



# High School Business Plan Competition - 2018

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**“Be so good they can’t ignore you.” – Steve Martin**

We’re so excited that you have chosen to participate in the 2018 Forza Financial Business Plan Competition – we cannot wait to see your innovative ideas.

This document should be used as both a guideline on how to structure/approach your written business plan and on how to stay within the boundaries of the competition. Please read it in its entirety.

If you have any questions, after consulting this document, please contact our Chief Marketing Officer, Jon Hanley ([jdhanley@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:jdhanley@crimson.ua.edu)).

## Competition Guidelines & Parameters

1. The competition will consist of two parts: a written business plan and an in-person pitch. Participating teams (from one to five members) will construct a formal plan about their business idea (hypothetical or existing) and later pitch this idea at the competition.
  2. Written business plans will be due midnight (11:59 pm) April 15<sup>th</sup>, by email, to Jon Hanley ([jdhanley@crimson.ua.edu](mailto:jdhanley@crimson.ua.edu)); also, please print 5 hard copies to bring to the competition (judges will be using these to leave feedback).
  3. The business plan competition and pitch day will take place on Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> on the University of Alabama campus, in the Ferguson Center Mortar Board Room (Room 3107), from 1-4pm.
    - a. Teams will be assigned a pitch slot and given 10 minutes to pitch their respective business plans to the judging committee. The rest of the time will be devoted to a meet & greet, judging period, and the awards ceremony.
  4. The written business plans and in-person pitches will be judged on 100-point grading scales, and the two will be added together. Prize money will be awarded to the top three teams and awarded evenly amongst the team members. First place will win **\$300**, second place will win **\$200**, and third place will win **\$100**.
  5. Teams are required to write and build their plan on their own original ideas and without outside help or assistance; deviating from this rule can lead to disqualification.
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## Business Plan Outline & Structure

### Technical Structure:

- Please use either Times New Roman or Tahoma size 12 fonts.
- Double space (with no space between paragraphs of similar style).
- Utilize one inch page margins.
- Keep all ideas and wording school/business appropriate.
- Avoid using bullet points; write in paragraph form for the most part.
- Please adhere to the following structure (i.e. keep each section in the order in which they appear in the following section).

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# Business Plan Outline

## I. Sections (start each on its own page):

### A. Cover Sheet

1. List information pertaining to your business (name, industry, logo).
  - i. Creating a logo is optional, but encouraged.
2. Contact information (team member names, email addresses, and school name).

### B. Table of Contents

1. List table of contents for the content of the business plan (the following bullet points C through H should be included).

### C. Executive Summary (short summary of business and business plan)

1. Tips:
  - i. Do this last. It is the “big picture.”
  - ii. This is like an elevator pitch. It should be no more than one page.
  - iii. It should sum up all the important details an investor would want to know.
2. It should communicate three basic things:
  - i. What your business will do
  - ii. How it will generate a profit
  - iii. Why people will want to buy it

### D. Market

1. How big is the market/industry?
2. Who are your main competitors and what do they sell?
3. How is your product different/better than what your main competitors are offering?

### E. Customers

1. Who will be your customers? What do they want to buy?
  - i. Demographics (age, income, gender, etc.)
  - ii. Identify how your idea will benefit this group in particular.
2. How do you reach or market to the selected target market?

### F. Business Model

1. Describe how your business will make money. What will you sell and what costs and net profit would be expected?
2. How are you marketing your service/product?
  - i. Advertising, promotions, etc.

### G. Possible outcomes

1. A business plan is only a plan, and like all plans, it can go wrong. What parts of your business are outside of your control and could go totally wrong?

### H. Use of Funds

1. Detail the startup costs of your business. How do you plan to spend any capital?
2. Research of related businesses in existence is recommended.

## Written Plan Rubric

Description	Points Awarded	Points Possible
Technical structure (includes cover sheet & table of contents)		10
Grammatical acceptability and stylistic creativity		10
Executive summary		10
Market section		10
Customers section		10
Business Model section		20
Possible outcomes section		10
Use of funds section		10
Overall effectiveness		10
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>100</b>

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## Business Pitch Outline & Structure

Just as important as written business plans are business pitches. Pitching your business idea is an integral part of spreading your message and finding sponsors, investors, or employees.

So, in order to have a comprehensive business-building experience, your teams are required to participate in a formal business pitch that will be judged by local entrepreneurs and University professors/faculty. Your idea should be presented as if you're trying to win over potential investors. Pitches will be capped at 10 minutes but teams should aim to talk for about 8

minutes to leave the rest of the time for questions. Your pitches will be graded on a 100-point scale that will be explained below – pitch and plan scores will be combined to determine the competition’s winner.

### **What to include in your pitch:**

Your pitch should be presented as if the judges have no previous knowledge about your business. It should clearly establish a need for your good or service and should explain why your business and product are the best ones for the job. So, focus on trying to pitch your mission and vision in a clear, concise, elevator pitch. Not all of the following topics are required to be in your pitch but offer a good idea of what a strong, comprehensive pitch might include:

- Industry analysis & competitors
- Customer types
- Marketing strategy
- Business model
- Risks
- Financial projection

### **How to structure your pitch:**

In order for your audience to remain engaged and interested during your pitch and for your team to organize its presentation, you will need to prepare a short PowerPoint (or comparable presentation). This should include the presenters’ names and school, the product name & logo (if applicable), and different slides to cover each section of your business plan. However, it is each team’s responsibility to figure out the layout that best fits their needs – feel free to deviate from the norm if your team feels it will aid in the presentation of the plan.

### **Other pitch details:**

- Dress business casual
  - Men: Button down & khakis
  - Women: Blouse & skirt/slacks or dress
- Practice your pitch (multiple times)! You don’t want to flounder in front of a panel and your peers.
- Make sure your pitch is professional and without grammatical error.

- Also, as advice on good presentation structure: don't include too much full-text (i.e. sentences and paragraphs) on slides, utilize bullet points that you can orally explain.
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## Pitch Rubric

**Categories (1 = poor, 2 = inadequate, 3 = average, 4 = above average, 5 = flawless):**

Effectiveness of Executive Summary – /5

Clarity of Mission & Vision – /5

Preparation and Confidence – /5

Creativity and Visual Appeal of Presentation – /5

Likelihood of Investment – /5

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_ x 4 = Weighted Score \_\_\_\_\_ /100

“Building a better Alabama, one idea at a time.” - Forza Financial