit it every 90 days. It should look different a year from now. If it doesn't, something is wrong.

SECTION 1: VALUE PROPOSITION

What problem do you solve, and why does your solution matter to the person who has that problem? This is not your tagline. It's not your mission statement. It's a plain-English answer to: what does your customer get from working with you or buying from you that they couldn't easily get somewhere else, or couldn't get as well?

Write it in one or two sentences. If it takes more than that, you don't have it yet.

1. *What problem do you solve?*

2. *Why does your solution matter to the specific person who has that problem?*

3. *What makes your answer to that problem different from what else is available to them?*

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SECTION 2: TARGET CUSTOMER

Who specifically are you serving? "Everyone" is not an answer. Neither is a demographic. Your target customer is a real person with a specific situation, a specific problem, and a specific reason they would choose you over someone else.

Describe your best current customer first. Not the ideal one. The real one who actually shows up, pays, and comes back. Then describe who you want more of.

1. *Who is your best current customer? Describe them specifically.*

2. *Who do you want more of? Where do they differ from who you're serving now?*

3. *Are there customers you're currently serving that you should stop serving? Why?*

SECTION 3: REVENUE STREAMS

How does the business make money, and from what? List every way you generate revenue. For each one, note approximately what percentage of your total revenue it represents right now. Then flag which ones have room to grow and which ones are at or near their ceiling given your current capacity.

1. *Revenue source(s) / Approximate % of total / Room to grow or near ceiling?*

2. *Which revenue stream is most underperforming relative to its potential?*

3. *Which revenue stream, if it disappeared tomorrow, would hurt the most?*

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SECTION 4: COST STRUCTURE

What does it cost to run this business? Separate your fixed costs (the ones that show up whether you work or not) from your variable costs (the ones that scale with volume). Include what you pay yourself. If you don't know a number exactly, estimate it and flag it so you know to verify it.

1. *Fixed costs (monthly):*

2. *Variable costs (monthly, approximate):*

3. *What you pay yourself (monthly):*

4. *What you want to pay yourself (monthly):*

5. *Monthly burn rate total (fixed + variable + your pay):*

6. *How many months of runway do you currently have if revenue stopped tomorrow?*

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SECTION 5: DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS

How does your product or service get to your customer? This is not your marketing plan. It's the path your customer takes from not knowing you exist to having your product or service in their hands. That path is made up of channels, and those channels need to be deliberate, not accidental.

List the channels you currently use to reach and deliver to customers. For each one, note whether it's working (bringing the right customers at a reasonable cost in time or money) or whether it's happening out of habit without evidence it's doing anything.

1. *Channel / Working or habit?*

2. *Which channel produces the highest quality customers right now?*

3. *Which channel are you investing in that you have the least evidence for?*

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SECTION 6: ONE SENTENCE VERSION

After filling out everything above, write one sentence that a stranger could read and understand what your business does, who it's for, and why someone would choose it.

This is harder than it sounds. If you can't do it yet, that's useful information.

Your business in one sentence:

When to update this

Every 90 days, read through what you wrote. Ask three questions: Is this still accurate? What changed? What should change? It should take you 20 minutes, not two hours. The goal isn't a perfect document. It's a current one.

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