1) Executive summary

In this section, you have to write a short description of your project, to arouse the interest of your reader

Example

This Marketing Plan concerns the launch of a new product on a new market which is quickly developing. The product is a special variety of apple, especially designed for the consumers of the planet Mars, who are increasingly interested in fresh products from Earth. This market is now accessible thanks to the development of interplanetary flights, but current exported products are simple Earth Planet products. It is instead possible to meet, in a more accurate way, the special need of Martian consumers, with a dedicated Marketing Plan.

2) Analysis of the situation and PEST

Demand trends, social factors, psychographics

Here you have to summarise the results of your market analysis (see dedicated chapter)
It is very important to be honest, both if the document is for internal and for external use. Both potential benefits and drawbacks have to be outlined.

What are the **trends in demand** for your product or service? Is its demand seasonal? Where is it mostly purchased? How is it paid (card, cash, payments)? Can you envisage demand changes that can become opportunities for you?
Who will buy your products? Are you selling B2B (business – to – business) or B2C (business- to – consumer), or both? In each case, who decides which product to buy (e.g.: a housewife, a very busy working mother, a modern distribution buyer, the purchasing manager of a wholesaler...)
Which specific characteristics will the buyers of your product have? Age? Gender? Religion? Race? Education? Socio – economic condition? Type of household? Favourite point of purchase (internet or brick and mortar, mall or city center)? Favourite media? Main source of information and guarantee concerning food quality?
What about your product's appeal? Is it meant to substitute existing products or is it a new solution for a problem / need? In the first case, why should your product be bought instead of / in addition to existing ones?
Are you trying to increase the interest to a certain **social or cultural group**? Why do you think they will like your product?
Is there any *risk* associated to the consumption of your product? (e.g. recent alarming news, but also a particularly high price associated with inconstant quality, so that the risk of a bad consumption experience is perceived as high, if associated with the product's high price)

Analysis of the situation and PEST

PEST analysis: political, economic, social, technological environment

This section will help you understand if, independently from the quality of your product and of your marketing policies, the environment is favourable to your sales' growth. The result of this analysis will help you estimate realistic sales forecasts

Questions

Whether you are going to sell in the same area where you produce, or you have decided to expand your area of influence, it is important to make a reflection about the **general economic and business conditions in the area you have chosen**. Supermarkets of the same chain change their product range according to their location: in students areas, portions are smaller; in low socio-economic condition areas high end products play a marginal role, etc.

And do you have information to estimate the **current conditions and trends in this geographic area as far as your sector / product is involved**? An evaluation element could be the current conditions and trends for this Industry for your product.

Changes in income: are people losing jobs or is unemployment decreasing? Are people being paid more or less? These data are available from your country's Statistical Office.

Are there **changes in consumer behaviour**? Are more people taking the bus and driving less? In this case they may appreciate home delivery. Are they buying products more or less frequently? Are there relevant trends (e.g. for gluten free and lactose free products, for organic products, local procuts, etc.)

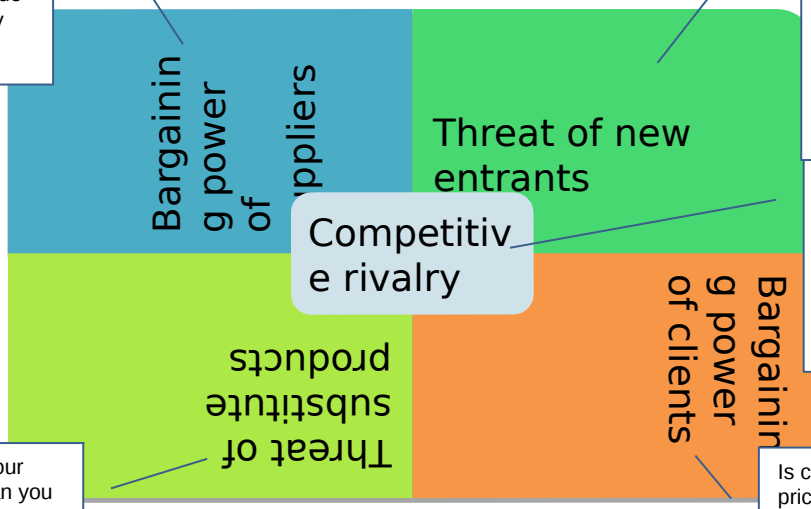
Is your product something people buy when they are well-off or when they need to save money? A clear example is that of beef meat and eggs. Both are a source of protein and can be substituted in case of a tight budget.

What about the **political and legislative framework**? Is the present government in the geographic area you are aiming at following expansive or restrictive policies? Are taxes increasing? Is public expense being reduced? If it is a foreign country, what is the attitude of its government towards the import of the products like the one you are going to sell? Are there high custom tariffs? And are there non-tariff barriers, such as very restrictive requirements for products?

Are there new **technologies** concerning your product, that can, for example, make a certain product type obsolete? Is the market changing quickly, so that a certain version of the product will quickly reach the end of its life cycle? Is yours a mature market, where little innovation is possible? Are there recent patents?

3) Competitive analysis: Porter's five forces

Are your suppliers competing for clients? Are you free to change your suppliers? Is it easy or do you have to «switch costs» (direct or indirect costs you have to face if you decide to change?). Can you easily obtain price reductions?



If the idea/market seems profitable, you have to consider if there is a risk of new entrants? Are there «entry barriers» that can be enhanced (for example, high costs that new entrants would be facing and that you have already incurred, a brand reputation you have already built and they would have to build a fresh?)

Describe the competition you are facing, or you would be facing if you start selling the product for which you are preparing a marketing plan. Focus on current competitors: how could they react?

Your product provides your clients with a benefit. Can you think of other products which can offer a similar benefit and substitute yours in consumers' preferences?

Is competition intense? Is it price-based? Are your clients free to change their suppliers easily or do they have to «switch costs», or are they uncertain about product quality?
Have you successfully made your customers be loyal so far?

Describe your competitors, and their strategies

Who are your main competitors? In a concentrated market, you will have a few, big competitors. In fragmented markets, you may have types of competitors (e.g. smaller farms, bigger farms, farms located in a «famous» area, importers of Chinese products, etc.)

3) Competitive analysis: competitor analysis chart

Product: _____

Competitors and features	Feature 1: _____	Feature 2: _____	Feature 3: _____	Feature 4: _____	Feature 5: _____	Feature 6: _____	Price
Competitor 1: _____	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Competitor 2: _____	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Competitor 3 _____	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	
Competitor 1: _____	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	

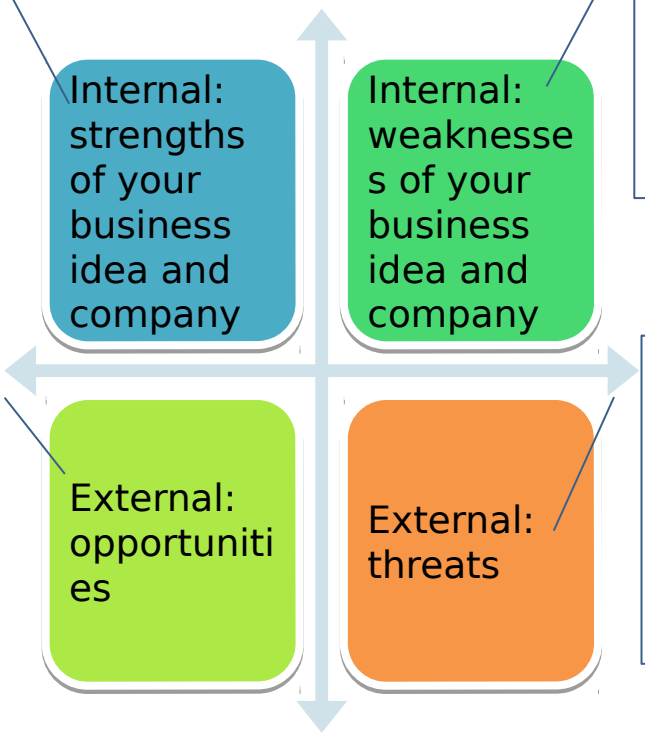
3) Competitive analysis: SWOT

Make a list of your strenghts, based on the analysis you have made so far:

_____
_____
_____

Make a list of your weaknesses. It is very important to identify them on time:

_____
_____
_____



Opportunities may come from macroeconomic trends, technology, changes in the legislative framework, changes in consumer behaviour ...:

_____
_____
_____

Threats may come from competitors' reactions, new entries, but also from the negative version of the variables that may give life to opportunities:

_____
_____
_____

The project

Offer description, STP, Marketing objectives and goals

Questions

Describe your ideas in detail. Underline the benefits it will offer to clients / consumers. Benefits can be practical, but also symbolic. A good wine can also be a nice present and a way to show that one is a gourmet. Good packaging may be attractive for consumers, but also easy to stock on shelves for retailers.
Think of the market analysis you have just completed, and answer these questions:
Segment: who are the potential buyers of this product?
Target: specific target audience inside the segment? Potentially mostly interested consumers group? Better willingness to pay? Demographic, social, psychograpic characteristics? Lifestyle? Special needs? Why have you chosen them? How many are they? How many of them could you reasonably reach?
3. **Positioning**. What is the positioning that you want? How do you think you can attain it?
There are three main ways to position a product: Unique: the only one of its kind; Difference – has a few characteristics more intense than your competitors'; Similarities: similar characteristics, but a lower price.
c) Marketing objectives and goals. Here numbers are needed. What are your marketing objectives and goals on sales volume, market share, return on investment? How much time do you need to have sales higher than costs, and to start making a profit, to pay back investors? How many clients will you reach? How many products can they reasonably buy? At what price? What will your fixed costs be (employees, expenses that do not depend on how much product you sell ...) ? And variable costs (costs that depend on how much product you sell, for example packaging, raw materials, shipping , etc.)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
n° of consumers			
volume of product sold to them (V)			
unit price (P)			
sales (PxV)			
fixed costs			
variable costs (unit) (C)			
variable costs (unit) (CxV)			

Break-even: how many units do you have to sell so that your sales equal costs (fixed + variable?). The formula is:

$$Q\text{(uantity)} = \frac{\text{Fixed costs}}{P\text{(rice)} - C\text{(osts)}}$$

Unit price

Unit costs

Marketing tactics

The 4 Ps

Questions

Product: describe your product, its technology, its shelf- life, its packaging (hardware and software).
Price: state your way of deciding the price, and the price you have consequently chosen, on the basis of the analysis you have made so far. Motivate your choice.
Place: describe the channels through which the product will reach your clients. Motivate your choice
Promotion: describe how you are going to promote your product. Make a table of promotional expenses.

Actions

Divide your plan into actions, the «smaller» the better. Describe even plain actions, such as «buy plastic bags». For each action, state its timing (by when it has to be completed) and who is responsible for it.

Action's name	Description	Person responsible	Timing

Performance monitoring

How are you going to check if things are going well? What variables will you follow? Number of clients? Sales? Prices? And how frequently? Weekly? Monthly?

Variable	Method	Unit of measurement	Time period
Price	recording on a copybook; on a PC	In €/kg, €/unit, etc.	every month
Sales volumes			
Sales value			
Number of clients			
…			
…			
…			

Your plan is ready.
Now, give it a smart look, and show it to your partners, employees, investors.
Of course, you can choose which parts you can show or hide each time …