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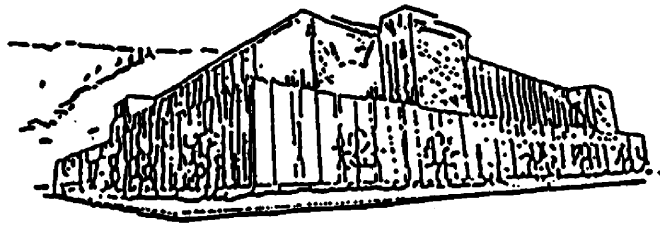
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An Operating Plan for the Montana Business Plan Competition

By

Patrick J. Dailey

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Master of Business Administration

The University of Montana

1998

Approved by:



Chairman, Dr. Paul Larson



Dean, Graduate School

12-22-98

Date

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An Operating Plan for the Montana Business Plan Competition

Thesis Chairman: Dr. Paul Larson



Not unlike most events, the Montana Business Plan Competition (MBPC) hosted in the spring by the University of Montana's School of Business Administration started out small and has grown larger each year. Last year (1998) the MBPC attracted nearly 200 of Montana's most prominent business leaders. Accordingly, the need for a more structured approach to the planning and operation of the competition is needed to help ensure its continued success. It is my goal that this operating plan will serve as a guide to the future planners and organizers of this extremely worthwhile event.

The first portion of the plan is written in a text format and covers the purpose, history, and other basic background information.

The second portion of the plan is written using the software program Microsoft Project 98' and contains the actual operating plan. Microsoft Project 98' is an extremely powerful and flexible software program which allows the user to view the plan in calendar form, Gantt chart form, PERT Chart form as well as many others. The operating plan is divided into work groups and lists over 120 total tasks. Each task listed provides an estimated duration, required start and finish dates, a list of predecessor tasks, and resource names.

The third and final portion of the plan contains hard copy examples of key documents necessary for the planning, organizing and execution of the MBPC. At the bottom of each key document the file name and path is provided. Rather than "reinventing the wheel each year" future organizers of this event are encouraged to use the actual document from the computer disc provided to make adjustments necessary from year to year.

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Dedication

This body of work is dedicated to my beautiful wife Ennea, my darling daughter Lauren, and to the hope that Ennea and I may be blessed with more children. Together they have provided me with more happiness than one man could ever want. Thank you Ennea and Lauren for understanding my many absences while working on this project. I love you.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee Dr. Paul Larson, Dr. Gerald Evans, and LTC Don Malerk for their support and encouragement throughout this project.

I'd also like to thank the U.S. Army for providing me the opportunity to attend graduate school. Finally, I'd like to thank the many trout I caught and released at Rock Creek on those Friday afternoons during my "stress management seminars" with Ennea and Lauren.

Purpose of the Montana Business Plan Competition

The purpose of the Montana Business Plan Competition is to encourage and support students enrolled in Montana's 2 and 4-year colleges who have business ideas and want to turn them into successful ventures.

History

The first annual Montana Business Plan Competition (MBPC) was held in 1989 organized and sponsored by the University of Montana and Alpine Log Homes. Ken Thuerbach, CEO of Alpine Log Homes, and Paul Larson and Larry Gianchetta of the University of Montana's School of Business Administration were instrumental in starting the event.

Those persons involved in the competition and their family and close friends, attended the first competition in 1989 and subsequent competitions in 1990, 1991, and 1992. However, in 1993 the Dean of the Business School, Larry Gianchetta sensing the growing appeal of the event to Montana businesses, suggested expanding and promoting the event. Members of the Entrepreneurship Club under the direction of Dr. Paul Larson, planned and organized the 1993 competition to be held at the Holiday Inn Parkside complete with a catered buffet style dinner.

Naturally, as the event grew from 30-40 attendees to between 100 and 150 invited guests of the Montana business community, so too did its cost. To help defray the cost of the event, the Business School provided some financial support. In addition, students were now required to seek sponsorship for the event.

The 1994 and 1995 competitions were again considered largely successful events with between 100-150 attendees, with both competitions being held at the Village Red

Lion, now the Doubletree Hotel. The 1995 MBPC marked the first time the event was opened up to all two and four year schools in the state of Montana. The majority of the Montana schools were well represented in the competition.

Unfortunately, the 1996 competition was not held due to scheduling problems resulting from the Montana University system changing from a quarter system to a new semester system.

The 1997 MBPC saw many new changes. First, it was at this time that the MBPC changed the way business plans were evaluated. Up to this point, the MBPC always had two categories: one category for plans that were written based on students new venture ideas; and a second category for those plans written by students who hold a high level management position in a proposed new venture. The decision to merge the two categories was made in an effort to conform to the trend of national competitions and eliminate any potential imbalances in the number of business plans submitted in one category compared to the other. Lastly, the change increased the amount of prize money awarded to the winning presentations.

Another major change regarding the 1997 competition involved the site of the competition. The competition was held in the new School of Business Administration's William and Rosemary Gallagher Building. The competition showcased the buildings state of the art audiovisual rooms by running many of the presentations through an AMX converter using Microsoft Power Point to project the presentations onto a large screen. The second floor atrium was used as the site for the catered buffet style dinner, and beverages provided to the guests from the Montana business community. The final

presentations were held in room 106 a large auditorium type room equipped to handle high-tech audio-visual presentations.

Lastly, the most significant change with regard to how the event was organized involved the offering of a Business Plan Competition class by the school of business. The addition of this class to the school of business's curriculum was significant for two reasons.

The first reason is because previous competitions were entirely organized by only two to three members of the Entrepreneurship Club and Dr. Paul Larson. The new Business Plan Competition class offered during the spring semester required students to write a business plan, enter and compete in national business plan competitions, and organize the MBPC. By offering the Business Plan Competition class, the business school now had a pool of students to help with the organization and planning of the event.

Secondly, the Business Plan Competition Class was important because this class improved the quality of the business plans submitted from the University of Montana. While the Entrepreneurship Class offered the previous semester provides students the opportunity to write a business plan, the Business Plan Competition Class now offers students the opportunity to refine their written plans and practice presenting the plans.

In 1998 the MBPC enjoyed its most successful competition ever. Over 175 spectators attended evening banquet and final presentations. The 1998 competition marked the first year of a semi-final round. In 1998, the ten semi-finalists were placed into two brackets and allowed to present their plans in the morning to the judges. The judges for each bracket in turn picked the top two plans for the final presentations later

that evening. Prior to 1998, the School of Business Administration after reading all the submitted plans selected the top ten plans and forwarded them to the judges for review. The judges in turn would pick the four best plans to present during the evening competition.

Stakeholders in the MBPC and Their Interests

Students

The students involved in the MBPC are the most important stakeholders in the MBPC. Students enrolled in the Business Plan Competition class mentioned above have the option of competing in national and local competitions and/or help with the planning and organization of the MBPC. Students with business ideas who want to turn them into new ventures are encouraged to write a business plan and enter the competitions. Those students who do not wish to enter the competition, but want the opportunity to learn how to organize and run a major event, are encouraged to become involved with the planning, organizing and running of the MBPC.

Those students from across the state with business ideas who want to turn them into new ventures are encouraged to participate in the competition. Students are afforded the opportunity to submit, and if selected, present their plan to a panel of judges during the competition. Students who submit written plans all receive valuable feedback in the form of written comments concerning their proposed start-up venture from members of the business school and the judges from the business community.

Those students involved in the planning, organization and running of the MBPC have a unique opportunity to learn and apply all the major facets taught in business

school. Students learn and apply marketing skills, as they are required to organize and solicit corporate sponsorship for the event. They also learn and apply financial skills with regard to managing the competition budget. Lastly, and perhaps more importantly they learn and apply management skills as they plan, organize and execute the competition itself. Regardless of the category, all students are part of an excellent, well-rounded learning experience.

Montana Business Community

The MBPC provides those interested members of the Montana Business Community the opportunity to interact with students and the school of business. Many members of the business community are genuinely interested and curious about these new business ventures; some are even potential investors. Other members of the business community enjoy the interaction with young students and the sense of community involvement the event invokes in them.

School of Business

For the University of Montana's School of Business, the MBPC provides an excellent opportunity to showcase its students, facilities, programs, and faculty. In addition, the competition provides an excellent opportunity for students, faculty and staff to interact with the Montana Business Community. Lastly, and most importantly the MBPC allows the School of Business to encourage and support those students with entrepreneurial aspirations.

Analysis of Other Competitions

Although the MBPC is only open to Montana based students; it is useful to compare the MBPC with other competitions so that any valuable idea draw from these competitions can be used to improve the MBPC. Currently, San Diego State University, the University of Oregon, and the University of Nebraska host three of the most established student business plan competitions held across the country.

One of the largest and most well known competition is the International Student Business Plan Competition hosted by the Entrepreneurial Management Center, College of Business Administration, at San Diego State University. The strengths of this nine-year-old competition are its location, its superior sponsorship, and its propensity to have several international teams in the competition. The very fact that San Diego is known for its very warm comfortable climate coupled with its reputation as a resort type area allows the San Diego State University competition to attract competitors from around the world. Naturally, all things being equal, competitors have more of an incentive to enter a competition held in San Diego, California for this very reason.

The second reason the SDSU competition is so successful is due to the tremendous sponsorship of the event. Last year, NASDAQ a major stock exchange who specializes in trading small start up companies was the majority sponsor of the event. In addition to NASDAQ, several other large corporate sponsors in the area such as Motorola New Enterprises, Ernst and Young LLP and Union Bank of California provide substantial sponsorship of the event.

Another reason the SDSU competition is so successful is its ability to attract competitors from around the world. Last years competition had teams from Australia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Russia.

While the SDSU competition is considered one of the most successful competitions in the country, it is not without its weaknesses. Many students who have competed in the competition believe that while they had a tremendous learning experience, the amount and quality of the feedback received from judges could be better. Most of the students readily acknowledge the high quality of the judges, as all are certainly very well qualified and highly successful business leaders. However, most students' felt that many of the judges simply do not devote lots of time to familiarize themselves with each plan and consequently do not provide quality feedback. In addition, many of the students felt that most of the questions asked by the judges lacked depth.

A second area in which the SDSU competition could be improved is in the area of technical and audiovisual support for the competition. While nearly all the contestants would agree that the final round technical and audiovisual support for the competition was excellent, many of the preliminary rounds did not provide the same level of support. Many of the preliminary contestants commented how their computer aided presentations needed alterations to run on the much older and slower audiovisual support equipment.

The University of Oregon's Lundquist Center for Entrepreneurship hosts the seven year old New Venture Competition. The Oregon competition while receiving sponsorship from several large corporations such as Bank of America and Motorola is generally considered a smaller and less international competition than the SDSU

competition. The strengths of the Oregon competition are the quality and commitment of its judges, its overall excellent organization of the event, and its superior technical and audiovisual support.

The Oregon competition more than any other, is known for the quality and commitment of its judges. Each judge personally reads and provides written comments on each business plan. In addition, they provide a highly professional, informative face to face feedback session to each team. Most students would agree that the judges for this competition asked very informed questions regarding their business plan.

Another reason the Oregon competition is such a success is due to its excellent organization. Everything from the initial letters and flyers advertising the event to the final awards ceremony was organized superbly. Consequently, all events occurred on time without confusion.

The final reason the competition is such a success involves the high level of technical and audiovisual support provided to the contestants. Every team who competed in the event was thoroughly impressed with the superior quality of all the equipment provided.

The University of Nebraska at Lincoln hosts the nine-year-old Donald Duncan/Duncan Aviation Business Plan Competition. While the competition has national attention, attracts some big name schools, and is considered a success for years, it is not without its weaknesses. The largest distracter according to contestants is its lack of organization. Contestants complained that they never knew where they should be and at what time. The event hosts did provide student assistants to help answer questions.

Unfortunately, they proved to be of little help, and often times they compounded the problem.

Strengths and Weaknesses in Previous Competitions

The MBPC's biggest strength is that it is almost entirely run by students. By allowing the students to run the event, they gain invaluable experience with regard to planning a major event. Those students involved in the planning, organization and running of the MBPC have a unique opportunity to learn and apply all the major facets taught in business school in one semester.

However, as is usually the case, each positive point tends to have a corresponding negative point. Because students run the MBPC almost entirely, often times many critical tasks in the planning process are not completed to satisfaction or in some instances skipped entirely. Additionally, since students change from semester to semester, it is difficult to maintain continuity in the planning process.

After interviewing personnel involved in previous competitions, several more specific strengths and weaknesses associated with past competitions were identified.

Strengths:

1. The catering provided by the University of Montana Catering Service the last two years has been outstanding. The price is reasonable, the food is superior and unique, and the support staff is professional and efficient.

2. The quality of the presentations with regard to the use of audio-visual equipment tends to be of a very high quality. Nearly all of the competitor presentations the past few years take full advantage of the hi-tech audio-visual rooms and equipment available in the business school building. Most students use Microsoft PowerPoint (or

similar professional software package) with appropriate projection equipment to project their presentation onto a large screen rather than using overhead transparencies. Students routinely insert color graphics and images into their presentations. In addition, several of last year's presentations included video clips inserted directly into the PowerPoint presentations.

Weakness:

1. Poor database management was the most glaring weakness in last year's competition. Database management is extremely important with regard to the operating of the MBPC. Databases are used to maintain the invitation list, sponsor list, instructor list, and final attendee (RSVP) list. Improper or inaccurate data base management can lead to embarrassing and financially costly results. In 1998, the invitation list and RSVP lists were improperly managed. As a result, the nametags arranged nicely in alphabetical order waiting on the reception table for the 1998 guests were for the previous year's guests. In addition, since the RSVP list was inaccurate, food was ordered and catered for 300 people. Unfortunately only 150 showed up, causing an additional catering expense of \$1,300.00.
2. The lack of a formal process to ensure students receive written or oral feedback from the judges concerning their business plans.

Recommendations

While there are many ways to improve an event from year to year, four main areas for the MBPC to focus and improve on are listed below.

Issue 1: The need to emphasize instructor involvement.

Discussion: Without the interest and involvement of instructors associated with either Entrepreneurship or small business in their respective 2 and 4 year college or university, the MBPC will not happen.

Recommendation: Send information packets to all appropriate instructors **early fall semester**. A phone call to each institution is usually necessary to identify who the appropriate instructor is, as they often change from year to year.

Issue 2: Emphasize accurate database management!

Discussion: As discussed earlier, database management is extremely important with regard to operating the MBPC. Databases are used to maintain the invitation list, sponsor list, instructor list, and final attendee (RSVP) list. Improper or inaccurate data base management can lead to embarrassing and financially costly results.

Recommendation: Place a highly motivated, responsible, and meticulously accurate student who is familiar with computer databases in charge of database management.

Issue 3: Implement a system to get judges' feedback to students.

Discussion: Currently, there is no formal process to ensure students receive written or oral feedback from the judges concerning their business plans.

Recommendation: Include a brief paragraph in the letter that explains the judging criteria that emphasizes the importance of providing written feedback to the students. In addition, schedule a brief face-to-face feedback session between the judges and all teams to take place after the morning semi-finals.

Issue 4: The MBPC is traditionally held one day during the University of Montana's final examination week.

Discussion: A great deal of thought, planning and most recently tradition, has dictated that the MBPC be held one day during the University of Montana's finals week. While the date has worked in the past and will probably continue to work in the future, there are more benefits to be realized if the MBPC is held one week earlier.

One reason to hold the MBPC one week earlier is because each class who runs the event has a better opportunity to improve the competition for next year's class. Moving the event one week earlier allows the class to perform an after-action-review of the event. That is to say that they can formally discuss what went well and what didn't go so well. In addition, the class can and should provide a written after-action-review with recommendations to next year's class on ways to improve the competition.

Another reason the event should be held the week prior to finals week is that it allows the class (not the advisor or a couple faithful students) the opportunity to properly thank all sponsors with letters, return all items borrowed or donated, pay all bills and generally tie up all loose ends associated with the competition.

From a student's perspective, it is difficult and stressful to hold and/or compete in the MBPC during finals week. During this week, students must balance a week packed full of exams with the fact that the day of the MBPC, they are essentially doing nothing else. Preparations for the MBPC usually start at 8 a.m. and last until clean up is complete around 11 p.m. or midnight. In summary, most students would rather it be held any other week.

From a building and room scheduling perspective, it makes no difference when the MBPC is held because it is difficult regardless of the week, to reserve all the rooms necessary for the competition.

Recommendation: Hold the MBPC during the week or weekend prior to finals week.

Structure of Work Groups

The current work group structure for the Business Plan Competition class consists of five primary work groups. The five work groups are:

Student Assistant: Actions required during fall semester

Work Group 1: Database and Invitations

Work Group 2: Sponsors and Judges

Work Group 3: Facilities and Catering

Work Group 4: Promotional / Instructor & Student Contacts

The work group structure is based on an estimate of 12-15 students enrolled in the Business Plan Competition class offered spring semester. Past history and conventional theory on group dynamics reveal that three or four members of each work group is traditionally the most efficient work group structure.

Work Group Responsibilities

Work Group 1: Responsible for preparing the invitation mailing list, sending out the invitations, printing name badges and registrations lists, and organizing the check in during the competition.

Work Group 2: Responsible for recruiting sponsors and judges for the event, ensuring the sponsors and judges receive proper recognition, and coordinating all the activities of the judges the day of the event.

Work Group 3: Responsible for arranging all the necessary facilities and catering arrangements for the event.

Work Group 4: Responsible for all promotional activities associated with the event and coordinating with necessary instructors and students.

Approaching Sponsors

1. Introduce yourself as a student at the University of Montana involved with the Montana Business Plan Competition.
2. If you have a definite contact name, ask for them, and reintroduce yourself. If you don't have a contact name, you'll probably ask for the owner or general manager (if it is a smaller firm); or, if it is a larger firm (like Montana Power Co.), you'll have to gain a sense of who you should try to talk to.
3. If they have sponsored before, let them know that we are working hard to organize a higher quality competition this year, and could we count on them for support again. Remind them of what they donated last year, what the different sponsor levels are this year, and ask them which level they would like to participate at.

4. If they have not sponsored before, explain what the purpose of the competition is and what it is like (refer to information sheet).
5. Let them know what publicity we will give them, and also inform them that they are welcome to invite as many guests as they like.
6. Offer to send them an information packet, which includes a sponsor registration form.
7. Thank them and make any arrangements to get back in touch with them, or vice versa.

HAVE FUN WITH THESE PEOPLE! SHOW THEM THAT UM STUDENTS ARE BRIGHT, INQUISITIVE PEOPLE THAT SHOW AN INTEREST IN OTHERS!

Business Plan Competition Schedule

Insert Date of the Competition

8:00-9:30 am Tech-checks in GBB L26, 119

9:00-9:30 Judges meet in lobby of Gallagher Business Building (refreshments served)

	Group A-- Room L26	Group B-- Room 119
9:30	The UM Grizzette	Cars Etc.
10:15	Special Edition Antiques	Salad Express
11:00	Safety Handling Systems	We're Nuts!!
11:45	Coffee Allie's	Nadeau's Mowing Service
12:30 p.m.	Angel ID's	Doggie Haven
1:15	Lunch for Judges	
	Lunch for Students/Instructors	
1:45	Announcement of Finalists	
3:20-5:00	Tech-check in 106	
5:00	Reception	
5:30	Welcome and Introductory Remarks	
5:45	Team #2 from Group A	
6:15	Team #2 from Group B	
6:45	Intermission	
7:00	Team # 1 from Group A	
7:30	Team # 1 from Group B	
8:00	Dinner Served	
8:45	Awards Ceremony	

Group A Judges







Bill Cain
Lynn Himes
Jon Marchi
Bob Zimorino

Group B Judges

Barb Callaghan
Steve Huntington
Eddie McElroy

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
1		Actions Required by Student Assistant Fall Semester	130 days	Thu 10/1/98	Wed 3/31/99		
2	☐	Reserve catering date with UC Food service	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		Ph: 243-4899
3		Reserve room #s L26, 119 for morning presentations (see Bldg ro	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		Ph: 243-2455
4		Reserve room #106 for final evening presentations	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		
5		Reserve room #'s 201,202,205,225,226,382 for evening dining	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		
6		Reserve front entryway/2nd floor piazza	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		
7		Reserve guest speaker	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		Lt. Gov?
8		Reserve MC for evening portion of event	1 day	Thu 10/1/98	Thu 10/1/98		Peter Christian
9	☐	Update last years info kit for instructors	23 days	Thu 10/1/98	Mon 11/2/98		c:1999 Info Kit to Instr
10	☐	Contact each school:get name and address of small bus&entrep. l	23 days	Thu 10/1/98	Mon 11/2/98		
11	☐	Send/mail out updated info kit(intent to compete,Judging criteria, p	1 day	Mon 11/2/98	Mon 11/2/98		c:Prof letters & Info
12	☐	Collect instr intent to compete forms from instr	11 days	Mon 11/2/98	Mon 11/16/98		
13	☐	Call all instructors again to double check intent	6 days	Tue 11/17/98	Tue 11/24/98	12	
14	☐	Update Instr database add/delete as necessary	17 days	Mon 11/2/98	Tue 11/24/98		c:Profandcontacts1998
15	☐	Place "Y" or "N" in database field to indicate attending/not	21 days	Mon 11/2/98	Mon 11/30/98		
16	☐	Initiate accounting/budget for MBPC	1 day	Mon 11/2/98	Mon 11/2/98		c:Budget
17	☐	Receive/account for sponsor money	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99		
18	☐	Work Group 1: Database/Invitations	59 days	Mon 2/22/99	Thu 5/13/99		
19	☐	Prepare invitation mailing list	36 days	Mon 2/22/99	Mon 4/12/99		
20	✓	Familiarize yourself with last years invitation list/data base	6 days	Mon 2/22/99	Mon 3/1/99		c: Guest List Info
21	✓	Check with Instructor for additions/deletions to list	31 days	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 4/12/99	20	
22	✓	Obtain classmates list of invitees/add to list	31 days	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 4/12/99	20,21	

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
45		Read "How to approach sponsors letter"	1 day	Mon 2/1/99	Mon 2/1/99		Get from Dr. Larson
46		Receive guidance from Instructor concerning fund raising prc	1 day	Mon 2/1/99	Mon 2/1/99		
47		Brainstorm in class for potential sponsors	4 days	Tue 2/2/99	Fri 2/5/99	46	
48		Approach Dean on potential sponsors	1 day	Mon 2/8/99	Mon 2/8/99	47	
49		Telephone previous year sponsors/verify renewal	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99	48	
50		Send out (mail) sponsorship packets to renewals	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99	45	c: Sponsor/follow up le
51		Contact new potential sponsors	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99		
52		Send out (mail) sponsorship packets to potential sponsors	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99		c:sponsor/potential spc
53		Receive/account for sponsor money/give to student assist	37 days	Tue 2/9/99	Wed 3/31/99		
54		Ensure sponsors get proper recognition	27 days	Wed 4/7/99	Thu 5/13/99		
55		Give sponsor names to Work group 1 (for badges)	1 day	Wed 4/7/99	Wed 4/7/99		
56		Give sponsor names to work group 4(pamphlet)	1 day	Wed 4/7/99	Wed 4/7/99		
57		Give sponsor names to work group 4 for sponsor board	1 day	Wed 4/7/99	Wed 4/7/99		
58		Buy/make certificates of apprec for sponsors	17 days	Thu 4/8/99	Fri 4/30/99	57	
59		Buy frames to place certificates in	17 days	Thu 4/8/99	Fri 4/30/99	56	
60		Buy ribbon or something to differentiate name badges	17 days	Thu 4/8/99	Fri 4/30/99	55	
61		Present sponsors certificates at finals	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
62		Judges	69 days	Mon 2/8/99	Thu 5/13/99		
63		Telephone prev year Judges/verify renewals	5 days	Mon 2/8/99	Fri 2/12/99		
64		Send renewal judges thank you letter w/critical dates	5 days	Mon 2/8/99	Fri 2/12/99		c: Judges/letter to judg
65		Contact other potential judges as needed	15 days	Mon 2/8/99	Fri 2/26/99		
66		Send confirmed judges thank you letter w/critical dates	15 days	Mon 2/8/99	Fri 2/26/99		c:judges/letter to judge

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
23		Make RSVP card	5 days	Mon 3/1/99	Fri 3/5/99		c: Guest List Info
24		Make other necessary changes to list	31 days	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 4/12/99		
25		Send out invitations	32 days	Mon 3/1/99	Tue 4/13/99	19	
26	✓	Familiarize self with invitation form letter	31 days	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 4/12/99		c:Prof Ltrs & Info/invita
27		Execute trial run w/merging data base to form letter	1 day	Tue 4/13/99	Tue 4/13/99	26	
28	✓	Mail invitation letter, RSVP reply	6 days	Tue 4/6/99	Tue 4/13/99	27	
29		Print name badges and registration lists	63 days	Mon 3/1/99	Wed 5/12/99	25	
30	✓	Obtain/Buy appropriate name badges for guests, judges etc.	8 days	Mon 3/1/99	Wed 3/10/99		
31	✓	Place Guests who RSVP'd "Yes" on Reg. List.	27 days	Tue 4/6/99	Wed 5/12/99	30	
32		Execute trial run w/merging data base w/badges	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
33		Identify/reserve laptop/printer for printing badges on-site day	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
34		Identify method(micro program)to print single badges day of c	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
35		Print trial run of name badges	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		c: Name Badges
36		Print namebadges for RSVP'd guests	21 days	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 5/12/99		
37		Organize check in at banquet	6 days	Thu 5/6/99	Thu 5/13/99	29	
38		reserve tables from catering for receiving area	1 day	Thu 5/6/99	Thu 5/6/99		
39		Arrange name tags (alphabetically) on reception table	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
40		Check guests in using Registration list, add new guests as a	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
41		Bring blank name tags for extras who show up w/o RSVP	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
42		Print extra name tags on laptop computer as needed	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		c: Name Badges
43		Work Group 2: Sponsors and Judges	74 days	Mon 2/1/99	Thu 5/13/99		
44		Sponsors	74 days	Mon 2/1/99	Thu 5/13/99		

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
67		Make 1 copy of ea.semi-final plan for each judge	1 day	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/16/99		
68		Mail plans/judging criteria to each judge	1 day	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/16/99		
69		Coordinate all Judges activities day of event	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
70		Greet them upon arrival, provide itinery etc.	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
71		Provide parking pass	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		see Cathi Darrington 2
72		Ensure Judges get proper recognition	54 days	Mon 3/1/99	Thu 5/13/99		
73		Provide judges names to work group 1 (for badges)	1 day	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 3/1/99		
74		Provide Judges names to work group 4	1 day	Mon 3/1/99	Mon 3/1/99		
75		Buy/make cert of apprec for judges	22 days	Thu 4/1/99	Fri 4/30/99	74	c: Judges/judge certific
76		Buy frames to place certificates in	22 days	Thu 4/1/99	Fri 4/30/99		
77		Buy ribbon to differentiate name badges for judges	22 days	Thu 4/1/99	Fri 4/30/99		
78		Present Judges certificates at finals	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
79		Work Group 3: Facilities/Catering	59 days	Mon 2/22/99	Thu 5/13/99		
80		Review catering contract(see student assist)	1 day	Mon 2/22/99	Mon 2/22/99		
81		Review rooms reserved for event (see student assist)	1 day	Mon 2/22/99	Mon 2/22/99		
82		Contact Instructional Media Tech(IMT) ref: Tech support	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		Jeff Meese 243-5471
83		Reserve computers, AMX converters/overheads etc. w/ IMT	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
84		Reserve microphones for judges w/ IMT	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
85		Arrange for taping/filming of final presentations w/IMT	1 day	Wed 4/14/99	Wed 4/14/99		
86		Plan seating arrangements for morning presentations	1 day	Thu 4/15/99	Thu 4/15/99	85	
87		Physically check rooms to ensure adequate chairs/tables are avail	1 day	Thu 4/15/99	Thu 4/15/99		
88		Plan seating arrangement for dinner	1 day	Thu 4/15/99	Thu 4/15/99		

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
89		Physically check rooms to ensure adeq chairs/tables are avail	1 day	Thu 4/15/99	Thu 4/15/99		
90		Inform Bldg custodians of event/help w/clean up etc.	1 day	Thu 5/6/99	Thu 5/6/99		
91		Provide UC Catering w/proper # for food & refreshments	1 day	Thu 5/6/99	Thu 5/6/99		
92		Arrange rooms for morning presentations	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
93		Arrange rooms for dinner guests	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
94		Provide breakfast rolls, muffins, coffee, juice etc for morning of M	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		Costco/Great Harvest
95		Work Group 4: Promotional/Instructor & Student Contacts	64 days	Mon 2/1/99	Thu 4/29/99		
96		Make 10 taped copies of prev year final presentations from IMT	1 day	Mon 2/1/99	Mon 2/1/99		Jeff Meese
97		Obtain hard/disc copy of prev years brochure	1 day	Mon 2/1/99	Mon 2/1/99		
98		Decide on format/design for brochure (less sponsor/judges/finalist	4 days	Tue 2/2/99	Fri 2/5/99	97	see last years brochure
99		Decide on format for sponsor board	4 days	Tue 2/2/99	Fri 2/5/99		
100		Obtain list of Judges from Work Group 2	1 day	Wed 3/31/99	Wed 3/31/99		
101		Obtain list of sponsors from work group 2	1 day	Wed 4/7/99	Wed 4/7/99		
102		Communicate with students about format for presentations	6 days	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/23/99		
103		Send video tape of prev years presentations to 10 finalists	6 days	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/23/99		
104		Obtain list of guests to attend competition/banquet from finalists	6 days	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/23/99		
105		Inform instructors about banquet etc.	6 days	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/23/99		
106		Obtain list of guests for competition and banquet from instructors	6 days	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/23/99		
107		Add names of sponsors,judges,finalist to brochure	1 day	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/16/99		
108		Take brochure format/pictures etc. to print shop for printing	1 day	Mon 4/19/99	Mon 4/19/99	107	
109		Add names of sponsors to sponsor poster/billboard	1 day	Fri 4/16/99	Fri 4/16/99		
110		Take necessary materials to print shop/have poster made	1 day	Mon 4/19/99	Mon 4/19/99	109	

ID		Task Name	Duration	Start	Finish	Predecessors	Resource Names
111	ME	Write press release for newspaper article	3 days	Mon 4/26/99	Wed 4/28/99		see Dr. Larson
112	ME	Arrange PR: call/provide press release to newspaper/call local nev	1 day	Thu 4/29/99	Thu 4/29/99	111	
113		All Groups: Post event activities	7 days	Thu 5/13/99	Fri 5/21/99		
114	ME	Clean up reception area	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
115	ME	Return all classrooms to original config.	1 day	Thu 5/13/99	Thu 5/13/99		
116		Return all beverages/kegs etc. to donor	1 day	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/14/99	115	
117	ME	Collect all bills: print shop, catering, muffins etc.	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99	114	
118	ME	Ensure all bills are paid	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99		
119	ME	Thank you letters to sponsors	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99		
120	ME	Get Certificates to sponsors and judges if not at event	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99		
121	ME	Update this plan as approp	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99		
122	ME	Perform after action review: issue, discussion, recommendation	6 days	Fri 5/14/99	Fri 5/21/99		

December 21, 1998

Dear ,

Thank you for your interest in the 1999 Tenth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition. The competition will give Montana students the opportunity to develop creative new venture ideas.

The 1999 Business Plan Competition is sponsored by the University of Montana School of Business Administration and other corporate sponsors. Entries must be received on or before April 7th, 1999 to be eligible for the final competition May 13th. Ten Semi-Finalists will be announced April 16th, 1999. The competition will be held Wednesday May 13th, with preliminary judging in the morning. Four finalists will make presentations at the banquet in the evening.

Each school is allowed to enter up to three teams. The plans must be written for companies in the pre-venture stage; or in other words, they have not yet sold products or services. At least one member of the team must hold a senior-level management position in the proposed new venture.

I have enclosed information indicating the timeline and a brief description of the evaluation criteria for the Tenth Annual Business Plan Competition. We hope you will consider encouraging students and assist them in writing and presenting their plans. Enclosed you will find:

- Competition Guidelines
- Judging Criteria
- Instructor's Intent to Compete
- Entry Forms
- Posters

If you intend on sending a team, please fill out the enclosed "Instructor's Intent to Compete Form" and fax it back to us by December 10, 1998. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Landon Capdeville, who is working under the supervision of Dr. Paul Larson, the SBI Director, at (406) 243-5695, email - bizplan@selway.umt.edu. We look forward to your participation in the Tenth Annual Business Plan Competition.

Sincerely,

Landon Capdeville
Business Plan Competition Coordinator

Dr. Paul Larson
Faculty Advisor to the Business Plan Competition

Instructor's Intent to Compete

University of Montana Business Plan Competition

Name _____

University _____

Address _____

—

Phone _____ E-
mail _____

Fax _____

- Yes, please reserve a spot for our school in the preliminary competition. I understand that five copies of the business plan are due to the University of Montana by April 7th, 1999.

Please fill out this form and fax it to the University of Montana School of Business Administration at (406) 243-2086 or mail to the University of Montana, Business Plan Competition, Missoula, MT 59812. We look forward to your participation.

Judging Criteria

Evaluation

Submissions will be judged on the basis of potential success as a new business venture. The primary determinants of business success to be used in the judging will be:

- market attractiveness
- competitive advantage
- strength of management
- implementation plan
- economic value

The judges will be evaluating the following criteria in the plan:

market attractiveness (20%)

- size
- growth rate
- margins available
- competitive level

competitive advantage (20%)

- market need for product/service
- ability to reach defined market(s)
- ability to withstand competitive attacks
- potential for additional advantages or markets

strength of management (20%)

- completeness of management team
- requisite skills and experience for this type of venture
- ability to present and “sell” the business
- quality of written plan and data

(Continued on reverse)

implementation plan (20%)

- description of operations
- implementation plan and timetable
- projected income statement
- cash flow projections
- projected balance sheet
- source of funds

economic value (20%)

- total wealth created
- risk/return relationship
- exit strategies for outside investors (if any)
- assessment of risks
- cash flows

Preliminary judging will be based on *all* the above criteria.

Final judging will be based on three criteria, all with equal weight:

quality of the new venture concept—(33.33%) Will the plan convince prospective employees, bankers, and investors of the opportunity for success?

formal presentation of the written and oral plan (33.33%)

potential for financial success—(33.33%) Do the numbers make sense? Are the numbers and projections credible? What is the realistic return to investors?

The ability to present and “sell” a new venture plan is critical to the venture’s success. The management team and business plan must be able to attract and motivate prospective employees as well as investors, bankers, resellers, and other business partners.

Competition Purpose / Guidelines

Introduction

The Tenth Annual University of Montana Business Plan Competition will give students the opportunity to develop ideas and convince judges from financial, academic, and business communities that a new venture can be successfully launched. New Ventures are defined for the purpose of this competition as pre-revenue, start-up companies. Buyouts, expansions of existing companies, real estate syndications, and consulting projects for existing businesses are not eligible.

Student teams are encouraged to build and present a plan that clearly promotes the quality of the new venture concept and its potential for success. Successfully launched new ventures rely as much on the promotion and presentation of the concept as they do on the detailed business plan and financial projections.

Competition Guidelines

Qualifying Round Judging

The plan is limited to 25 pages, double-spaced on 8 ½- x -11 size paper, 12-pt. font size, including the executive summary and financial data. Detailed spreadsheets and appendices can follow the text, however the total plan should not exceed 40 pages. Please submit 5 copies of the plan by April 7, 1999.

The plan should also include an explanation of the offering to investors, if one is planned, indicating how much money is required, the expected ROI, how the deal might be structured, and a management team description. Possible exit strategies should be included.

Entries are due April 7, 1999, and semi-finalists will be contacted by April 16th.

Selection of Semi-Finalists

Ten semi-finalists will be selected to present at the preliminary round at the University of Montana Business Plan Competition.

Semi-Finalists will be announced April 16th, 1999. The competition will be held Thursday May 13th, with preliminary judging in the morning. Four finalists will make presentations at the banquet in the evening.

(Continued on reverse)

Each semi-finalist team is required to present its plan at the competition. The teams will be divided into two groups of five for the first round of competition, on the morning of Thursday, May 13th. The top two teams from each set will move on to the final competition. Presentations will be a maximum of 20 minutes followed by a 20-minute question-and-answer period with the judges. The winners will be announced at the banquet on Thursday evening.

Eligibility

Institutions Three teams are allowed per college or university.

All entries must be prepared under faculty supervision; the faculty adviser is encouraged to attend the competition.

Team size may range from two members to a maximum of five members. At least one member of the team must hold a senior-level management position in the proposed new venture.

The management team outlined in the plan may include individuals who are not associated with the university but only student members can present in the competition.

All student members must be enrolled on a full-or-part-time basis, in the current academic year (1998-1999).

The business should not have raised outside capital prior to September 1998 or generated revenues prior to January 1999.

Entry Form

Tenth Annual Business Plan Competition

Please read competition rules *before* completing this form.

PLAN TITLE _____

Your signature below acknowledges that the submitted business plan is the original work of the author(s) listed below.

AUTHOR(S) *please print*

Name Address e-mail

Phone Author's signature

Name Address e-mail

Phone Author's signature

Name Address e-mail

Phone Author's signature

Name Address e-mail

Phone Author's signature

Name Address e-mail

Phone Author's signature

Include this form along with 5 copies of the plan to: Business Plan Competition
School of Business Administration
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812

The 1999 Montana Business Plan Competition May 13, 1999



Awards

1st Place:	\$1,000.00
2nd Place:	\$750.00
3rd Place:	\$500.00
4th Place:	\$250.00

Timeline

April 7th	Submit business plans for qualifying round judging
April 16th	Announcement of ten semi-finalists
May 13th	First round of competition - morning
May 13th	Finalist's presentations and awards banquet - evening

Please contact Dr. Paul Larson immediately at 243-6840 or GBB 329 for more information.

The Ninth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition
RSVP
May 13, 1998 - Gallagher Business Building

Your Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail
Guest's Name	Address
Phone	E-mail

Please RSVP by May 1, 1998

April 17, 1998

Name
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Name,

On behalf of The University of Montana School of Business, we would like to extend to you a personal invitation to the Ninth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition. You were chosen as one of a select group of business people because the UM School of Business felt that your input would be extremely valuable in the judging process of this exciting event.

The Business Plan Competition invites Montana students to present their new business ideas to a group of Montana's business and community leaders. As an audience member, you can challenge these student entrepreneurs and provide a memorable learning experience. Audience voting comprises 40% of the judging process.

This evening is a fun, exciting event that allows you to hear what students from Montana institutions of higher education are doing with their business skills. Many of our previous winners have turned their dreams into successful Montana businesses.

The Ninth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition takes place on May 13th in The Gallagher Business Building at The University of Montana. The schedule for the evening will be as follows: we will begin with a short reception at 5:00 p.m., the competition and presentations will begin at 5:30, a complementary buffet style dinner will be served to all guests at 8:00 p.m., and winners will be announced at 8:45 p.m. Enclosed is an RSVP card; please write in your name and the names of any guests who will be attending with you. A return envelope has been provided. Or, you can E-mail your RSVP to us at klt@selway.umt.edu, or call us at (406) 243-5695. Please RSVP by May 1, 1998. A complementary buffet style dinner will be served to all guests.

As the event coordinator of this event, I sincerely hope to see you on May 13th. Your attendance will result in a successful and inspiring evening!

Sincerely,

Student Assistant or Your Name

The Annual Montana Business Plan Competition

Fact Sheet

The First Annual Montana Business Plan Competition was held in 1989, organized and sponsored by The University of Montana and Alpine Log Homes. Ken Thuerbach, CEO of Alpine Log Homes, and Paul Larson and Larry Gianchetta of The University of Montana's School of Business Administration, were instrumental in starting the event. Students at Montana's colleges (4-year and 2-year), vocational-technical schools, and tribal colleges are invited to submit business plans in the Competition. Finalists are allowed to make oral presentations of their plans at a large banquet in May, and they are judged by both a panel of judges and by the audience. Nearly \$3000 in cash prizes is awarded to finalists and honorable mention recipients.

The purpose of the Montana Business Plan Competition is to encourage and support students who have business ideas and want to turn them into successful ventures. Students are given feedback on their plans, primarily by a select group of judges with expertise in starting and managing companies. On the evening of the final presentations, the audience is allowed to raise questions and provide feedback to students.

Many ventures proposed in the Business Plan Competition are now operating businesses. In fact, one of them is now a several hundred million dollar operation (a student affiliated with Montana Power Co. wrote a business plan for what is now an operating coal conversion process). Many smaller businesses, including restaurants, a brew-pub, electronics manufacturer, tent manufacturer, and others have grown out of the Competition.

The 1998 Montana Business Plan Competition will be held Wednesday, May 13th in the Gallagher Business Building, at 5:30pm, with reception beginning at 5:00pm. More than two hundred people are expected to be in attendance, and all who participate are given a buffet dinner and a chance to interact with the students who present their business plans.

In 1997, sixteen businesses and individuals were sponsors of the Montana Business Plan Competition. Sponsorships help support cash prizes for students and the cost of the banquet. In 1998, the following levels of sponsorship are available:

Platinum	\$1000
Gold	\$ 500.
Silver	\$ 250

For more information on the Montana Business Plan Competition, contact:

Kara Thomas
 Montana Business Plan Competition
 Gallagher Business Building
 University of Montana
 243-5695, email klt@selway.umt.edu

1998 Montana Business Plan Competition

***Mary Ann
Albee***

December 21, 1998

Dear ,

Thank you for agreeing to sponsor the 1996 Montana Business Plan Competition. This year's competition will be better than ever, and we who are planning the event are working hard to ensure its success. The banquet will be held on May 14 at 5:00 p.m. at the School of Business Administration at the University of Montana, room 106. Enclosed are some RSVP cards. You may give these to any guests whom you might want to invite to the banquet.

We have enclosed an invoice, a sheet on which we would like the names and addresses of any business contacts you would like to invite, and a return envelope. Please include your sponsorship check and the invitation sheet in the enclosed envelope. Also, if your company logo has changed in the last year, please include a current copy. We want to make sure that your sponsorship is properly promoted at the event. Your logo will be featured on a sign that hangs at the banquet and the name of your company will appear in the brochure. We will send you a receipt for your donation as soon as we receive your check.

Once again, we thank you for your willingness to sponsor this worthwhile event. We feel that it will be a positive experience for the competitors, instructors, and business people who attend.

Sincerely,

Laura Myers
Kara Thomas

BANQUET INVITATION LIST

PLEASE LIST BELOW THE NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF ANY PEOPLE WHOM YOU WOULD LIKE FOR US TO INVITE TO THE BANQUET.

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

December 21, 1998

Name
Organization
Street Address
City State, Zip

Dear Mr. ,

Thank you for your interest in the Ninth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition. This year's competition will be better than ever, and we who are planning the event are working hard to ensure its success. The purpose of the Montana Business Plan Competition is to encourage and support students who have business ideas and wish to turn them into successful business ventures.

Enclosed you will find sponsorship information and a fact sheet about the Competition. For your convenience a sponsorship card has been enclosed. If you are interested in being a sponsor, just fill out the card and include payment in the enclosed envelope. If you need a statement before processing a check, mark the appropriate box on the card and we will send you an invoice. In our promotional materials, we can recognize your organization with the use of a logo along with the company name if you like. Please include camera-ready art in the enclosed envelope if you would like us to use your logo.

We hope that you will be able to join us at this year's Competition. If you will be attending, please fill out the RSVP form and return it to us at your earliest convenience. On the same sheet, you can include the names of any guests who will be coming with you.

If you need any further assistance, please contact Kara Thomas at 243-5695.

Once again, we thank you for your interest in sponsoring this worthwhile event. We feel that it will be a positive experience for the competitors, instructors, and business people who attend.

Sincerely,

Your Name
Montana Business Plan Competition
Gallagher Business Building
University of Montana
243-5695, email:

SPONSOR'S NAME			TELEPHONE
STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE FAX
CONTACT PERSON		TITLE	E-MAIL

SPONSORSHIP LEVEL:

PLATINUM \$1,000

GOLD \$500

SILVER \$250

ENCLOSED IS:

A CHECK

VISA/MC # _____ EXP _____

OR

PLEASE SEND ME A STATEMENT FOR PROCESSING

Thank you for your contribution to the Montana Business Plan Competition.

Montana Business Plan Competition - Sponsorship Agreement

SPONSOR'S NAME			TELEPHONE
STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE FAX
CONTACT PERSON		TITLE	E-MAIL

SPONSORSHIP LEVEL:

PLATINUM \$1,000

GOLD \$500

SILVER \$250

ENCLOSED IS:

A CHECK

VISA/MC # _____ EXP _____

OR

PLEASE SEND ME A STATEMENT FOR PROCESSING

Thank you for your contribution to the Montana Business Plan Competition.

Montana Business Plan Competition - Sponsorship Agreement

SPONSOR'S NAME			TELEPHONE
STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE FAX
CONTACT PERSON		TITLE	E-MAIL

SPONSORSHIP LEVEL:

PLATINUM \$1,000

GOLD \$500

SILVER \$250

ENCLOSED IS:

A CHECK

VISA/MC # _____ EXP _____

OR

PLEASE SEND ME A STATEMENT FOR PROCESSING

Thank you for your contribution to the Montana Business Plan Competition.

Montana Business Plan Competition

Sponsorship Information

The *Montana Business Plan Competition* relies on corporate and individual sponsorships to fund cash prizes for finalists and the dinner that is served to all attendees.

Approximately \$3000 is awarded to students who are finalists in the Competition. At the banquet, approximately 200 people are served and the cost of each dinner is typically \$15 or more. Incidental expenses such as supplies, phone charges, and postage are also covered by sponsorships.

Three levels of donations are possible:

Platinum	\$1000
Gold	\$ 500
Silver	\$ 250

Donations are made through the University of Montana Foundation, are tax deductible, and are channeled to the Business Plan Competition. All business plan sponsors will be recognized in UM foundation literature. Also, Platinum sponsors automatically enter the President's Club, which brings with it a variety of privileges and recognition at The University of Montana.

In the Business Plan Competition, sponsors will be described in the banquet program, signs will be placed at the Competition displaying the company/person's name (and logo, if appropriate), and a person from each sponsoring organization will be personally awarded a certificate of appreciation at the Awards Ceremony.

Companies or individuals interested in sponsoring the Montana Business Plan Competition should contact:

Paul Larson, Faculty Advisor
Montana Business Plan Competition
Gallagher Business Building
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
(406) 243-6840
email prl@selway.umt.edu

April 25, 1997

Name
Organization
Street Address
City, State, Zip

Dear Mr. ,

Your role as a Judge in the Eighth Annual Montana Business Plan Competition is about to begin! We appreciate your contribution to this event and want to thank you for your time and effort which is vital in making it a success. Enclosed are copies of each of the four plans selected as finalists for this year. We sincerely appreciate your active participation in this event.

As you read each plan, we ask that you refer to the judge's scoring sheet that is provided. This form may help you organize your thoughts for ranking each plan. The score sheet that you are completing will comprise thirty percent (30%) of the competitor's final score. Please remember to bring the scoring sheet for each plan with you on the night of the Competition because it will be used in calculating the final score. Any suggestions, comments or impressions you may wish to tell the author(s) of the business plan may be written on the back of the scoring sheet. We encourage you to give the students the benefit of your expertise.

The plans are separated into two categories: Category A plans were written for an outside company and not for the use of the author. Category B plans were written for the author's use. Of the finalists, two are Category A and two are Category B. When judging, please keep in mind that the plans are only competing within their respective categories. For example, there will be two first place prizes-one for each category.

Please include a wallet-size photo of yourself and send us a short biography of yourself and your business that we can include in the brochure to be given out at the event. Also, please make sure we have your name spelled correctly and the way you would like it presented at the competition. If you have any guests you would like to attend the competition, please write their names on the enclosed RSVP card(s).

The Competition is on Wednesday, May 14 at the Gallagher Building, School of Business Administration, University of Montana, in Missoula. We ask that Judges arrive at 5:00 p.m. for a short briefing in room 106. The presentations will begin at 5:30. The evening looks to be fun-filled and well attended; our response from the Montana community has been excellent.

Once again, your participation is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call us at 243-5695.

We hope you enjoy the plans, and we look forward to seeing you on the 14th!

Sincerely,

Your Name

The University of Montana
School of Business Administration

wishes to thank

Bob Zimorino

For judging the

1998 Montana Business Plan Competition

Larry Gianchetta

Paul Larson

Kara Thomas

Landon Capdeville

1998 Business Plan Competition
Judges' Scoring and Feedback Sheet

Use this sheet to evaluate both the written plans and oral presentations. Each plan has the chance of earning 60 points (we chose 60 because in the Finals, the audience vote counts for 40 points). Along with your scoring, please write as many comments and suggestions as you can on the back of this sheet. All of these sheets will be forwarded to competitors after the Competition.

Bring this sheet to the competition, with the written plan evaluation complete. You can fill in your scoring for presentations on the same sheet at the competition.

Plan Name _____

Written Plan

Possible Criteria:

- Amount of opportunity
- Completeness of plan
- Clarity and readability of plan
- Overall Feasibility

Written Plan Score _____ (out of 30)

Presentation

Possible Criteria:

- Degree of organization
- Use of visuals
- Audience appeal
- Persuasiveness
- Response to questions

Presentation Score _____ (out of 30)

Comments (continue on back)

1998 Business Plan Competition

Audience Scoring Sheet

Audience scoring accounts for 40% of the total judging of the business plans. Listed below are some criteria you might use to evaluate presentations; however, you are not required to use them.

Possible Presentation Criteria:

- Opportunity and potential growth
 - Feasibility
 - Degree of organization
 - Use of visuals
 - Audience appeal
 - Persuasiveness
 - Response to questions
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Scoring

Out of a possible **40 points**, please write in a score before the name of each plan.

- _____ Team #1
- _____ Team #2
- _____ Team #3
- _____ Team #4

