

A background image showing a business meeting. Two people in dark suits are shaking hands in the center. In the foreground, a woman with dark nail polish is writing on a document with a pen. There are also papers, a laptop, and a clipboard on a wooden desk. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an office environment.

Business Quick Start Workshop

Welcome!

Hope Hartman, Executive Director

hope@larimersbdc.org



Who We Are & What We Do



U.S. Small Business Administration

We help existing and new businesses grow and prosper.



Our Agenda Today

1. Introductions
2. Part 1 – The Essentials
3. Part 2 – The Plan
4. Part 3 - Marketing & Your Budget
5. Next Steps
6. Wrap Up

Introductions

Your name?

What is your business (now or planned)?

Why are you here?

Part 1: The Essentials



What You Bring

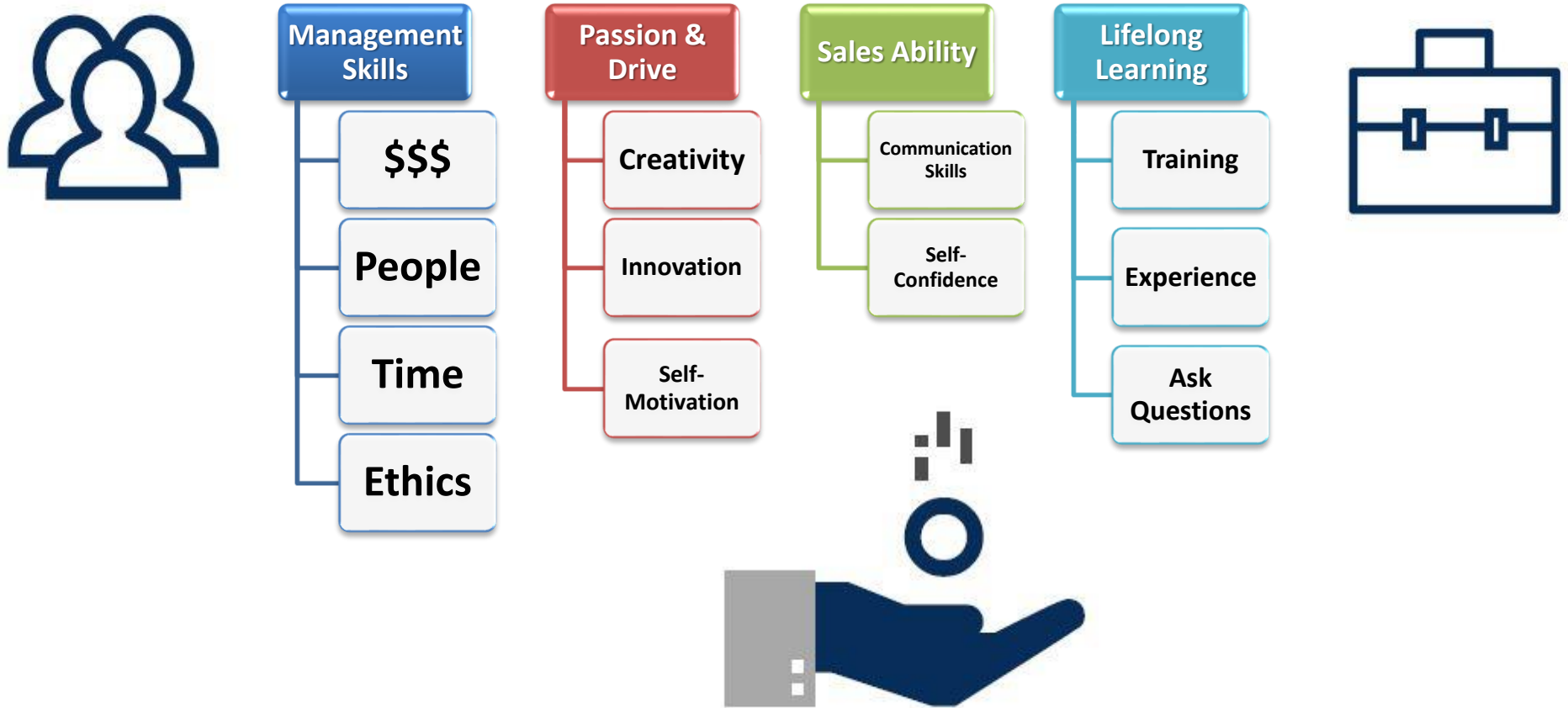
Experience,
Knowledge & Skills



Reality Check

Running a business is a LOT of
hard work

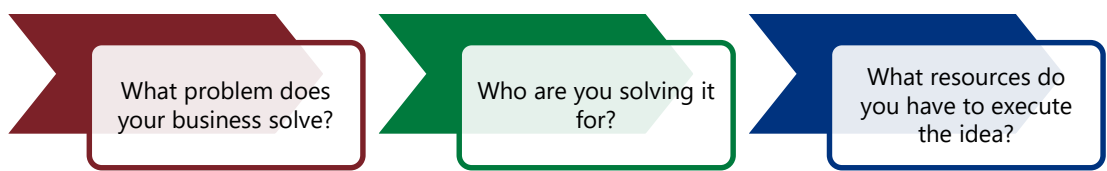
Reality Check 1: Self Assessment





Reality Check 2:

Business Idea Assessment



What problem does your business solve?

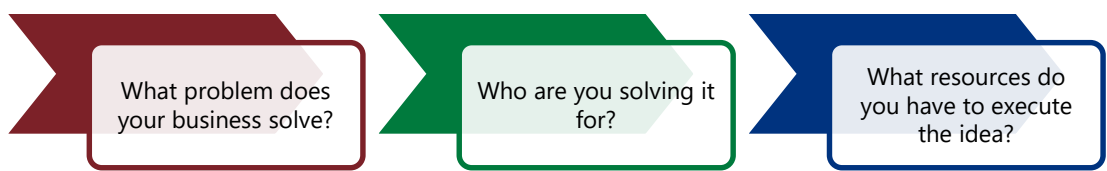
Who are you solving it for?

What resources do you have to execute the idea?



Reality Check 2:

Business Idea Assessment



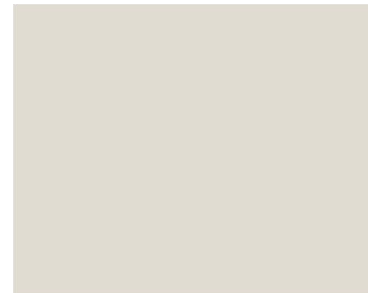
What problem does your business solve?

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Startup - Foundational Activities

- Legalities
- Licenses & Registrations
- Location
- Logistics & Planning



Your Legal Entity

Entity type affects:

- Taxes
- Legal separation between your business & you
- How you fund your business



Entity Types

- Limited Liability Company (LLC)*
- S-Corp
- C-Corp
- B-Corp
- Sole Proprietorship
- Partnership

* Most common

A Few Tips

- Research online
- Talk to your attorney/accountant
- “Make It Official” On Demand class
- May want/need “Operating Agreement” especially with a partner

License Check



Examples:

- Professional License – healthcare, insurance, home improvement, etc.
- Electrical or Plumbing; inspections for home owners
- Credit Unions
- Athletic Trainers
- Special licenses - See “Occupational License Database” Check out the Occupational License Database at www.LarimerSBDC.org/resources

Your Business Name

- Check with Colorado SOS
- <http://www.sos.state.co.us/>
- Do an internet search
- Research available domain names
- Making changes can be costly and time consuming
- If selling nationally, consider obtaining a US Trademark*

*Will probably require help of IP attorney.

State Registration

<https://mybiz.colorado.gov>

- 1) Offers NEW businesses a single portal
- 2) Self-service, work can be “saved”
- 3) OR Register with CO Secretary of State at www.sos.state.co.us



MyBizColorado is the fastest way to register and manage a business. This is the official filing tool for the State of Colorado. You can start right now, or take a few moments to learn more.

Ready to get started?

START

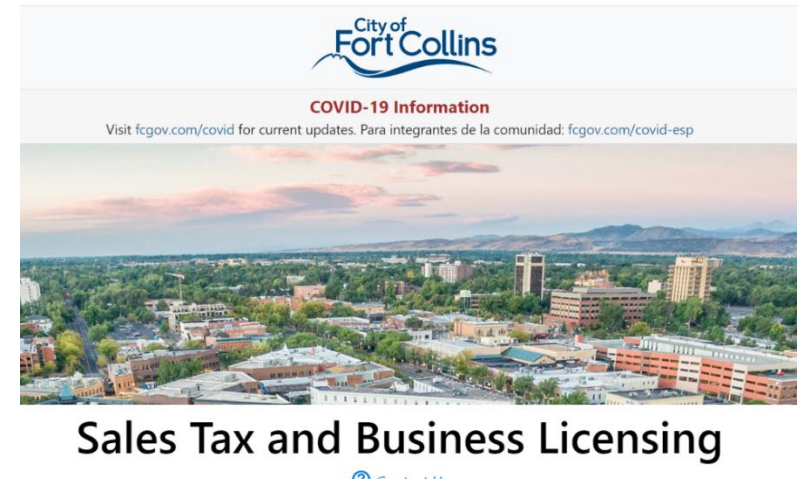
Great! Here is where you are so far!

- 1 Introduction & Profile - Not quite done yet
- 2 Tell us about your business
- 3 Tell us about the people involved in your business
- 4 Tell us about your company activities
- 5 Attestation

Local Registration

- May or may not be needed
- Check “City Sales & Use Tax” department
- <https://www.fcgov.com/business/business-licenses-permits-faqs>
- <https://www.lovgov.org/city-government/i-want-to/do-business-in-loveland>
- <https://estepark.colorado.gov/businesslicensing>

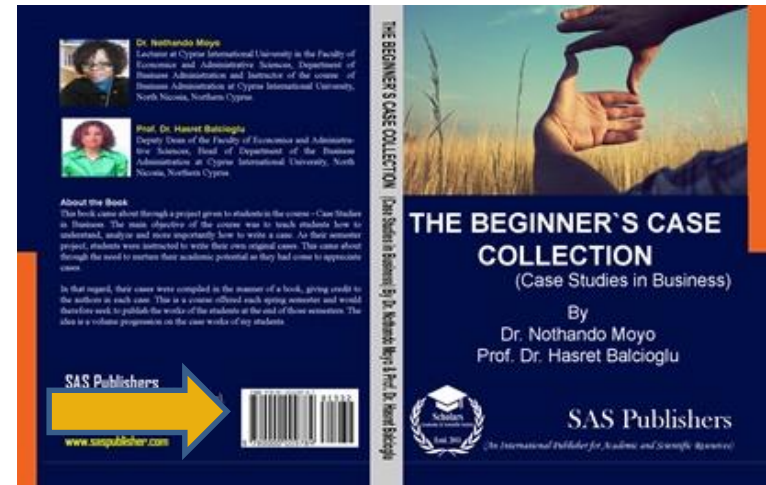
Note: To date, Berthoud, Timnath & Wellington do not require local registration.



Federal Registration

- Federal – Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) through the IRS online. www.irs.gov
- EIN is a unique identifier (i.e. ISBN for books)

Note: *You need an EIN to open a bank account.*



Separate Your Banking

- A separate bank account is key
- Know your banker
- EIN required
- A small deposit
- A business plan is helpful & necessary for a loan



Location



Home Based
Commercial Space
Shared Space



Zoning Check



Colorado Business Resource Book

<https://www.coloradosbdc.org/resources/entrepreneurs/colorado-business-resource-book/>

Available in English & Spanish

Handout - Business Startup Checklist

Business Start-up Check List

PLANNING

- Determine viability of business. Conduct market research and competitive analysis. Contact the business librarian at Poudre River Public Library District or Loveland Library to assist with preliminary research on your target market.
- Create a business plan.
- Research License requirements. Apply for business licenses. Licenses and permits are needed for specific types of businesses. www.SBA.gov has a helpful tool to learn more.
- Check the Colorado Secretary of State site and conduct an internet search to make sure someone else isn't using the name.
- Calculate your costs. Complete cash flow form to determine if your business will generate a profit (what revenue remains after expenses.)

LAUNCHING

- Choose a business name. Register the name on the Secretary of State site; remembering Articles of Incorporation.
- Register domain name—match domain to your business name, or as close as possible.
- Create Social Media sites with the same name or as close as possible. — Facebook LinkedIn Profile LinkedIn Company Page Pinterest Twitter Instagram
- Choose a legal structure (corporation, LLC, sole proprietorship); discuss with your attorney and accountant.
- Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) You'll need it if you plan to open a business bank account. Apply online: www.irs.gov
- Apply for sales tax licenses. Check with local City and State offices on regulations. Don't forget zoning. If you are a home-based business make sure it is allowable with your HOA.
- Research a business location, contact a local commercial realtor. You will need to have an idea of your monthly lease/mortgage payment to complete cash flow.
- Create a marketing plan including your brand, a logo, set up a website, order business cards. Be prepared to promote your business.
- Set up accounting system. Contact your accountant to ask which system would work best for your business.
- Purchase liability insurance before your open your business.
- Open a business checking account, don't mingle personal account with business expenses. Get a merchant account—Square has become popular for mobile businesses.

MANAGING

- Employees—if hiring, make sure you are [paying with labor laws](http://www.laborlaws.com) www.DOL.gov Check www.sba.gov for more info. You will need to pay for Workers' Compensation Insurance and at year end you will need to send out w-2s and 1099 forms to employees and independent contractors. The SBDC has HR specialists who can

Ways Businesses Get Into Trouble

Business Failure Rates Year over Year



Source: Entrepreneur Weekly, Small Business Development Center, Bradley Univ, University of Tennessee Research via Statistic Brain.

Top 6

1. Not understanding your competitive advantage.



2. Not understanding your cash flow process.



3. Not putting enough value on your goods and services.

4. Paying rent/ mortgage on a physical space that's too big.



Top 6 (cont.)

5. Surprising your banker.



6. Lack of job descriptions (unclear or undefined responsibilities for your employees, managers, and co-owners.)



Part 2: The Plan

When To Do It?

Before you start spending money!

*An on-going process, not a one-time event.

CAVEAT: All depends on what you are doing, your goals, and what your needs are.

You need a “road map”.

What's Your Why?

Your WHY will keep you motivated. The plan is for YOU. **It helps you:**

- Focus
- Determine strategy
- Understand financial viability
- Identify customers
- Determine best product, service
- Identify resources needed



*** Necessary for outside funding**

Determine Goals & Needs

Your plan helps manage your expectations:

- Side gig
- Lifestyle business
- Advanced Industry
- Venture track

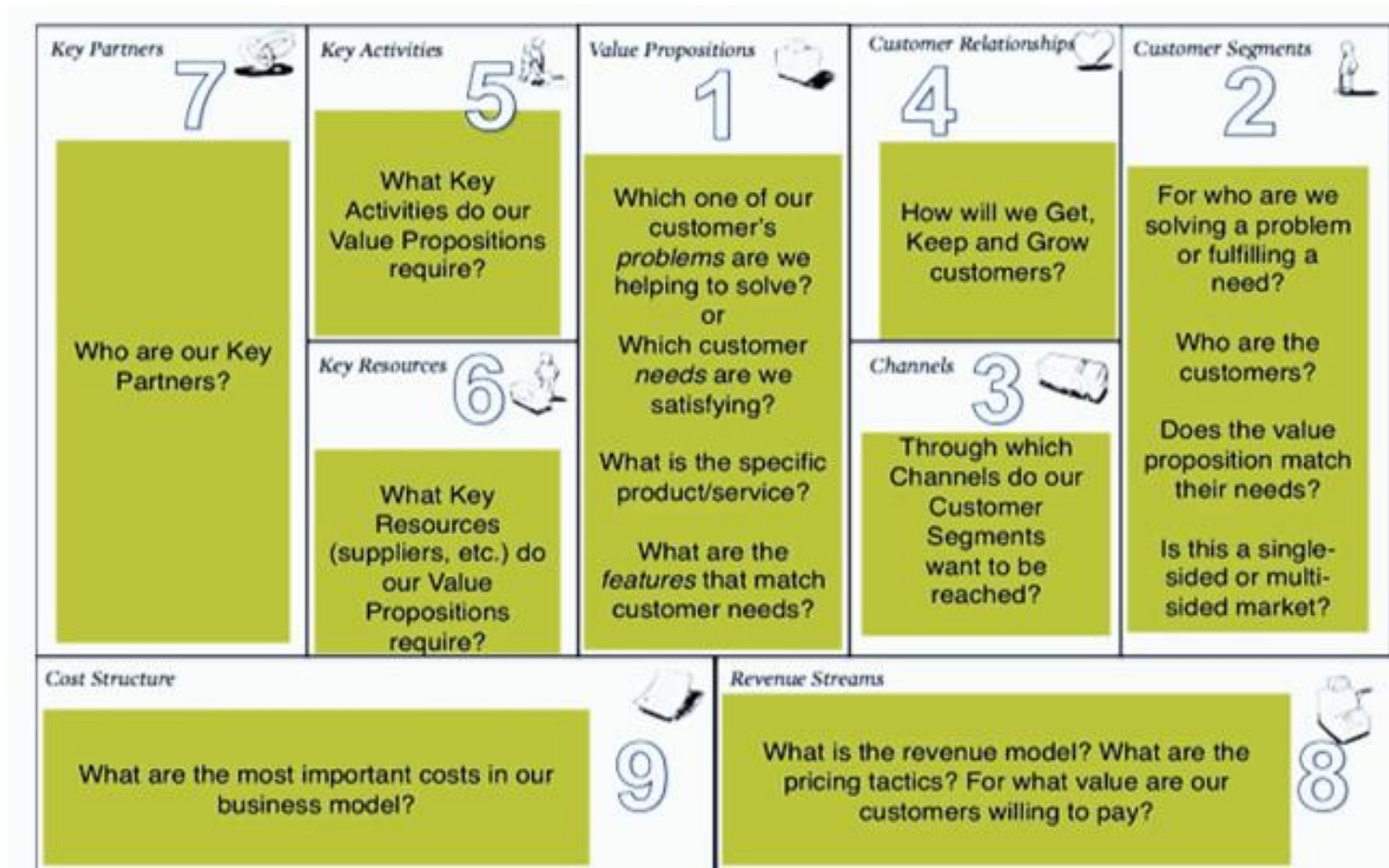
Book recommendation: Start With Why - Simon Sinek

Business Plan Priorities

- 1) Your Concept
- 2) Your Customers
- 3) Business and Economic Models
- 4) Identification & Mitigation of Risks



Handout – Business Model Canvas



Your Concept

Explain your concept in terms of its “value proposition.”

= a concise statement that summarizes how your product or service will be of value to a customer or better solve their problem than other similar offerings.



*The smartest way to get around.
One-tap, predictable, and
cashless.*

Your Customers

FROM YOUR MARKET RESEARCH:

IDENTIFY your target market(s)

INCLUDE what you know about your customers

- Consumers: demographics, geography, lifestyle, shopping habits (***a.k.a. client profiles/personas***)
- Commercial/Wholesale: industry compatibility; government need
(BMC – 2: Customer Segments)



Your Customers (cont.)

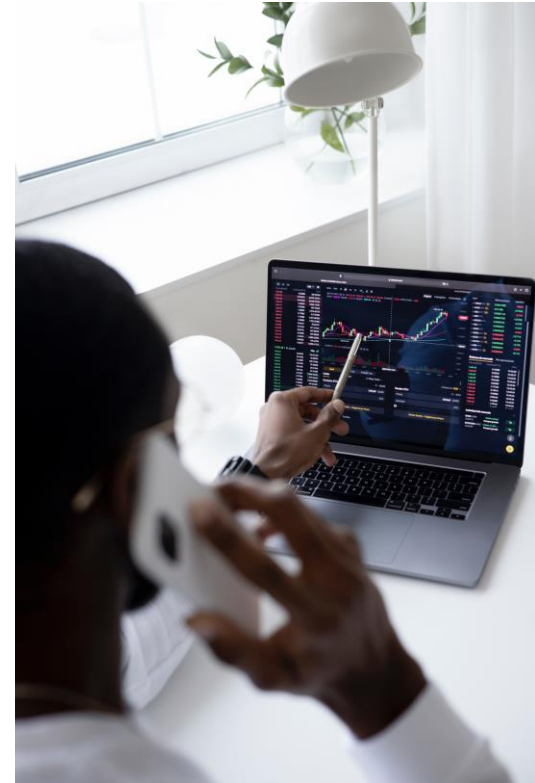
QUANTIFY:

- Current Market: *How many are there?*
- Future Growth: *How many will there be?*
- Economic Reliability of your Markets: *How many have the incentive/ability to give you their money?*

VALIDATE by citing your research*

(BMC – 4: Customer Relationships; BMC – 3: Channels)

**Business librarians can help, as well as [SBDC market research specialists](#). See website.*



Your Business & Economic Models

- What kinds of resources do you need? Physical assets, materials and/or staff?

(BMC – 6: Key Resources)

- What are your fixed and variable costs?

(BMC- 9: Cost Structure)



Your Business & Economic Models

- How many customers do you need to break even?

Will this deliver the profit you want?

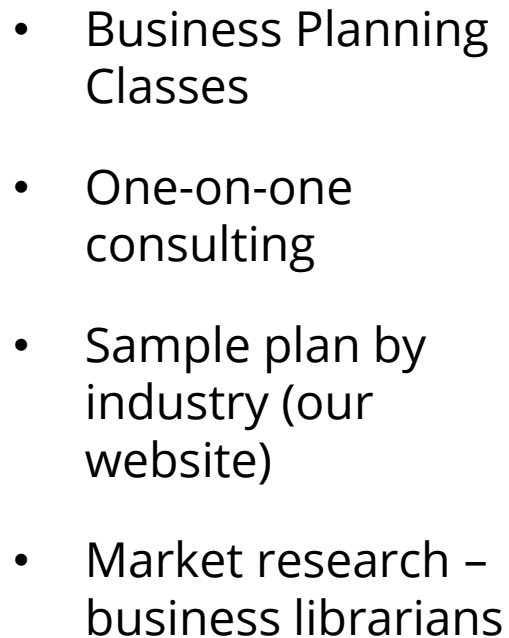


What's in a Formal Business Plan?

1. Your Concept
2. Industry Description
3. Market Analysis
4. Financial Projections
5. Marketing Strategy
6. Operations
7. Management Team
8. Risks & Assumptions
9. Timeline



Business Planning Resources

- 
- Business Planning Classes
 - One-on-one consulting
 - Sample plan by industry (our website)
 - Market research – business librarians

Your Team

- Start thinking about your team
- Advisors/ mentors
- Internal management
- 3rd Party Service Providers (accountant, banker, insurance agent, lawyer)



Different People Focus on Different Things

- Friends and Family
- Lenders
- Private Investors



Part 3: Marketing



Marketing

Where do you start?

What's Marketing?

- How you communicate what you do
- Who, how, when, what, why
- Start with a plan, ask for feedback
- Seek assistance



Marketing Plan

- 1) How you will reach your customers
- 2) Business Model Canvas components
- 3) Digital strategy & tactics
- 4) Non digital tactics



What's in a Formal Marketing Plan?

1. Materials – collateral (newsletter, flyer, brochures, postcards)
2. Website or online platform
3. Branding guidelines
4. Social Media
5. Videos – audience, location
6. Mailing Lists
7. Locations List to post, leave behinds, etc.
8. Professional Associations



Tips

1. **Communicate where your customers consume information**
2. **Social Media – better to choose one and do it well, then to do too many and fail. Build up to other channels**
3. **Remember Call to Action (CTA)** – what do you want people to do
4. **Track & Evaluate** – remember your customers are a great resource for learning and improvement

Part 4: Your Budget



Build a Budget

Identify your costs first.

Know Your Costs

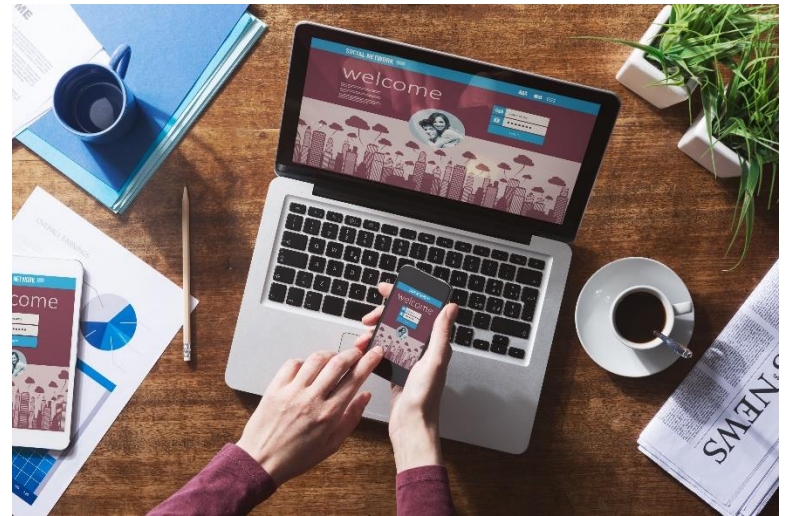
- Bills will be paid before your first sale
- Understand fixed & variable costs
- Better estimate profits
- Conduct break-even analysis



<https://www.sba.gov/breakevenpointcalculator>

Identify Your Startup Expenses

- 1) Different types, different expenses (brick & mortar, online, service)
- 2) Group by category (office supplies, 3rd party service provides, online tools & subscriptions)
- 3) Licenses, permits, legal
- 4) Payroll



Startup Costs Examples

1. Equipment and supplies
2. Communications
3. Utilities
4. License and permits
5. Insurance
6. Accountant
7. Salaries
8. Marketing
9. Online tools – website
10. Office space



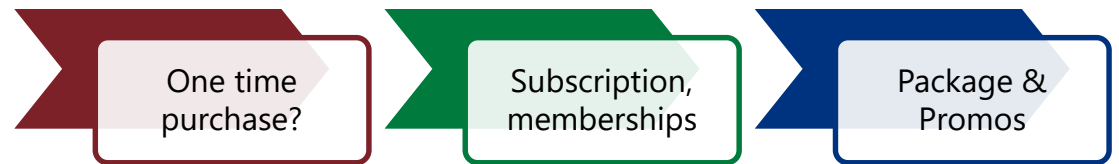
Estimate & Validate

- Make a list
- Estimate
- Research
- Confirm
- Map across 1-2 years
- Determine how to track (inform accountant for taxes)



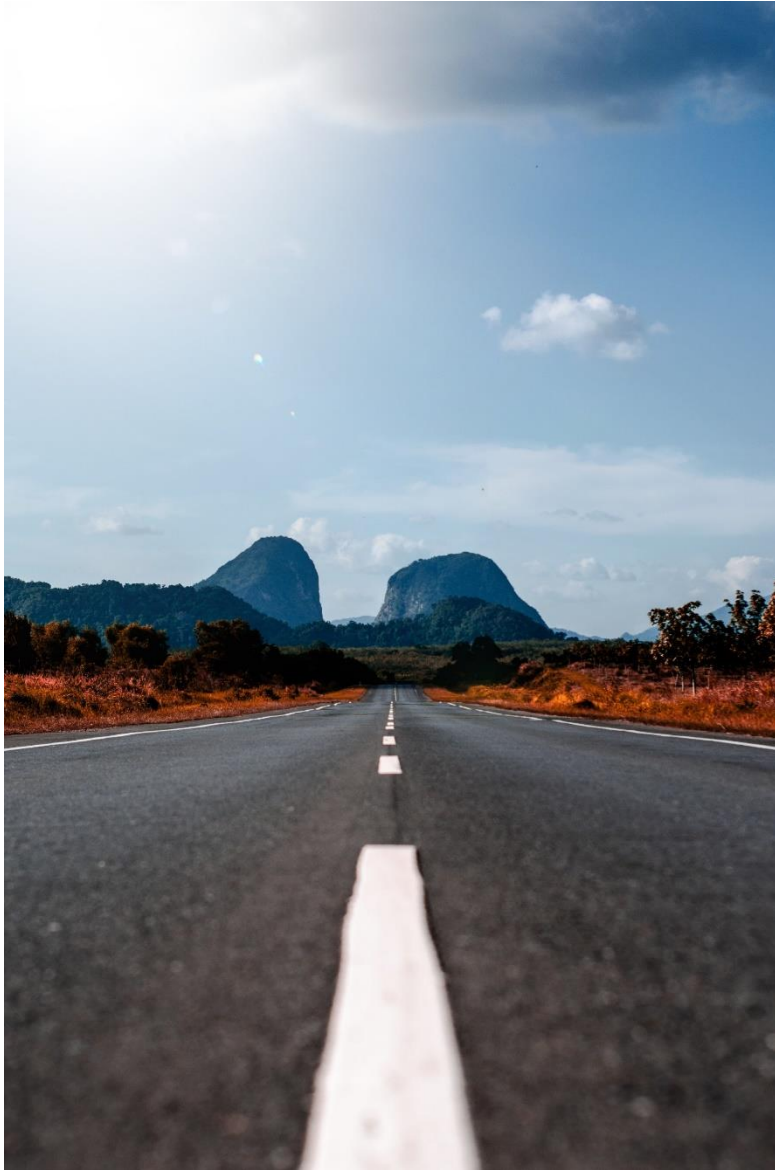
Revenue

How will you make money?



What About Profit?

- Your revenue minus expenses
- Keep a cushion for unexpected
- Set milestones
- Pay yourself



It's a Journey

Enjoy the ride

One Step a Day

1. **Starting a business is a process**
2. **Small steps add up – an email, online research, a phone call**
3. **Ask for help**
4. **Listen to your customers**

How We Can Help



U.S. Small Business Administration



Schedule an appointment with a consultant!

Connection to Resources

- Commercial lenders
- Micro-lenders
- [Larimer County Workforce Center](#)
- Colorado [Office of Economic Development and International Trade](#) (OEDIT)
- [The City of Fort Collins](#)
- [CSU – I4E \(Institute for Entrepreneurs\)](#)
- [The Innosphere](#) (Energy & Life Science High-Tech)
- [The Warehouse](#) (manufacturing)
- **Our website!**



Success Stories

Will you be next?

Wrap Up!

1. **Q & A** – for On Demand, please email us: info@larimersbdc.org
2. **Additional Resources** – Business Planning class or workshop, marketing & financials.
3. **Call to Action** – schedule a 1:1 confidential session with a certified SBDC consultant
4. **Evaluations** – please complete, your input is important to us!

Thank you!

Please tell your business friends to find us at www.larimersbdc.org

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 City of Loveland	 Ent Business Banking	 colorado enterprise fund Lending with Impact	 BBB	Leadership Circle  ANB Bank	 Larimer County Chamber of Commerce	 INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL



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