Research Project

Tutorial Title: Tutorial 01

Lecturer: Angelito Sciberras

Date: 9 February 2026

Today's Session

- Project Question
- Important Information
- Undertsanding the Rubric
- Suggested Planning Order

Project Question

Project Question

Students are required to develop a comprehensive Business and Financial Plan for a hypothetical start-up enterprise offering a product specifically conceived for the Maltese market. The completed plan will serve as the basis for a formal presentation of the proposed venture to a prospective Maltese business angel.

The submission must demonstrate the student's capacity to conduct extensive secondary research; to engage in critical analysis of relevant data; and to present a professionally structured and coherently argued plan that convincingly substantiates the feasibility, long-term sustainability, and growth potential of the proposed start-up.

Project Question

The Business and Financial Plan must also incorporate an evaluation of financial incentives and support schemes available to start-ups through the Maltese Government.

Students are expected to provide robust and well-substantiated evidence of originality, creativity, and innovation in the development of their business concept.

Project Question

The appendices must include:

1. A Business Model Canvas, which constitutes the conceptual foundation upon which the Business and Financial Plan is constructed.

2. A formal email addressed to the business angel, introducing the Business and Financial Plan and indicating its hypothetical attachment.

3. Projected Financial Statements

Approval of the proposed business concept is a mandatory prerequisite prior to commencement of the Business and Financial Plan.

What This Assignment Requires

Original and innovative business concept

- Extensive secondary research
- Critical analysis of relevant data
- Professional structure and coherent argumentation
- Evaluation of Maltese Government incentives
- Formal presentation readiness

Step 1: Developing the Business Concept

Identify a real market gap in Malta

- Define the product clearly
- Explain the value proposition
- Demonstrate originality and innovation
- Ensure concept is realistic and feasible

Market Research & Analysis

Industry analysis (Maltese context)

- Target market definition
- Competitor analysis
- Market demand evidence
- Use credible secondary sources
- Interpret data critically

Business Model Canvas (Appendix Requirement)

Foundation of the entire plan

- Value Proposition
- Customer Segments
- Channels
- Customer Relationships
- Revenue Streams
- Key Activities
- Key Resources
- Key Partners
- Cost Structure

Operational & Strategic Planning

Location and operational setup

- Suppliers and partnerships
- Staffing requirements
- Marketing strategy
- Growth strategy
- Risk assessment and mitigation

Financial Planning Requirements

Start-up costs breakdown

- Sales forecasts (justified)
- Cash flow projections
- Projected Profit & Loss statement
- Break-even analysis
- Clearly explained financial assumptions

Maltese Government Incentives & Support Schemes

Identify relevant start-up schemes

- Evaluate eligibility criteria
- Explain financial or operational benefits
- Analyse impact on feasibility
- Support with official sources

Formal Email to Business Angel (Appendix Requirement)

Professional subject line

- Introduce the business concept
- Summarise key financial highlights
- Indicate plan is attached
- Formal tone and professional structure
- Clearly labelled appendix

Expected Format

- Cover Page
- Contents Page
- Executive Summary
- Company Overview
- Market Analysis
- Product or Service Description
- Marketing and Sales Strategy
- Operational Plan
- Financial Plan
- Risks and Mitigation Strategies
- Conclusion
- Reference List
- Appendices

Appendices Checklist

- Business Model Canvas
- Formal Email to Business Angel
- Projected Financial Statements

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Project Question

You are required to design a fictitious brand and analyse and evaluate how its proposed email marketing and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) strategy would support customer engagement and retention within a digital marketing ecosystem. You should examine intended segmentation practices, message personalisation techniques, and campaign performance measurement, and apply relevant digital marketing and CRM frameworks to propose and justify strategic decisions that enhance campaign effectiveness. Combine brand creation, academic research, theoretical application, and strategic reasoning.

Project Question

You must write a formal business email addressed to a potential stakeholder or client in which you:

- Introduce your fictitious business
- Briefly summarise your Business and Marketing Plan
- Indicate that the full Business and Marketing Plan is attached (hypothetically)
- Use appropriate professional tone, structure, and language

This email should be included as an appendix and clearly labelled.

Project Question

The research project must demonstrate academic rigour through systematic research, , and the use of properly referenced scholarly and industry sources.

The Question

- Design a fictitious brand and evaluate its Email & CRM strategy
- Analyse engagement and retention within a digital ecosystem
- Apply relevant academic frameworks
- Write a formal business email (Appendix)
- Demonstrate academic rigour and referencing

What This Assignment Requires

Brand creation (realistic and coherent)

- Strategic email marketing design
- CRM strategy development
- Segmentation and personalisation planning
- Performance measurement framework
- Application of academic theory

Step 1: Designing the Fictitious Brand

Brand name and industry

- Target audience (clearly defined)
- Value proposition
- Positioning strategy
- Business model (e.g., B2C, subscription, e-commerce)
- Ensure brand supports Email & CRM strategy logically

Step 2: Email Marketing Strategy

Define purpose (lead nurturing, retention, upselling, etc.)

- Campaign types: Welcome, Promotional, Abandoned Cart, Loyalty
- Automation and trigger-based workflows
- Integration within the digital marketing ecosystem
- Strategic reasoning behind choices

Step 3: CRM Strategy

Explain role of CRM in data management

- Customer lifecycle tracking
- Integration with email campaigns
- Support retention and loyalty development
- Connection to Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)

Segmentation Strategies

Demographic segmentation

- Behavioural segmentation
- Psychographic segmentation
- RFM (Recency, Frequency, Monetary)
- Lifecycle segmentation
- Justify why chosen model fits your brand

Personalisation Techniques

Dynamic content

- Name-based personalisation
- Behaviour-triggered recommendations
- AI-driven recommendations (if justified)
- Link personalisation to engagement and retention

Campaign Performance Measurement

Email KPIs: Open rate, CTR, Conversion rate

- Bounce rate and Unsubscribe rate
- CRM Metrics: Retention rate, Repeat purchase rate
- Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)
- Churn rate
- Align KPIs with strategic objectives

Recommended Project Structure

- Cover Page
- Contents Page
- Introduction and Brand Overview
- Business & Marketing Plan Summary
- Literature Review (Email & CRM Theory)
- Strategy Design and Justification
- Segmentation & Personalisation
- Performance Measurement Framework
- Conclusion and References
- Appendix: Formal Business Email

Formal Business Email Requirements

Address a potential stakeholder/client

- Introduce the fictitious business
- Summarise Business & Marketing Plan
- Indicate full plan is attached
- Maintain professional tone and structure
- Clearly label as Appendix

Presentation

In addition to the written project, you are required to prepare and deliver a 10-minute presentation addressing the same research question.

Date: 2 Mkarch 2025 at 17:30hrs

Presentation

Objectives of the Presentation:

- Share your approach to researching and preparing the project.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the topic and progress so far.
- Receive feedback on your direction and methodology to ensure you're on track.

Presentation

Presentation Tips:

- Outline the industries chosen and your rationale for selection.
- Summarise key findings and insights from your analysis.
- Highlight specific examples or campaigns to support your points.
- Use visual aids like slides, charts, or graphs to enhance clarity.
- Conclude with reflections on challenges faced or areas requiring further exploration

Important Information

Proposal Deadline

Friday, 13 February, 2026 at noon.

Maximum 3 proposals by not later than Friday 20 February 2026.

Proposal

Company Name:

Service Name:

Service Description: 250 words

How did you come up with the service: 250 words

Proposal

Company Name:

Brand Name:

Brand Description: 250 words

Why do you think that this company/brand are fit for your digital marketing strategy: 250 words

Expected Format

- Your assignment document should be structured using appropriate headings and subheadings.
- Use a professional and consistent formatting style throughout the document.
  - Text - Times New Roman, Size 12, 1.5 line spacing
- Ensure proper citation and referencing of any external sources used in your research - **Harvard Style** must be used.

Expected Format

- The main body of your assignment should be approximately **7,000 words**, excluding appendices.

- **Appendices** can include supporting documents such as market research data, financial statements, and any additional materials that support your plan.

Submission Deadline

Thursday, 2 April, 2026 at 23:59 hrs.

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Understanding the Rubric

Assessment

	5 marks	4 marks	3 marks	2 marks	1 mark	0 marks
Cover Page	Cover page is exceptionally well-designed, visually striking, professional, and includes all required information.	Cover page is visually appealing, professional, and includes all required information.	Cover page is well-designed and includes necessary information.	Cover page is included but lacks creativity or professionalism.	Cover page is incomplete or lacks essential information.	No cover page is included
Appearance	The document has outstanding formatting, is visually appealing, and demonstrates a high level of professionalism and attention to detail.	The document is well-formatted, visually appealing, and easy to read with appropriate use of headings, subheadings, and formatting elements.	The document has consistent formatting, is well-structured, and visually pleasing.	The document has consistent formatting, is well-structured, and visually pleasing.	The document has inconsistent formatting, and some sections may be challenging to read.	The document has a poor visual appearance, lacks formatting, and is difficult to read.
Report Format	The report has an exceptional structure, is exceptionally well-organised, and effectively presents information with clear, concise, and coherent sections, headings, and subheadings.	The report has a well-defined structure, is logically organised, and effectively presents information with clear sections, headings, and subheadings.	The report follows a clear structure and effectively presents information with appropriate use of sections, headings, and subheadings.	The report follows a basic structure, but some sections may lack coherence or clarity.	The report has some structural issues and may have inconsistent section headings or organisation.	The report lacks a clear structure, sections are disorganised, and content is poorly presented.
Harvard Referencing Style	Exceptional use of Harvard referencing style, demonstrating precise and consistent referencing throughout the document.	Accurate and consistent use of Harvard referencing style throughout the document with few or no errors or inconsistencies.	Consistent use of Harvard referencing style with only minor errors or inconsistencies.	Basic use of Harvard referencing style, but minor errors or inconsistencies may be present.	Some attempt at using Harvard referencing style, but significant errors or inconsistencies are present.	No or very limited use of Harvard referencing style.
Word Count (7,000 words)	The conclusion is exceptionally well-crafted, leaves a lasting impact, and effectively summarises all the key points of the business plan.	The conclusion effectively summarises all the key points of the business plan in a strong and convincing manner.	Word count falls within an acceptable range around the specified limit (+/- 100 words).	Word count deviates from the specified limit by a moderate margin.	Word count deviates from the specified limit by a large margin.	Word count significantly exceeds or falls short of the specified limit.

	26 to 30 marks	21 to 25 marks	16 to 20 marks	11 to 15 marks	5 to 10 marks	0 marks
Creativity and Innovation	The product or service demonstrates exceptional creativity and innovation, with highly original and groundbreaking elements.	The product or service exhibits a high level of creativity and innovation, showcasing many unique and original elements.	The product or service displays moderate creativity and innovation, incorporating several unique or original elements.	The product or service shows some degree of creativity and innovation, with a few unique or original elements.	The product or service demonstrates minimal creativity and innovation, with limited unique or original elements.	The product or service lacks creativity and innovation, showing no unique or original elements.

	5 marks	4 marks	3 marks	2 marks	1 mark	0 marks
Executive Summary	The executive summary is exceptionally well-written, engaging, and successfully captures the essence of the business plan, leaving a lasting impression.	The executive summary is well-written, concise, and effectively highlights the key points of the business plan.	The executive summary effectively summarises all the essential elements of the business plan, providing a clear and concise overview.	The executive summary provides a clear and concise overview of the business plan but may lack some key details.	The executive summary is somewhat clear but lacks conciseness and fails to effectively highlight key points.	The executive summary is missing or does not provide a clear and concise overview of the business plan.
Company Overview	The company overview is exceptionally well-written, provides a compelling description of the company, and effectively conveys its mission, vision, and key details.	The company overview provides a comprehensive and well-defined description of the company, its mission, vision, and key details.	The company overview provides a detailed description of the company, including its mission, vision, and key details.	The company overview provides some details about the company, including its mission, vision, and key details.	The company overview is somewhat descriptive but lacks clarity and may not provide a comprehensive understanding of the company.	The company overview is missing or lacks a description of the company's mission, vision, and key details.
Market Analysis	The market analysis is exceptionally well-researched, provides deep insights into the target market, industry trends, and competition, and demonstrates a thorough analysis.	The market analysis provides a comprehensive and insightful understanding of the target market, industry trends, and competition.	The market analysis demonstrates a good understanding of the target market, industry trends, and competition but may lack some critical insights.	The market analysis provides some insights into the target market, industry trends, and competition but lacks depth and critical analysis	The market analysis is somewhat superficial and lacks in-depth research or fails to identify important industry trends and competitors.	The market analysis is missing or lacks a thorough understanding of the target market, industry trends, and competition.
Product or Service Description	The product or service description is exceptionally well-written, provides a captivating and detailed explanation of the product/service, and effectively highlights its unique features and benefits.	The product or service description is comprehensive, clearly explains the product/service, and effectively highlights its unique features and benefits.	The product or service description provides a clear explanation of the product/service and highlights some unique features and benefits.	The product or service description provides some explanation of the product/service and highlights a few unique features and benefits.	The product or service description is somewhat unclear or lacks detailed information about its unique features and benefits.	The product or service description is missing or lacks a clear explanation of the product/service and its unique features.
Marketing and Sales Strategy	The marketing and sales strategy is exceptionally well-developed, creative, and demonstrates a comprehensive and innovative plan for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention.	The marketing and sales strategy is comprehensive, innovative, and demonstrates a clear plan for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention.	The marketing and sales strategy includes a well-defined plan for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention, but may have some gaps or lacks innovation.	The marketing and sales strategy provides some basic ideas for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention but lacks depth and innovation.	The marketing and sales strategy is somewhat vague or lacks a comprehensive plan for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention.	The marketing and sales strategy is missing or lacks a well-defined plan for target market identification, customer acquisition, and retention.
Operational Plan	The operational plan is exceptionally well-documented, demonstrates a sophisticated and efficient approach to the company's operations, and anticipates potential challenges.	The operational plan is comprehensive, detailed, and demonstrates a well-organised and efficient approach to the company's operations.	The operational plan provides a detailed outline of the company's operations, production, supply chain, facilities, and technology, but may have some minor gaps or lacks efficiency.	The operational plan provides some basic information about the company's operations, production, supply chain, facilities, or technology but lacks depth and organisation.	The operational plan is somewhat incomplete or lacks detailed information about the company's operations, production, supply chain, facilities, or technology.	The operational plan is missing or lacks a detailed outline of the company's operations, production, supply chain, facilities, or technology.
Financial Plan	The financial plan is exceptionally well-prepared, provides a comprehensive and realistic financial outlook, and demonstrates a deep understanding of financial projections and analysis.	The financial plan provides comprehensive and well-supported financial projections, including income statement, cash flow statement, balance sheet, and key financial ratios, with in-depth analysis and a realistic financial outlook.	The financial plan includes comprehensive financial projections, supported by reliable data and assumptions, but may have some minor inconsistencies or lacks in-depth analysis.	The financial plan includes some financial projections, but they lack detail, or the data and assumptions are not thoroughly explained	The financial plan is somewhat incomplete or lacks detailed financial projections, or the projections are not supported by reliable data or assumptions.	The financial plan is missing or lacks comprehensive financial projections, including income statement, cash flow statement, balance sheet, and key financial ratios.
Risks and Mitigation Strategies	The risks and mitigation strategies section is exceptionally well-written, demonstrates a deep understanding of potential risks, and provides comprehensive and innovative mitigation	The risks and mitigation strategies section comprehensively identifies potential risks and provides well-developed and realistic mitigation strategies.	The risks and mitigation strategies section identifies potential risks and provides some mitigation strategies, but may have some gaps or lacks a comprehensive approach.	The risks and mitigation strategies section identifies some potential risks but lacks detail or fails to provide robust mitigation strategies.	The risks and mitigation strategies section is somewhat incomplete or lacks a comprehensive identification of potential risks and corresponding mitigation strategies.	The risks and mitigation strategies section is missing or lacks identification of potential risks and corresponding mitigation strategies.
Conclusion	The conclusion is exceptionally well-crafted, leaves a lasting impact, and effectively summarises all the key points of the business plan.	The conclusion effectively summarises all the key points of the business plan in a strong and convincing manner.	The conclusion provides a satisfactory summary of the key points of the business plan, but may lack some clarity or impact.	The conclusion provides a brief summary of the key points of the business plan but lacks clarity or impact.	The conclusion is somewhat weak or fails to effectively summarise the key points of the business plan.	The conclusion is missing or lacks a strong and convincing summary of the key points of the business plan.

Cover Page

Cover page is exceptionally well-designed, visually striking, professional, and includes all required information.

Cover Page

- Visual Appeal
- Clean and Organised Layout
- Professional Design Elements
- Relevant Information
- Branding
- Attention to Detail

Appearance

The document has outstanding formatting, is visually appealing, and demonstrates a high level of professionalism and attention to detail.

Appearance

- Clear and Consistent Formatting
- Professional Typography
- Visual Elements
- Consistent Styling
- Attention to Detail
- Consistent and Clear Structure
- Appropriate Use of Colours and Graphics

Report Format

The document has outstanding formatting, is visually appealing, and demonstrates a high level of professionalism and attention to detail.

Report Format

- Clear and Logical Sections
- Well-Defined Headings and Subheadings
- Effective Use of Paragraphs and Bulleted Lists
- Logical Flow and Transitions
- Coherent and Cohesive Writing
- Appropriate Use of Visuals
- Effective Use of Appendices
- Easy-to-Navigate Table of Contents

Referencing

The document has outstanding formatting, is visually appealing, and demonstrates a high level of professionalism and attention to detail.

Referencing

- Correct In-Text Citations
- Accurate Reference List
- Consistent Formatting
- Proper Attribution
- Precise Source Identification

Referencing

- Consistent and Accurate Citation Style
- Proper Handling of Multiple Authors
- Correct Referencing of Different Source Types
- Attention to Detail
- Cross-Verification

Word Count

Word count is exactly on target, meeting the specified limit of 7,000 words. (+/- 5%)

Word Count

- Meeting Specified Limit
- Tolerance of +/- 5%
- Exclusion of Cover Page
- Exclusion of In-text Citations
- Exclusion of Contents Page
- Exclusion of Appendices
- Focus on Business and Financial Plan Text
- Importance of Word Limit Compliance
- Proofreading and Editing

Word Count

- Executive Summary: 5% - 10% (350 - 700 words)
- Company Overview: 5% - 10% (350 - 700 words)
- Market Analysis: 15% - 20% (1,050 - 1,400 words)
- Product or Service Description: 10% - 15% (700 - 1,050 words)
- Marketing and Sales Strategy: 10% - 15% (700 - 1,050 words)

Word Count

- Operational Plan: 10% - 15% (700 - 1,050 words)
- Financial Plan: 15% - 20% (1,050 - 1,400 words)
- Risks and Mitigation Strategies: 10% - 15% (700 - 1,050 words)
- Conclusion: 5% - 10% (350 - 700 words)

Creativity and Innovation

The product or service demonstrates exceptional creativity and innovation, with highly original and groundbreaking elements.

Creativity and Innovation

- Unique Concept
- Creative Problem-Solving
- Unconventional Features
- Cutting-Edge Technology
- Disruptive Innovation
- Novel Design and Aesthetics
- Forward-Thinking Features
- Breakthrough Performance

Further Assessments

- Executive Summary
- Company Overview
- Market Analysis
- Product or Service Description
- Marketing and Sales Strategy
- Operational Plan
- Financial Plan
- Risks and Mitigation Strategies
- Conclusion

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Suggested Planning Order

Get it Approved

The proposed concept must be approved prior to commencing work on the Business and Financial Plan.

Complete the provided research project proposal form and submit it via email to info@advisory21.com.mt by no later this **Friday 26 September at noon**

Get it Approved

Company Name:	
Product/Service Name:	
Product/Service Description: (250 words)	

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Get it Approved

How did you come up with the product/service? (250 words)	

Suggested Planning Order

- Product or Service Description
- Market Analysis
- Operational Plan
- Marketing and Sales Strategy
- Financial Plan
- Risks and Mitigation Strategies
- Company Overview
- Conclusion
- Executive Summary

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Product or Service Description

- Thorough description of the product or service
- Features
- Benefits
- Unique selling points
- Any intellectual property or technological advantages
- Value proposition of your offering

Creativity and Innovation

Product or Service Description

- Research Project Proposal Form
  - In course resource centre
  - To be received by email

- Company Name
- Product/Service Name
- Product/Service Description
- How did you come up with the product/service?

Submit: Friday 4 August

Market Analysis

- Analyse the target market
- Industry trends
- Customer segments
- Competition
- Relevant Market Research

Appendices

Operational Plan

- Operational processes
- Facilities
- Equipment
- Technology (Keep data privacy in mind)
- Human Resources

Business Model Canvas

Marketing and Sales Strategy

- Target audience,
- Pricing strategy
- Distribution channels
- Promotional activities
- Sales forecasts

Business Model Canvas

Financial Plan

- Income statements
- Balance sheets
- Funding requirements
- Financial assumptions
- Other funding opportunities
- 5 year plan

Appendices

Risks and Mitigation Strategies

- Identify potential risks
  - Market volatility
  - Competition
  - Regulatory changes
  - Operational challenges
- Propose strategies to mitigate or manage them effectively.

Appendices

Company Overview

- Mission
- Vision
- History
- Legal structure
- Ownership
- Key personnel

Conclusion

- Reiterate the business's potential for success
- Leave the reader with a positive and confident impression.

Executive Summary

- Reader can quickly grasp the main points and objectives of the business

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Lecturer: Angelito Sciberras

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