

Mission Driven Business Planning for SEE NGO Electronic Networks

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with contributions from Gabor Heves and Pavel Antonov

Welcome

This Mission Driven Business Planning workshop is a part of the Balkan Bytes programme on Environmental NGOs and Electronic Networking in South East Europe.

The workshop is funded by the Italian Ministry of Environment and organised by Umana Dimora and the Regional Environmental Centre. The programme is developed and facilitated by Mark Surman of Commons Communication – a consultancy specialised in support to electronic networking by non-profit organisations – and Jan Haverkamp of the ZHABA facilitators collective.

The workshop is not in the form of traditional speakers and discussions, nor in the form of conventional training. The format needs input from everybody in the room at all times. It draws on all our experiences and tries to create synergetic steps forward for all involved.

During this workshop, we will work on the business plans for electronic networks from the Balkan region, with input from colleagues from Central and Eastern Europe and Italy. Focus will be on the work of the present electronic networks from the Balkan region: OKE (Albania), EkoMrezaBiH (Bosnia and Herzegovina), BlueLink (Bulgaria), ZaMIR (Croatia), Sharri.Net (Kosov@), Eko.Net (Macedonia) and Volvox (Serbia and Montenegro).

Learning objectives

Overarching:

- Develop a business plan for each NGO on-line network

As a part of this:

1. Understand market conditions using tools such as segmentation, needs analysis and competitive analysis.
2. Define products and services that respond to market needs and that contribute to organizational sustainability.
3. Prepare financial framework for an organization (budget) and product line (break even analysis).
4. Identify and articulate a 'unique selling proposition' that differentiates your organization from others.
5. Understand and manage organizational and product / strengths, weaknesses and risks.
6. Develop marketing and outreach plans.

Day One - Wednesday 25 February

09:00 – Introduction

- Welcome
- Technical remarks
- Facilitation

09:20 – Introduction into the programme

- Expectations
- Goals

10:00 – Mission and vision of the networks

Business plan section written: Vision

11:00 Coffee break

11:20 – Mission and vision of the networks - *continued*

12:30 – Welcome speech by the Italian funders

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – Introduction - *continued*

14:15 – Business Plan – why that???

14:55 – Doing business is responding to needs

- Mark & Jan's Lesson
- Planning Framework

15:15 – Needs and market – a short recapitulation

16:15 Break

16:30 – Needs and market - *continued*

Business plan sections written: Market profile / market needs / competitive analysis / unique selling points

18:05 – End day one

- Outlook to programme for tomorrow
- Remaining technical remarks

Day Two - Thursday 26 February

09:00 – Introduction of the day

09:10 – From Needs to Market Niche

Business plan sections written: Product and service description / risk analysis and success factors

10:45 BREAK and time to write flips into business plan

11:15 – From Needs to Market Niche - *continued*

13:00 Lunch

14:00 - From Needs to Market Niche - *continued*

15:55 Break

16:15 From Needs to Market Niche - *continued*

Business plan sections written: Business strategy – delivery approach / financial models / break even analysis ... also feeds into financial overview

17:20 – Sources of financing

18:00 – End of Day 2

- Look back
- Outlook at programme tomorrow
- Technical remarks

Day Three - Friday 27 February

09:00 – Introduction of the day

09:25 – The Full Picture – up to financial sustainability

Business plan section written: Summary of: business strategy, financial overview, risk / threat analysis

11:00 BREAK

11:20 – Marketing – tool for financial sustainability

13:00 Lunch

14:00 – Marketing – tool for financial sustainability - *continued*

Business plan section written: Marketing plan

16:00 Break

16:20 – Business Plans

17:45 – End day 3

- Look back
- Outlook at programme tomorrow
- Technical remarks

People can continue to work at written plan in the evening

Day Four - Saturday 28 February

09:00 – Presentation business plans

11:00 Break

11:15 – Next steps

11:50 – Evaluation of the workshop

12:20 – End of the workshop

About the facilitation team ...

Jan Haverkamp – ZHABA Facilitators Collective

Jan Haverkamp is Jan is co-founder of the ZHABA facilitators collective and facilitates regularly in workshops, seminars, large meetings and support activities, mainly in the civil society sector (NGOs). He is also member of the International Association of Facilitators. He published numerous articles and 8 books in the area of organisation and management for Central and East European NGOs, amongst which the first book on the issue published in the then still German Democratic Republic - East Germany ("Handbuch Planmäßige Umweltarbeit", Lutherstadt Wittenberg 1988), and the widely spread "Making it Work!", "Money for Earth!", "Organisation Models" and "STRATEGY!". All were published in the English or German language with translations into Slovak, Romanian, Russian and/or other Central and Eastern European languages.

In 1996 he emigrated to the Czech Republic, where he worked as project co-ordinator for the development of strategic use of new information and communication technologies for Econnect and the Association for Progressive Communication (APC). In 1999 and 2000 he was international co-ordinator of the International Energy Brigades based at Hnutí DUHA (Friends of the Earth Czech Republic). In 2000 and 2001 Jan was project co-ordinator on nuclear issues for Greenpeace in the Czech Republic and Central Europe. From 2001 to 2003 he was Campaign Director for Greenpeace in the Czech Republic.

ZHABA (www.zhaba.cz) is a collective of facilitators that co-operates with NGOs, to tackle barriers that hinder them in working for a change. ZHABA translates as FROG: Facilitators Reaching Out to Grassroots. ZHABA is an affiliate of the International Association of Facilitators (www.iaf-world-org).



Mark Surman – The Commons Group

Spanning everything from television to print to the Internet, Mark Surman has been developing leading edge community-based media projects for almost 15 years. Mark's current role is as the president of Commons Group, Inc. He has also served as the Director of Content and Community at Web Networks and as a Business and Technology Analyst for the Government of Ontario's Volunteer @ction Online grants program.

Mark has done extensive work developing business plans and sustainability strategies for online projects in civil society. He also managed or evaluated over 150 Internet projects for clients like the Canadian Child Care Federation, Community Information Toronto, the Association for Progressive Communications, and the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Mark serves on the boards of Rabble.ca, OneWorld Canada and WildCanada.net. His written work includes "Commonspace: Beyond Virtual Community" on Financial Times Press, a recent guidebook called 'Choosing Open Source' and a collection of articles and tools on mission driven business planning for electronic social change networks.

The Commons Group is a research and strategy firm providing collaboration and business planning and support to grantmakers, networks and enterprising non-profits. A large portion of Commons' work focuses on the area of 'social technology' – software, skills and services that support the work of civil society organizations. Based in Toronto, the organization has five staff as well as a large number of associate consultants.

Related documents and resources

A collection of documents has been compiled on for the participants of the SEE Mission Driven Business Planning Workshop. These documents are meant to be a resource for participants both during and after the workshop. They include:

- **Commons Simple Business Planning Template:** The aim of our workshop is to produce a business plan for each participating network. This template will be used as the basis of the business plans that we write. It includes all of the basic sections of a business plan as well as annotations that explain the type of information that should be included.
- **APC Mission Driven Business Planning Toolkit:** Produced by the Commons Group for APC, this is a collection of business planning tools for NGO electronic networks. It includes general material about the kinds of services that these networks might offer as well as tools for strategic planning and business management. *For reference only.*
- **Balancing Mission and Money:** An article on the business issues facing NGO electronic networks. The article is based on case studies from APC member networks around the world. Individual case studies are also provided.

While most of these materials are also available online, we have compiled them all onto a single CD so that they are easy to use and access during the workshop.