

A Work Project, presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Master Degree in
Management from the NOVA – School of Business and Economics



CONNECT TO SUCCESS CONSULTING PROGRAM

PAU DE GIZ

A Turnaround Business Plan: Individual Report



PAU DE GIZ DESIGN

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A Project carried out on the Master in Management Program, under the supervision of:
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Introduction

This individual report aims to complement the work project “Pau de Giz: A turnaround business plan” carried through the second semester of the academic year 2015/2016. As part of the Nova SBE Masters in Management and Connect to Success Program requirements, the report intends to summarize the personal experience acquired throughout the execution of the project, highlighting subsequent key learnings and main challenges attached to it. Furthermore, a detailed reference will be made regarding individual contributions to the final output.

Personal Experience

- Key Learnings

During the kick-start session, Mrs. Kim Sawyer had highlighted the importance of syndication with the client regarding business transformations. Indeed, by sharing and reviewing her past as successful entrepreneur, she was able to transmit that female business owner’s deal with their businesses as if it was their first child. Ana Teresa Pereira had somehow confirmed that trend being extremely passionate about the brand, engaging in more emotional decisions rather than rational and ultimately demanding a more cautious approach from us to problem solving.

Furthermore, the reduced dimension of the company also turned possible to acknowledge the difficulties that microbusinesses face in breath-taking competitive environments, especially when their funds are extremely limited or the market size is not that big. Nevertheless, the size of the business also allowed us as consultants to have a higher degree of influence close to the business owner than we would have if the project was intended to be developed for a multinational.

Finally, it was also acknowledged that a brand with high performance in product quality, brand reputation and service factors was not extracting sufficient revenues from the market. This evidence highlights the importance for future managers on the market key success factors that can ultimately support your core, as it is in this case the development of a solid online strategy.

- **Main Challenges**

The main challenges that arose from the project development can be divided in four main sections: (1) the lack of initial expertise on the assigned market; (2) the lack of theoretical research studies on the specific industry in Portugal; (3) business owner resistance to change and (4) business owner lack of management background.

Indeed, being the consulting team composed by two mans, it was not easy to get in the market environment instantaneously. Extensive market research, through the analyses of competitor's online platforms and empirical data extracted from the surveys performed, allowed the team to gain a deeper level of market understanding in the child room decoration market. This gained expertise allied with theoretical research on the overall retail industry, permitted drawing better conclusions for the formulation of a final proposal. In spite of the business owner has a strong personality, presenting always a friendly helping figure during the process, some barriers arose from her lack of background in management. There were some concepts especially regarding financials that had to be slowly discussed due to a perceived non-familiarization with specific concepts. Finally, excessive concerns raised around one of the most consensual tools to boost an online business (blog) did reveal some resistance to change from the operating model carried on over the past years.

Individual Contribution

Besides the fully extent of project issues and strategy refinement were discussed in group, through brainstorming and consensus seeking meetings, great part of the writings were delegated in order to increase the group efficiency. Therefore, regarding the contribution division a greater portion of focus was devoted by myself in the internal analysis and external analysis (namely on Porter's 5 Forces, Industry Key Success Factors, Competitors and Competitors Evaluation model), Swot Analysis, social media and blogs objectives, revising the entire document and proofreading it for consistency alignment across the work project