



Business planning workshop

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Workshop objectives

- Review outcomes from the VIP self-assessment
- Understand the principles of business planning
- Do some practical work to help prioritise action for the future

Workshop programme

- Introduction
- VIP self-assessment feedback: Q & A
- VIC business planning: a best practice framework
- Developing a vision
- SWOT analysis and action planning
- Identifying priorities and close

Session 1

NETWORK STANDARDS & VIP SELF-ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Staffing & branding

- Over 140 staff, mainly p/t
- All wear a staff uniform
- < 50% have new VIC logo/branding in place
- Many VICs have plans, subject to budget

Services provided

- **Strengths:**
 - N Ireland info/map
 - Nearly all have direct phone line (or tourism option 1)
- **Weaknesses:**
 - Foreign languages (only 10 have)
 - Arts/crafts provision (16)
- Engagement with B&BI: early stages (2 out of 3)

Out of hours provision

- **Strengths:**
 - Display opening hours, website, accommodation details
- **Weaknesses:**
 - Emergency/other VIP contact details
- Most offer IT: apps, kiosks, QR codes, websites

Communications

- **Strengths:**
 - “What’s on” – very positive response
 - 75% send out weekly in summer
 - Database: 6,000 recipients (est)
- **Weaknesses:**
 - Few monitor opening rates
 - <50% have a communications plan
 - 2 out of 3 have an annual trade forum

Administration

- **Strengths:**
 - VIC enquiry statistics
 - Nearly all update the DNI site & most are happy with it
- **Weaknesses:**
 - Most common complaints: speed, crashes, duplication
 - More training needed

VIP progress

■ Strengths:

- Wide range of local info points & big “wish list” for future
- Literature distribution to the trade
- Attending events/shows
- Equipping the trade: bedroom packs, fams, training etc
- New technology: WiFi, apps, kiosks etc
- Community engagement
- Familiarisation trips (over 2/3 had organised)

VIP progress

- **Weaknesses:**
 - Only 9 VICs have their own local visitor information plan
 - Social media – only 50% are engaged
 - Collecting customer data and CRM

How can NITB help you deliver VIP?

- Support requested:
 - Training (52%)
 - Guidance: branding, VIP template, IT (16%)
 - Best practice/research/benchmarking (16%)
- Top training requests:
 - Fams
 - Social media
 - Retail display/merchandising
 - Mystery shopper
 - Business planning

What are your priorities for action?

- Outreach
- Social media
- Business planning/VIP/sustainability planning
- Local service development
- Community engagement
- Trade engagement
- Re-branding
- Marketing & promotion
- Training
- Quality/customer satisfaction

Any questions?

Session 2

BUSINESS PLANNING – A BEST PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

What makes an effective business plan?

Business Planning

Business planning is about defining your VIC's objectives and the best way of achieving them.



The value of business planning

Why we need to do it and what the business gurus say about best practice.



The value of business planning

- **Six important ways it helps you run your VIC:**
 - Strategic direction
 - Performance management
 - Performance measurement
 - Co-ordination and control
 - Communication
 - Empowerment

Some advice before you start

- Agree the purpose of the plan and who it is for
- Consider who you should involve in the process
- What evidence do you need to gather?
- How can you improve the presentation?

Some tips on business planning

- Be flexible
- Be action-oriented
- Use it to inform training plans
- Beware of finance
- Take care when using a consultant

Case Study 1: The East Midlands TIC Business Planning Template

- **8 main sections:**
 - Executive summary
 - Introduction
 - Strategic context
 - Business overview
 - SWOT analysis
 - Action plan
 - Resources
 - Appendices

The East Midlands TIC Business Planning Template

Executive Summary



Introduction: define your purpose



Strategic context

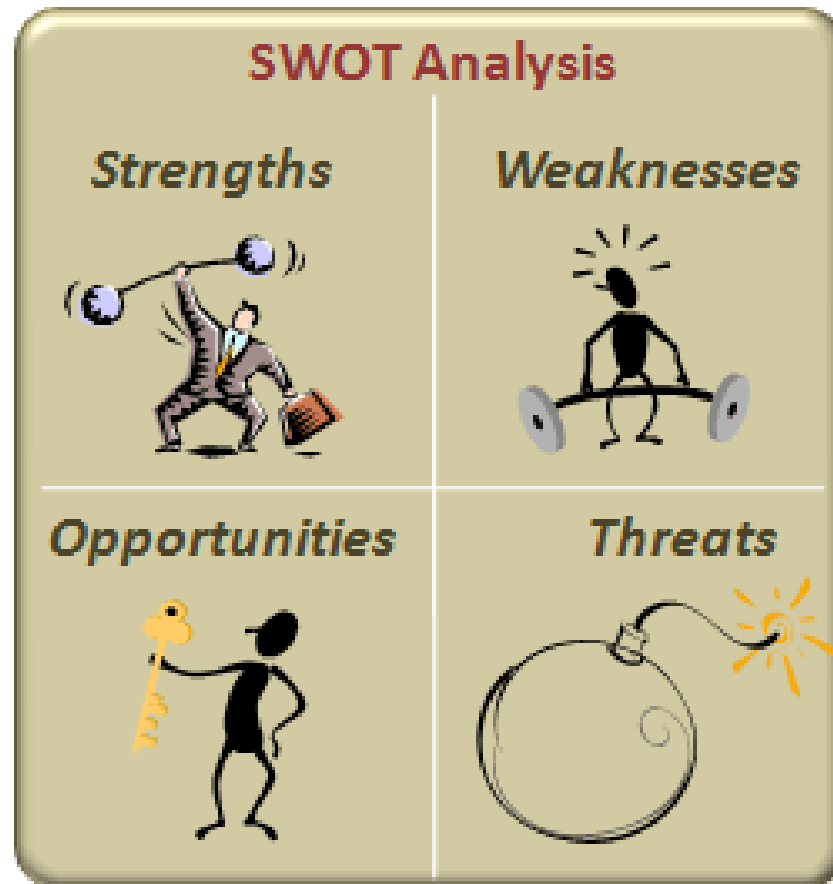


Business overview: Where are we now?

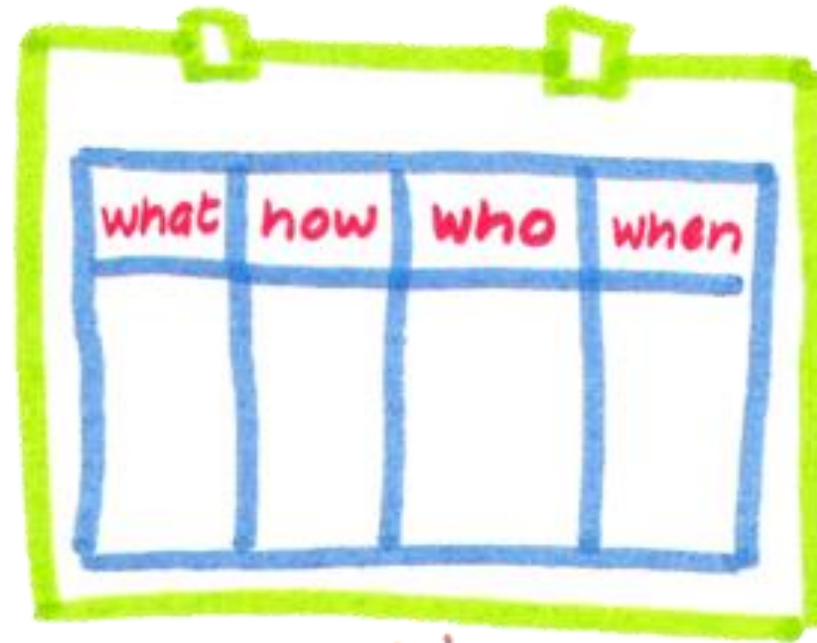
“So, what do you do?”

“Erm...”

SWOT analysis



Action planning

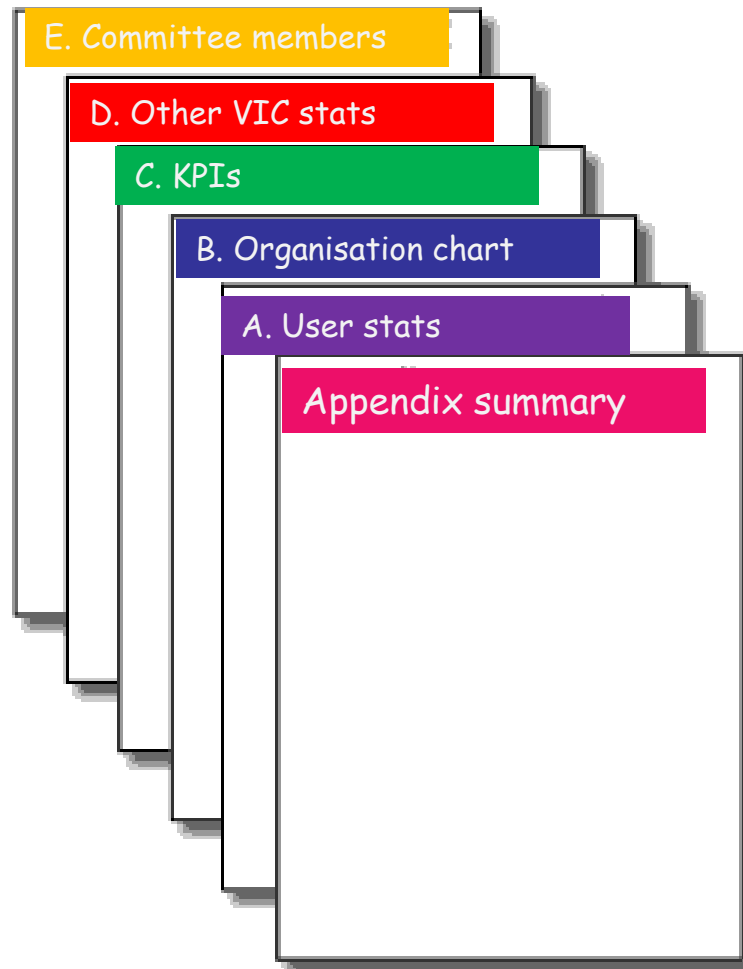


action
plan

Resources



Appendices



Case Study 2: Cumbria Tourism

- **3 key sections:**
 - **Where are we now?**
 - SWOT
 - **Where do we want to be?**
 - Objectives and targets
 - **How do we get there?**
 - Action plan, responsibilities, timetable and resources

Any questions?



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Group exercise 2: Developing a vision

Imagine a press release 5 years from now
proclaiming the outstanding success of your VIC.

What would it say?

Vision and Strategic Aims



Example: Arts Council England

Vision:

To put the arts at the heart of national life and people at the heart of the arts.

Strategic aims:

- For everyone in the country to develop a rich and varied artistic and creative life
- Ensure that more high quality work reaches a wider range of people – engaging them as both audience and participants
- Support artists and arts organisations to take creative risks and follow new opportunities

Example: Virgin Atlantic

Vision:

Safety, security and consistent delivery of the basics are the foundation of everything we do. The success of our strategy requires us to build on these foundations by focusing on the business and leisure markets and driving efficiency and effectiveness.

Strategic aims:

To grow a profitable airline...
Where people love to fly...
And where people love to work.

Example: NI Visitor Information Plan

Vision:

By 2020...Northern Ireland has adopted a philosophy of taking information to the visitor, rather than expecting the visitor to come to a central point for information...

Strategic aims: based around

People

Places

Promotions

Partnerships

SWOT and action planning

Identifying priorities

Syndicate groups: Step 1

- **What are the top 5 things that need to be cracked to build on the strengths and tackle the weaknesses?**
 - Put 5 statements on the flip chart
 - Express each one as an action (make sure it has a verb in it!)
 - Make sure each one is different
 - Give each one a reference letter (A-E)

Syndicate groups: Step 2

- **Score each of the 5 actions in turn**
 - From 1 to 10 in terms of the **ease of doing it**
 - 1 = Hard, 10 = Easy
 - **Ease** covers cost, staff, skills, time, politics (internal factors)
 - From 1 to 10 in terms of **impact it would make**
 - 1 = Low impact, 10 = High impact
 - **Impact** = visitor volume, value, satisfaction, perception (external factors)

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Easy
	Hard									

E A S E



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Business planning workshop

Thank you for coming today!