



**Grow Your
Business Faster
and Stronger with
SDA CPA +
LivePlan**



Business Owners' Common Frustrations

Have you ever felt like:

- You're working too hard, and too many hours?
- Your business isn't growing fast enough?
- You're not making enough money?
- Your business isn't as fun as it used to be?

If so, don't worry. You're not alone. Business is hard. And for small business owners, it can be lonely. It's hard whether you're just starting out, or have an established business.

Just consider these facts:

- According to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), 40 percent of new small businesses fail within 2 years. That's an alarming failure rate amongst startup businesses.
- The SBA also reports that 60 percent of small businesses that fail are profitable when they fail. By the time most businesses realize they are in trouble, it is often too late to get help. The business can be too upside-down for a lending institution or investor to take the risk.
- On a positive note, businesses that actively plan—meaning they plan and measure against the plan—grow 30 percent faster. A comprehensive research study by Cranfield University, "Do Business Plans Add Value?" discovered businesses that actively plan grow 30 percent faster.

Let's consider some of the reasons for these alarming statistics...



The reasons so many small businesses fail

- **A confusion between profits and cash**, and delaying tracking cash until it's a critical problem—small business startups are prone to simply running out of cash
- **An inability to build a profitable business model** with an understanding of revenue, expense drivers, and product margin
- **Failure to create and communicate concise value propositions** in a clear and compelling way
- **No real differentiation in the market**, which makes price the only competitive advantage
- **Emotional pricing instead of strategic pricing**; reacting to gut feel and emotion rather than data
- **Not communicating with customers to understand their needs**, leading to a lack of understanding of the market
- **Lack of strategic business planning**
- **Rapid expansion leading to overspending and running out of cash**

- **A lack of systems and processes for operations**, as well as sales and marketing (both are important)

It doesn't get any easier after five years. Growth brings opportunity, but also a new set of problems to tackle.

The challenges facing the established business

Businesses that have been established for five or more years have typically gone through an initial high growth phase, but without strategic planning, they can start to stagnate.

Some of the common problems we find include:

- Constant cash flow issues due to the demands of high overhead and working capital needs
- Slow growth and lack of strategies to grow sales
- Downward pressure on price and margins

- Working harder without seeing results
- Consistently falling short of profit targets

More than tax planning

Tax planning alone will not help a business grow and realize better profit and margins. Tax planning is critical to help minimize taxes, but does not help build strategic programs to grow a business.

Real business growth—growth that leads to increased valuation—comes from increasing revenues, gross margin, and net profit.



So, what is the *solution*?

The solution is strategy:

Lean Planning, forecasting, budgeting, and planning for cash flow needs.

However, this can be frustrating work, for reasons such as:

- Financial statements are hard to read and interpret—they don't seem like business management tools. Business owners often tell us, "I know my business. I don't understand how the numbers can help me make better decisions."
 - It's hard to make spending decisions, or business growth decisions. Business owners tell us that it "feels like trial and error."
 - You know your accountant has the information, but it's hard to know what questions you need to ask to access that information.
 - Planning seems like a good idea, but "I don't know how to do it in a way that will help my business."
- "I know I need to set goals and monitor progress, but I don't know how, and I don't have time."
 - "I need a lender-ready business plan, but I don't know what format to use."

The answer is to revisit your strategy, your reason for being in business, and what you want to achieve.

Our LivePlan growth programs will help you identify what you want to achieve and how to get there. We work with you to create a roadmap that gives you a clear picture of how to build the business you want.

This service is for business owners who want to get better results.

Some of the key work we will do for your business:

- **Analyze financial trends**, to help you make better business decisions and improve your profits.
 - **Conduct regular review meetings.** We'll even attend your board meetings if needed, as a resource you can call upon for business advice, acting as a facilitator or sounding board for your ideas.
 - **Help you to set and achieve business, and even personal, goals.** After all, your small business is part of your life. The goals between them are intertwined!
 - **Help you to identify and tackle the major challenges facing your business.** This can seem broad, but qualified analysis can identify problem areas.
- **Produce up-to-date business management information**, which will help you understand exactly what your current situation is.

Get started

We know that everyone is different. Your business is unique. We provide you with a range of options to let you choose the package that best meets your needs.

For each package, we offer a fixed price so you can budget and plan. And each of those packages can be customized so that you get exactly what you want.

In other words, you're in complete control and can build the LivePlan growth program that best meets your needs and budget.



We provide you with a range of options to let you choose the package that best meets your needs.



Your packages *at a glance*

Advisory services include a range of service and deliverables, from financial reporting, to planning, strategy, and business management. Whatever your business, you will find one of our LivePlan growth programs to suit your needs. Each package has a level of setup, planning, and feedback. The amount of reporting information, strategic planning, and feedback or business coaching you'll receive increases with each level of package.

Business Insights

Business Insights is primarily focused on reporting. Although it's just the basics— enough to give you the critical information about your regular business performance— it's a great place to start and get helpful insights. You will have access to real-time data on your business, in a format that makes easy reading for business owners. Business Insights also includes upfront goal setting, which means you'll have measurable targets to track performance against.

Business Growth

This is our most popular option because in this package we add planning and forecasting, so that you have set business goals to track. Planning leads to growth, and the ability to see plan-versus-actual financial data on a regular basis will help you make smart business decisions. You get valuable reports to help you manage your business and support to help you understand your numbers, make the best decisions, and achieve your goals.

Peak Performance

This is the best option for ambitious business owners who want to work closely with their accounting professional. You will receive one-on-one business coaching, as well as more comprehensive financial forecasting to make longer term strategic decisions. This is a full management package, bringing you monthly reviews and business management support. Think of it as your outsourced CFO.



The amount of reporting information, strategic planning, and feedback or business coaching you'll receive increases with each level of package.

Your packages in detail:	Peak Performance	Business Growth	Business Insights
Initial assessment and set up	✓	✓	✓
Goal analysis	✓	✓	✓
1-year sales forecast	✓	✓	✓
Financial Dashboard	✓	✓	✓
Benchmark metrics for your business	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited advice on business advisory matters	✓	✓	✓
Business summary web page	✓	✓	✓
Summary management reporting	✓	✓	✓
Financial systems health check	✓	✓	✗
The Lean Plan	✓	✓	✗
Measuring the things that really matter	✓	✓	✗
1-year full financial forecast	✓	✓	✗
Full periodic management reporting	✓	✓	✗
Business review meeting	✓	✓	✗
Access to cloud-based reporting platform	✓	✓	✗
3-year financial plan	✓	✗	✗
Rolling cash flow and profit forecasts	✓	✗	✗
Financial scenarios based on need	✓	✗	✗
Prioritized strategic action plan	✓	✗	✗
Accountability program—your business coach	✓	✗	✗

How you benefit from our *LivePlan Business Insights package*

Business Insights is focused on reporting. Although it's just the basics—enough to give you the critical information about your regular business performance—it's a great place to start. You will have access to real-time data on your business, in a format that makes easy reading for business owners. Business Insights also includes upfront goal setting, which means you'll have measurable targets to track performance against. There are six core components to Business Insights:

Initial assessment and set up

We set you up with the LivePlan reporting system, linking it to your cloud accounting software. LivePlan provides real-time financial data in charts and graphs built for small business owners. Just the critical numbers you need, in a format that's easy to understand. We carry out an initial assessment of your financial data to get a better understanding of your business. This includes the most important numbers in your business and what those numbers are now. This process will give you greater clarity on where your business is now.

Goal analysis and 1-year sales forecast

Working together, we look at what is important to you, what you want to

achieve both personally and in business, and build your goals. This stage will help you clarify where you want to be.

Using your goals, we will develop a 1-year sales forecast. A sales forecast is the first step to building a full financial forecast. Our Business Growth package includes the full forecast, but even a 1-year sales forecast is a very helpful tool to meeting your goals.

Financial Dashboard

One of the most popular features is the financial Dashboard: a semi-customizable screen showing you the key financial information you need to run your business. We will work with you to identify the most important numbers for your business and then set this up

within LivePlan. You'll come to rely on this Financial Dashboard just as much as you rely on the dashboard in your car when driving.

Benchmark metrics for your business

In addition to the Dashboard, you'll have access to industry benchmarks on your business type. Benchmarks are industry averages on key financial metrics. They allow you see how your business performs against other businesses like yours.

LivePlan Business Insights package *continued...*

Unlimited advice on business advisory matters

As part of all packages, you get unlimited advice on business advisory matters. Your fixed price is fully inclusive of unlimited email and telephone support for advice on ad-hoc matters. This means that you can call on us at any time, knowing that you will never be charged for our time or advice. We want you to feel free to speak to us whenever you need to, without ever having to worry about the cost.

Of course, if the issues raised at any of these unlimited free consultations (or anywhere else) require research or analysis beyond the consultation, we will give you a fixed price quotation for that extra work before any additional work is started. This means you will never get an unexpected bill.

Business summary (plus web page and PPT output)

Together, we will produce a one-page business summary, which can be offered to anyone interested in your business, from friends to investors. Your business summary will feature your business logo, headline, and unique selling proposition; your team members, partners, and resources; and your sales and marketing goals. The online business summary also includes a web page and Powerpoint presentation for you to use anywhere.

(Our Business Growth package includes a Lean Planning session, which is a deeper dive into these subjects, yielding a Lean Business Plan.)

Summary management reporting

The real power of a cloud accounting system is having real-time management information—information such as, who owes me money, what are my sales this month, and am I making a profit? As part of our Business Insights package, we will help you set up the key reports you need so that the most important information

is always a click away. Having your finger on the pulse of your business is critical for making the right business decisions. You need to know the key numbers. Besides the real time data you will access via the Dashboard, we will supply you with reports such as these:

- **A periodic* sales ledger report** showing you exactly how much money your customers owe you and how long those accounts receivables have been outstanding. This report will help you to keep on top of your accounts receivables and put more cash into your bank account.
- **A periodic* purchase ledger report** showing you how much money you owe to your suppliers.

* You choose how frequently you want this summary management information. Most people choose monthly or quarterly.

Of course, this is just a starting point. Many of our clients choose to involve us in business planning and management for growth, and this is the purpose of our next package: Business Growth.

How you benefit from our *LivePlan Business Growth package*

This is our most popular option; in this package, we add planning and forecasting, so that you have set business goals to track. Planning leads to growth, and the ability to see plan versus actual financial data on a regular basis will help you make smart business decisions.

You get valuable reports to help you manage your business, and support to help you understand your numbers, make the best decisions and achieve your goals. You get everything listed above plus the following:

Financial systems health check

We will periodically review your bookkeeping entries—at a frequency of your choice—to look for any errors or omissions. Even small errors, when undetected, can throw off financial data, making management information misleading. This check also acts as early-warning signal to let you know if

anything needs fixing—before it becomes a big problem.

All in all, the health check will give you peace of mind that the decisions you're making are based on accurate information.

The Lean Plan

A well-written Lean Plan is the biggest difference for creating growth in your company. We will work together to review the four most important subjects in your business:

- What does your business sell,
- Who does it sell to,
- How does it sell, and
- What does it rely on to make all of that work?

Using our skill with numbers, we will work with you to determine if your business is set up to achieve your goals.

This detailed analysis explores your business challenges, how to overcome those hurdles, and ways to get from where you are now to where you want to be. We use a variety of tools and processes to help you map out your strategies for getting to where you want to be. The Lean Plan includes strategic goals and a financial forecast.

Measuring the things that really matter

Numbers are really important. Not all numbers, but the right numbers are. Perhaps you've heard the phrase "what gets measured gets done." We help you to identify the really important numbers and how to measure them.



Measuring the right numbers on a regular basis helps keep you focused on moving toward your goal and increase the chances of you being successful.

1-year full financial forecast

A financial forecast is the key to tracking your actual performance against your plan. In our Business Insights package, we do a sales-only forecast, which is a great place to start. In the Business Growth package, we take that sales forecast and turn it into a full financial forecast, building in your costs and predicting your profits and cash flows.

Using the categories that really matter, together we will build a 1-year financial plan for your business. This plan will be tracked regularly, and will help to reveal areas where your business is struggling before you're in crisis, as well as opportunities for growth.

Full periodic management reporting

Because it is so important to know how your business is performing we will produce a full report every

month or quarter (you choose the frequency that best suits you), which will include:

- Your profit for the period compared against previous periods, which means you can see at a glance if your business is heading in the right direction.
- A detailed breakdown of each sales and expense category compared to previous periods, so you can see at a glance the key trends in your sales and your costs.
- Your sales ledger report showing you exactly how much money your customers owe you and how long those debts have been outstanding. This report will help you to keep on top of your accounts receivable and put more cash into your bank account.
- Your purchase ledger report showing you how much money you owe to your suppliers.



Business review meeting

One thing that all the most successful companies have in common is that they hold regular board meetings to discuss strategy. What's more, in our experience, when businesses—even sole proprietors— start holding board meetings, they immediately start thinking, acting, and achieving like their bigger and more successful counterparts.

In this meeting, we will review your management reports, the numbers that really matter, help you with strategy, and adapt the plan to meet your changing needs.

Business Growth includes quarterly review meetings. Our Peak Performance package includes monthly meetings of this nature, with more advanced strategic planning.

Access to cloud-based reporting platform

We use the industry-leading LivePlan platform giving you instant access to information in real time.

There is a subscription fee to access LivePlan, but as part of our Business Growth package we pay this on your behalf, which means you get all the benefits of a real time reporting system to manage your business.



One thing that all the most successful companies have in common is that they hold regular board meetings to discuss strategy.

How you benefit from our *LivePlan Peak Performance package*

This is the best option for ambitious business owners who want to work closely with their accounting professional, get access to our rolling forecasting helping you understand and plan for the future, and comprehensive structured support and advice. You get everything listed above plus the following:

3-year financial plan

As part of our planning session, we will build a 3-year, full financial plan, including forecasts for the three main financial statements: profit and loss, balance sheet, and cash flow. The financial plan is the basis for monitoring and measuring your business performance and for your strategic action plan. The full financial forecast can also be used with lenders and investors, should the need arise.

Rolling cash flow and profit forecasts

Forecasting and budgeting help you plan, and will give you an early-warning signal if you are likely to face cash shortages. Our forecasting option looks at each of your forecast profits, cash, and net assets, giving you a complete picture of what your business might look like in the future. In fact, this is such a powerful business planning tool that banks very often insist seeing your forecast when you apply for a business loan.

As part of this forecast, you will benefit from:

- **Advanced modeling of accounts receivable days** so you can see the impact on cash flow if you change your payment terms
- **Advanced modeling of accounts payable days** so you can see the impact on cash flow of various supplier

payment terms

- **Comparing projections against actual results** so we can continually amend your forecasts in light of actual performance; this means you will be able continually monitor whether you are on track to achieve your goals

Financial scenarios

Financial forecasts are powerful business management tools. But, sometimes it's necessary to model financial scenarios based on potential shifts in business. Maybe you want to open a new location, or consider a capital purchase. How might that affect your long-term profitability or short-term cash? Financial scenarios give you that insight. Our Peak Performance package includes unlimited support in developing financial scenarios based on business need.

LivePlan Peak Performance package continued...

Prioritized strategic action plan

At the end of our sessions together, you will have a clear picture of what needs to be done, and how and when to do it, so you can make the right decisions for reaching your goals. We create a Prioritized Strategic Action Plan, giving you a roadmap for the way forward.

Accountability program: Monthly meetings and your business coach

One of the keys to success is taking action. You need to do the things necessary to move you toward your goals. Unfortunately, this is harder than it sounds. The day-today running of a business often gets in the way. Having an external person holding you accountable helps you to get the right things done.

We will schedule a monthly call with you to help you work through your strategic action plan and provide help and support. This external support will make it much more likely that you will achieve your personal and business goals.



Popular add-ons and enhancements

Our three LivePlan business planning packages are flexible. For example:

- **If you want to change the frequency** of our meetings and/or the reports, you can do that. Although we recommend monthly reports and meetings, if you are on a tight budget, you can change them to quarterly.
- **All of our meetings will be held online or in our office.** However if you prefer to have them face to face in your office, we can do that too. Your the boss. You choose.

There are other enhancements you can add on if you find them valuable. For example:

- **A detailed Power SWOT analysis** where we analyse your strengths and how to build on them, and your weaknesses and how to minimize them. We analyse your external threats and think through how to protect your business from them, making it future-proof, and we analyse your opportunities and how to capitalize on the best ones.

- We can create a full business plan including a pricing strategy and marketing plan. This is powerful for attracting funding or new investors, as well as helping you crystallise your thinking and strategy.
- **If raising capital is important**, we can create a full lender-ready business plan designed specifically for helping you secure important funds for your business.

You will get much more out of your LivePlan business plan when your business takes advantage of a modern cloud-based financial accounting system. If you do not yet have it in place, we can set that up for you with our Cloud Accounting Set Up service.



You will get much more out of your LivePlan business plan when your business takes advantage of a modern cloudbased financial accounting system.





Cloud Accounting Set Up:

Installing a cloud accounting system

A cloud accounting system will make your life so much easier. Here are some of the benefits:

- **It saves you** a very significant amount of time
- **It gives you 24/7 access** to up-to-date financial information and reports (you can use cloud-based software from any device with an internet connection)
- **You can sleep at night** knowing your sensitive financial data is always secure and backed-up automatically
- **No system downtime** because all software upgrades are automatically installed; this worry-free maintenance saves you time and hassle
- **Since your accountant can access your data 24/7**, you get more value from an accountant—they will help you run and grow your business rather than just adding up the numbers We will set up your cloud accounting system and provide full advice and training.



You can use cloud-based software from any device with an internet connection.



We are happy to answer any questions
you may have so feel free to give us a call
at **770-392-1113**