

Exploitation plan, market launch and business concept



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1. Exploitation plan, market launch and business concept for research applications

In recent years, the requirements for applications have changed. In addition to the usual application contents, the submission of a utilization plan, a market launch and/or a business concept is now part of many funding applications. You will find some templates available for this purpose in the application documents. Start-up support, respectively founding consultancy, will also be happy to assist with any questions you may have. For this reason, we have provided a leaflet to help.

2. Results and utilization

The decisive factor for the planning of the exploitation/market introduction is what results are to be expected. It may be software, products, manufacturing processes, improvements to existing products or processes, and/or expertise.

In the first step, expected results from the application should be briefly presented.

Utilization depends on the nature of the results, the project partners, and the requirements of the application. The following is a list of important aspects to consider:

- It must be clarified who is entitled to the results. Thus, it may be that only cooperation partners can use results, as is common, with inventions, for example.
- Depending on the funding, there may also be requirements that results must also be made available to competitors on request in return for standard market conditions (e.g. licenses).

Exploitation can be carried out in different ways (also in combination and via different partners):

- Granting of licenses: This is common for software and databases due to the underlying copyright. Technical innovations (e.g. invention/utility model/patent) can also be exploited through licensing.
- Sale: This is common for products or intellectual property rights (e.g. inventions/utility models/patents).
- Consulting and continuing education: Depending on the result, expertise can be exploited as a service offer. Examples would be coaching or e.g. simulation calculations or optimization of processes.

- Spin-offs are also a form of result exploitation. In addition to the above-mentioned examples, the creation of jobs may also be a consideration. (see (4): Business concept).

The question of exploitation strategies is about why a certain exploitation path is chosen.

Depending on the project, a range of different exploitation measures may also emerge among the partners. This depends on resources and expertise. An example of this would be when a product is developed at the university, an industrial partner builds the prototype and later takes over production and distribution (e.g. after purchasing the invention). After the project, the university or a spin-off offers material analyses for quality assurance. Different niche markets can also be served through different partners or spin-offs.

In the context of exploitation, you specify not only the way, but also the objective. This can be, for example, the development of a further product line, the safeguarding of jobs or sustainable aspects (energy/resource conservation).

3. Market launch

In contrast to an exploitation plan, the creation of a market introduction strategy is much more complex, as this is only possible with detailed information. The constellation between the project partners plays a major role. Who will do the exploiting, and who has what goals in the project?

Possible aspects to consider are listed below, with simple examples in some places for clarity:

- Description of the target group (Who needs the product or service?)
- Why should the target group buy the product? The focus here is on the benefits for the target group. The offered solution should be different from other solutions offered by competitors. What makes the product special?
- How large is the total market? This may be a sub-market such as Germany, EU or selected countries. (Example: We define the total market as all countries in the EU. There are X million new bikes a year there.)
- How large is the targeted market share in relation to the total market? (Our goal is that in five years 2% of all new bicycles in the EU will be equipped with our new anti-theft system)
- Who are the competitors? Are there many vendors with similar solutions?

- What costs and revenues can be expected?
- What are the barriers to market introduction? These may include, for example, necessary test results or compliance with standards (CE marking, DIN), bottlenecks in raw materials or component parts. Delays may also occur due to different regulations in other countries. Here, temporal technical sequences which have an influence on the market launch can also be mentioned (milestones regarding development).
- How and where will the product be advertised? This includes presentations at trade fairs, lectures and, for example, publications in trade journals. Which of the partners is responsible for which of the measures?
- Description of the timeline. Milestones (prototypes, tests, approval procedures, production, etc.) may be taken into account as well as the market launch. (Example: In the first year, only the market in Germany is tackled, followed by France and the Netherlands, and in the fourth year the remaining EU countries).
- A project always has a goal for everyone involved. What changes will result from achieving the goal. (Example: A new research direction is being opened up in the research group. The participating company secures jobs, e.g. through products for a previously untapped market)

If the individual items are specified by a template, this fact sheet provides guidance on possible content. If there is no specification, you can use the process and content given here as a guide.

4. Business concept

This is usually a very short text (1-2 pages) that basically describes the possibilities of a spin-off.

- The first step is to present the business idea and how it can generate profits.
- What steps are necessary for a spin-off?
- What support is needed? LOI`s from project partners as enclosures are helpful, as well as clarify how UBT can provide IP rights. Here, care must be taken to ensure that the necessary leeway in cooperation agreements is also taken into account in order to make the establishment legally possible.
- Estimation of financial needs and financing.

We are happy to help.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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