



Module code: BMSW 4006
Module name: Managing Enterprise in the 21st Century
Module Leader: Dr XXXXXX XXXXXXXX

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Table of Contents

I.	Executive Summary	2
	Market synopsis	2
	Company Ownership/Legal Entity.....	3
	Financial Projection.....	3
II.	Business Overview	3
	Mission Statement and Vision	3
III.	Products and Services	4
IV.	Marketing audit	4
	Competitor analysis	5
	Our competitive advantages	5
	SWOT analysis.....	5
	PESTLE Analysis.....	6
V.	Target Market	7
	Interpretation of the questionnaire	7
VI.	Marketing Plan	8
	Marketing Strategy	8
VII.	Management Team	8
VIII.	Financial Plan	9
IX.	References	12
X.	Appendix	13
	1.Our services	13
	2. Our competitive advantages	13
	3. PESTLE analysis	14
	4. Market research Questionnaire	15
	5. Marketing strategy.....	16
	6. Management team	16
	7.Cash Flow Forecast.....	18

Executive Summary

The executive summary, according to Thiefels (2019), is the most relevant part of a business plan. Investors often rely on this without reading all the contents of the plan. So, a good business plan must be as detailed and interesting as possible.

HouseCarers provide exceptional on-site house-sitting services. We offer the same personalized, loving pet care that owners would provide if at home. Our team guarantee that the client can take business or holiday travels with peace of mind that their property and pets are in diligent care.

HouseCarers is a partnership agreement. It is formed equally between six partners with equal responsibilities. XXXXXX XXXXX, XXXXXX XXXXX, XXXXXX XXXXX, XXXXXX XXXXX, XXXXXX XXXXX and XXXXXX XXXXX are the company's owners. Each partner has unique skills related to the business from management to customer care. Like a business partnership, we take advantage of our personal work experiences and related skills to give the company a greater chance of success with customers who prefer to leave their pets at home when they travel or who want their pets to be entertained while away.

House Carers provide this along with a range of other services, including:

- Home sitting services
- Pet sitting services/ Pet walking
- Visits daily
- For days or weeks, 24-hour care is available
- Watering the plants
- Collection of mail
- Waste/Recycling
- Shopping

Market synopsis

Over the last three years, over 3 million families travelled out from Birmingham airport (Caa.co.uk, 2018). West Midlands is our targeted area. According to our market research questionnaire (Appendix 4), customers prefer to have a house sitter look after their pet rather than pets going into a kennel. Pets are happier in their environment.

Our competitive advantages are, while there are now four house sitting firms in West Midlands and based online, only three of them provide on-site home and pet care. None provide daily visit services for home and pet owners.

Company Ownership/Legal Entity

HouseCarers is a partnership agreement. The business is formed equally between six partners with equal responsibilities. A business partnership is defined as “a relationship between two or more partners who have common and unlimited responsibilities. All partners are equally liable for the debts and capital of the business” (Needle and Burns, 2010).

Financial Projection

Sales expectations for year one is £77,500. Based on the size of our market and the designated target region. For the first three years, we anticipate a 10% annual growth rate. Each partner will be paid a basic £7,200 a year. All qualified to provide a home sitting service but also add more staff as the business grows.

Business Overview

HouseCarers concept was envisioned by a group of students from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. The business is guided by a team with over 30 years combined experience in marketing, finance, sales, web design and the passion to help people in the community.

We offer a unique service while customers are away. We can achieve this through negotiating a timed based requirement of days/nights at the discretion of the client. HouseCarers have the added initiative to introduce highly-skilled, competent personnel to care for pets alongside the property with added services as one complete package tailored for the client's needs.

The benefit of having that peace of mind whilst away allows you to enjoy your holiday knowing the house is secure and pets are comfortable in their environment.

What makes our team different from the competition is we also have a repair person with DIY skills to fix maintenance issues if any may occur during an absence. For example, plumbing, minor electrical and garden maintenance.

The launch on the market is expected to be on 1st September 2021. We are based in Birmingham, but our services will be sold online and will cover the West Midlands area.

Mission Statement and Vision

Our mission is to help customers have a pleasant and relaxed holiday while we take care of their homes and valuables. HouseCarers vision is to expand the business across the United Kingdom and around the world while having a positive environment for our employees.

Products and Services

We are a home and pet sitting company built on trust, commitment, and provide our customers with a safe comforting, reliable service. We hire people who have passed all the requirements, have a clean criminal record, and meet all other requirements. Our dedicated team work hard to reassure customers their home and belongings will be guarded and protected.

We aim to provide unique, personalized packages. These ranging from one-off visits to nightly stays. In the picture below you can see the range of different packages, we offer, with the option to customize any package (see Appendix 1).

PLATINUM	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
£99.99 per day	£79.99 per day	£49.99 per day	£34.99 per day
• Days & night stays (three-day visits & overnight stay) • House clean before your return • Basic grocery shopping before your return • Look after one or more pets	• Two-day visits and overnight stay • House clean before your return • Basic grocery shopping before your return • Look after one pet	• Three-day visits • House clean before your return • Basic grocery shopping before your return	• Two-day visits • House clean before your return

*We can personalize packages with additional services incurring supplementary charges.

*Day visit consists of 20 minutes per visit and overnight from 8 pm till 8 am.

Marketing audit

According to Kotler and Keller (2009), a marketing audit is a tool that helps companies to analyze their competitors, to formulate their strategies and it must be “periodic, comprehensive, systematic, independent analysis of marketing environment, the company’s objectives, strategies, to determine opportunities and threats and recommend an action plan to improve company performance.”

Competitor analysis

According to Myk Pono (2018), a competitor analysis is a strategy that helps us identify our competitors, their strengths and weaknesses and compare them with our business.

Factors	Our company	House Sitters UK	Home Sitters	MindAHome
Industry	House-sitting	House-sitting	House-sitting	House-sitting
Products or services	House sitting and pet sitting	Pet sitting and house sitting	Home and pet sitting	House sitting
Similarity	Online website	Online website	Online website	Online website
What are the differences	Employees living in the house or just visit 2-3 times a day Basic cleaning and gardening Checking mail, accepting deliveries and paying bills Pet care	House sitters provide free pet care, garden care and home security in return for free accommodation	Employees live in the house and look after pets, garden and security.	Matching home sitters and homeowners across the UK.
Quality	Best prices with attractive customized packages ID verified and trained employees Additional insurance, handyman	Free for owners Sitters are paying for their services	Trained employees	Experienced house sitters all over the country
Advertising	Facebook Leaflets/Business cards Social media advertising Website	Facebook Instagram Business cards/Leaflets Website	Facebook Instagram Business cards/Leaflets Website	Facebook Instagram Business cards/Leaflets Website
Prices	Customized packages	Customized packages	24-h period charges	Subscription fees only for house sitters
Location	West Midlands	Across UK	Across UK	Across UK
How big of a threat are competitors to you?		Fair	Fair	Fair
How do their strategies affect your business?		Well-established business	Well-established business	No threats

Our competitive advantages

On our marketing audit, first, we established three of our biggest competitors: HouseSitters UK, Home Sitters and Mindahome. We all work in the online field and have the same advertising methods, social media, leaflets and business cards.

What we have different from our competitors is that our employees can live in the house, or they can just visit 2-3 times a day, we also do basic cleaning and gardening, light grocery shopping, checking mail and accepting deliveries, and pet care.

We engage to offer the best prices with attractive customized packages, and we ensure our customers that our employees are full ID verified and trained.

You can find a more detailed description in Appendix 2.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is “a strategic tool that enables companies to analyze the internal and external dimensions of the business” (Ommani, 2011). It is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.



The fact that we are new in the market and have a low reputation makes us want to combat this weakness through the close connection that exists between the management team, house sitters and customers by delivering high-quality services.

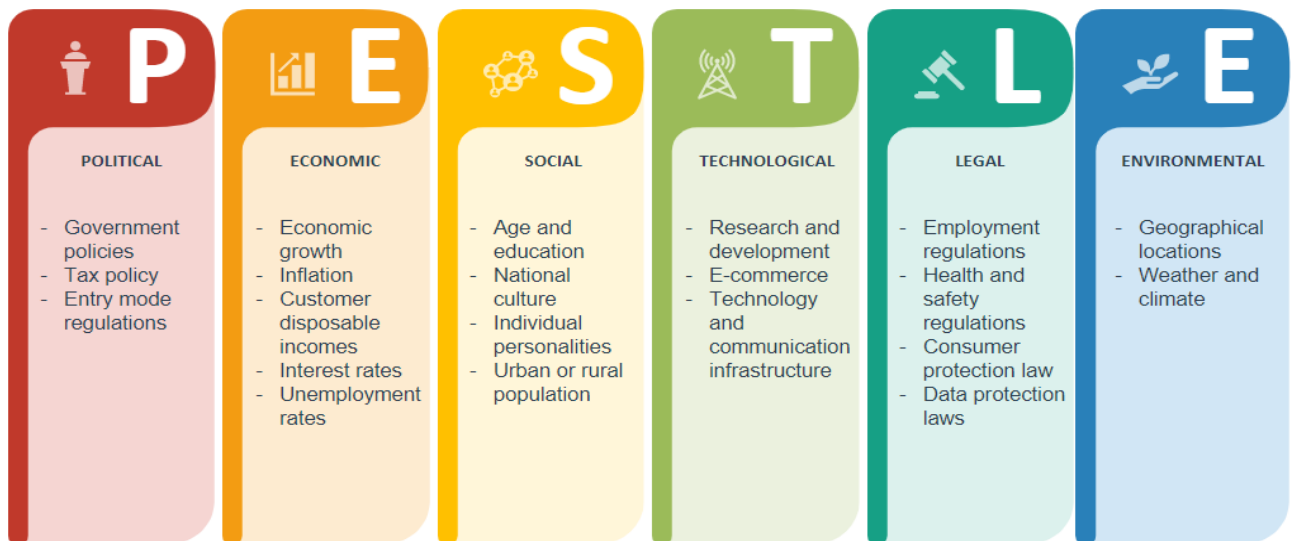
We can create over time a bigger team hiring more trained and full checked employees and entering a partnership with other strong services providers on the market using our dedication and determination as a strength.

Nowadays the increased cost of living is a big threat for us, as is travelling abroad due to COVID-19 pandemic, some customers cannot afford to go on holidays or the restrictions in place prohibit travel to certain countries.

PESTLE Analysis

A PESTLE analysis is an acronym for a tool used to identify the macro (external) forces facing an organization. The letters stand for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental (Oxford College of Marketing blog, 2016).

Every factor has been explained and detailed in appendix 3.



Target Market

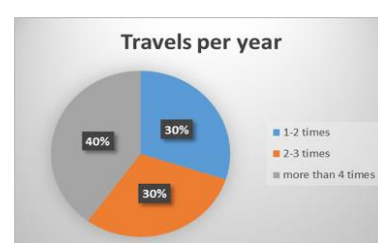
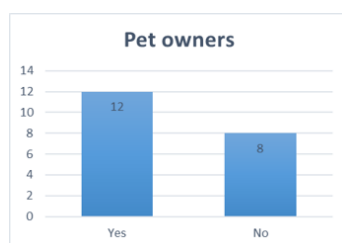
The target market can be defined as the group of customers to which the business is addressed (Investopedia, 2021).

At HouseCarers, we are happy to help customers any time, we know last-minute issues can happen. We aim to satisfy our customers travelling for work or pleasure. Our target market is based on:

- clients living in block apartments\flats\houses
- customers with more than one property and who split their time between them all
- people travelling regularly for work or pleasure
- customers that need 1-hour or more visits per day

Interpretation of the questionnaire

Based on 20 questionnaires (see appendix 4) completed by our clients, we have observed that more than half of our customers are pet owners and that they are willing to pay for our services they find affordable. We also found that we have a variety of customers that travel less than 2 times a year or more than 4 times a year.



Marketing Plan

Marketing is about understanding what the customer needs and offering the right service and making money from it (Westwood, 2013).

Using the SWOT and Pestel analysis, our strengths, and opportunities out way the threats and any weaknesses building this business can course. We will be focusing on using the internet/social media to start. Already have a great website full of information (see Appendix 5), offers and all the services we provide.

Business cards will be printed ready, with leaflets distributed throughout West Midlands starting 1st September 2021. Adverts will be broadcasted on social media.

Vehicles will have magnetic signs with name and website details visible. We will cover all areas in the West Midlands 24/7. Always ready to go.

Marketing Strategy

To introduce HouseCarers, we envisage sending introductory letters and our business brochure to areas of business. We intend to play a heavy presence on Internet blogs and forums including social media.

We are an online business. We will present our company on a static and interactive website as a stamp of internet awareness. Our strategic methodology of obtaining repeat business is to incentivize referrals with our existing clients. We will present percentage discounts on successful referrals obtained and utilized. Our tools for measuring our marketing success will be client feedback and appraisals and the number of clients per area.

Management Team

According to Pinson (2008), the weak and unskilled management team is very often the reason why businesses fail. HouseCarers management consists of six full-time employees with over 30 years of experience in different fields. The business is organized into three areas: finance and administration, marketing, and human resources. In appendix 6, you can find the description of each member and role possessed in the company.

	XXXXXX XXXX: MANAGING DIRECTOR		XXXXXX XXXX: DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS
	XXXXXX XXXXX: ADMINISTRATION GROUP MANAGER		XXXXXX XXXXX: WEB DESIGNER
	XXXXXX XXXXXXX: CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANT		XXXXXX XXXXX: HR RECRUITER

Financial Plan

A financial plan is living – it moves and changes with your life, so as life changes, it can adjust and keep you on track towards what you ultimately are hoping to achieve. (Ponesse and CPA, 2020)

While doing the financial plan it is plain to see the idea and passion shown can take this business far. A **£50,000** grant was offered, which was used as the starting budget, a tight budget but achievable and noticeably clear to see from the cash flow forecast that we are on target. As you can see in the cash flow (appendix 7) all equipment, insurance covers, marketing\advertising and checks are covered for the first month with many covered for the first year. With a lot of determination, we are positive that together with our combined experiences, we will make Housecarers a successful business.

HouseCarers		Profit and Loss Forecast		
Period: Year to 30 September 2022				
Sales	£		77,500	(A)
Grant	£		50,000	
Less direct (variable) costs	£			
Materials	£		13,875	
Direct Wages	£		0	
Other	£		0	
Total direct costs	£		13,875	
Gross profit/contribution	£		113,625	(B)
Fixed costs(overheads)	£			
Wages (incl. taxes)	£	39,600		
Rent	£	0		
Miscellaneous	£	600		
Advertising	£	2,800		
Insurance	£	2,184		
Transport	£	1,740		
Telephone/Internet	£	1,080		
Materials/Equipment	£	0		
Repairs/Renewal	£	0		
Depreciation	£	0		
Local Taxes	£	0		
Other Prof. fees	£	0		
Other Sundry	£	0		
Total fixed costs	£		48,004	(C)
Net profit	£		65,621	
Less drawings or dividends	£		0	
Profit retained in the company	£		65,621	

From the Profit and Loss forecast, you can see that our business is likely to be profitable and grow in the first year, a profit that we can further invest in our development.

$$\text{Break-even point} = (C) \times (A) / (B)$$

Our Break-even point = £48,004 (total fixed costs) x £77,500 (sales) / £113,625 (Gross profit) = £32,742

According to our Profit and loss forecast, our break-even point of £32,742 is the amount of sales that we need to have to pay all our costs that must be paid and where there is neither profit nor loss.

The market audit shows how competitive the business is against other companies with similar concepts, as well as showing the extras and the vast range of services that can be provided. SWOT shows the strengths and all the opportunities that can follow, it also shows how we can

overcome any weakness or threat the business can give, with many of them being rectified already. What a great start to what we see as a great idea.

Together we have decided to continue marketing and advertising this great business idea formed. Marketing is the key to get the custom. With all plans covered and from word of mouth, it will be on target to achieve all aspects of a great, smoothly run company with outstanding reviews leading to high turnovers. We are confident enough to say everything is on track with the budget, including having an emergency fund available in case any emergency occurs, and funds to go towards widening the areas we cover in the near future.

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Appendix

1. Our services

Customers can use our Facebook page, website or email to book our services. We will endeavour to respond as soon as possible during our 8 am / 8 pm office hours. When a reservation is made, we follow several steps to make sure that our services are adequate and fully satisfy the customer. We interview with the client, where we take all the information necessary to carry out our work. In bookings where pet sitter services are required, we do a cognitive interview where we take all the information about the animals, character, special care, diet to understand exactly how to make the animal comfortable during the absence of the owners.

As previously mentioned, we offer personalized services based on the needs of customers. For the silver, gold and platinum packages we have a basic grocery service that includes products to choose from such as, coffee, tea, milk, bread and eggs, sausage, bacon, mushrooms. These products are included in the package at no additional cost. If the customer has different preferences and would like to add other services, we allow them to do so with an additional cost based on what they would like. Before the return of the owners, regardless of the chosen package, we make a basic cleaning of the house. Our commitment is to make customers happy and carefree. According to Jons, having a clean house helps to combat anxiety and stress, this is why we want to make it easier for our clients when returning home from a trip, without having to think about the dust that has accumulated during their absence.

2. Our competitive advantages

What are the differences between us and our competitors?

Compared to our competitors, we offer a live-in or just visits as and when the customer requires. We also do basic house cleaning and general gardening with homeowner's tools or our own. We can check mail, accept deliveries, pay bills, shopping, and the most importantly take care of pets.

Quality: We can provide the best services at the best prices with attractive customized packages to make customers content. We have business insurance that covers all the properties we take on including the client's possessions and any damage that can occur while the property is in our care. All staff will be ID verified and have full pet care training.

Advertising: Currently, we are active in the online field. We are proud of our website, customers can book a house sitter or get a free quote. We pay for social media advertising and are spreading leaflets and business cards throughout the neighbourhoods we aim to cover.

Prices: Compared to some of our competitors, we offer customized packages tailored to customer needs. The criteria we used to divide our product prices were the amount of time spent on the client property, how many pets they have, and additional services requested.

Location: For a quick and smooth start-up, West Midlands is an exceptionally desirable choice, it covers seven big cities: Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Solihull, Coventry, and Sandwell, all populated by people with different financial statements.

3. PESTLE analysis

How external factors affect us:

- a. Political factors that can affect our business are:
 - Corporation taxes that can be increased or decreased by the government affecting our profits
 - Increased value-added tax on services;
 - A new law about National Minimum Wage adopted by the government that impacts our profit and employment rights
 - New health and safety rules, including how our staff is being trained.
- b. Economic factors
 - If economic growth occurs and we plan on increasing our team, we will pay more taxes
 - Due to inflation, prices rise and some of our clients may consider redirecting their money to more important things than holidays.
 - If the unemployment rate is high, then we will have more honest people to hire for the minimum wage. Otherwise, when the unemployment rate is low, we need to offer higher wages.
- c. Social factors
 - National culture: the UK has a multicultural population, and the area we are covering, West Midlands, has a variety of social classes, with different cultures and religions. That is why we personalize our packages for each customer based on their necessities.
 - People lifestyles can have an impact on our business. Based on the questionnaire we have used for market research, we have clients that travel for work or pleasure, some of them only 2 times a year, others more than 4 times a year. Our services are tailored to suit customer's lifestyles and preferences.
- d. Technological factors:
 - New products and services as a result of research and development, like smartphones, tablets, can help us to reach our clients faster and more secure
 - E-commerce helps us to save money with rent, office furniture,
 - Technology and communication infrastructure: our software must be up-to-date and in line with the new trends in the online field.
- e. Legal factors:

- Employment law by Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, we need to spend money on training our staff for pet care and to keep our standards as high as possible, but a good health and safety record is an opportunity for good workers to come and work for us.
- Employment Protection Act 1978, our employees will sign a written contract of employment, including all the regulations in place.
- Data protection law affects our business because we are working with personal information about our staff and customers, information that needs to be kept secure, accurate and up-to-date. Also, we are informing our clients what kind of information we will use and how, and give them the right to choose between having their information and delete it after the contract has finished.

4. Market research Questionnaire

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Are you a homeowner?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Maybe |
| <p>2. Are you a pet owner? If YES, please go to the next question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No | <p>8. Do you have a home insurance?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| <p>3. What kind of pet do you have and how many?</p> <p>Your answer:</p> | <p>9. Is your house equipped with security cameras?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| <p>4. How often do you travel?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ 1 – 2 times a year ☐ 3 – 4 times a year ☐ More than 4 times a year | <p>10. How much are you willing to spend for house sitting services?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ £50 - £80 ☐ £80 - £100 ☐ More than £100 |
| <p>5. Have you ever used a house sitter? If NO, please answer the next question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No | <p>11. What do you think about HouseCarers prices?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Cheap ☐ Affordable ☐ Expensive |
| <p>6. Why didn't you ever use a house sitter?</p> <p>Your answer:</p> | <p>12. Would you like to improve anything at HouseCarers?</p> <p>Enter your answer:</p> |
| <p>7. Would you like to receive information about the assigned house sitter?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Yes ☐ No | |

We want to thank you for taking the time to complete our questionnaire and offer you an additional service of your choice for 20% discount!

5. Marketing strategy

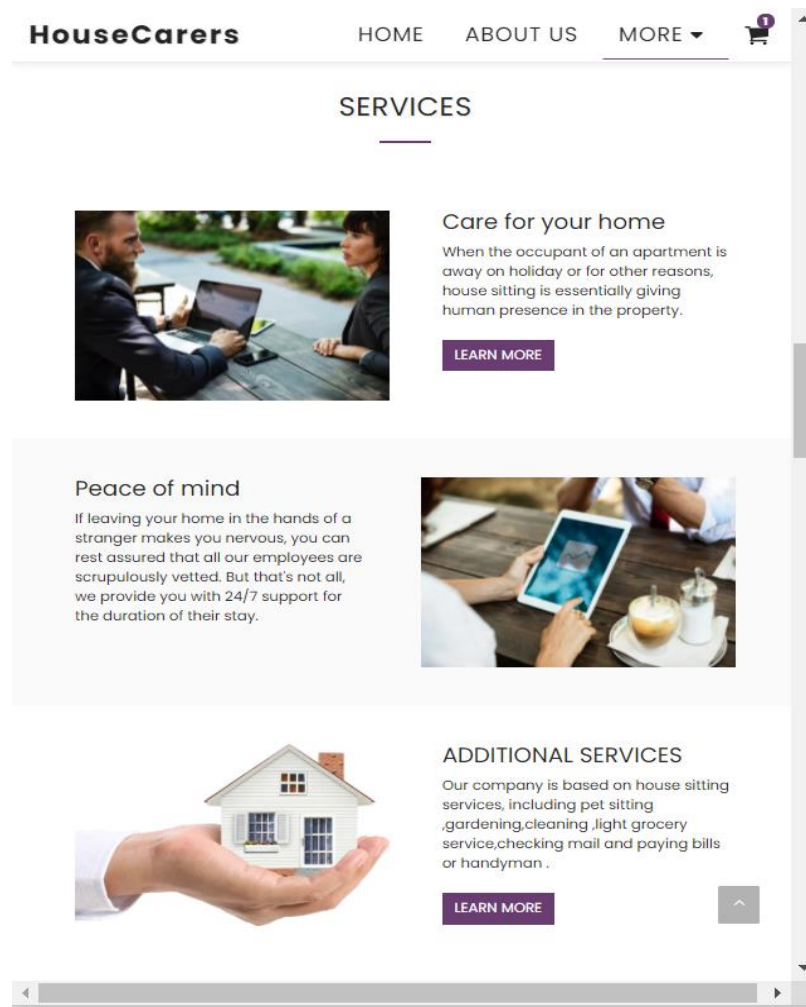


Figure 1 Website caption

Having a social page for your business according to Ristova (2014) is a big plus. It allows us to reach more customers, who can contact us at the most convenient times for them. Our website is ready for the first booking. Customers can explore various rubrics, such as the purpose and values of the business, who are the founders, the price list and so on.

6. Management team

We think it is important to point out that we were a team before we conceived the business. We have been colleagues at the university during the pandemic, we have supported and encouraged each other during uncertain times, and we have understood that we all have one thing in common: the desire to keep our community safe. Each of us will play a role related to his experience and this will be an advantage for the success of our business and to reduce costs in the initial periods.

For example, we would not need an accountant as we have **XXXXXX XXXXXX**, who as long as the business thrives will do the math, **XXXXXX XXXXXX** will make sure to have a good website without high costs and so on. We have **XXXXXX** who is currently in business and shares the ideas and realism behind company success.

XXXXXX XXXXXX: With 3 years of experience as a director she is going to cover the role of the **managing director**, in charge of providing guidance and advice to the team and making sure that the company is developing in the right direction.

XXXXXX XXXXXX: As a Director of Business Operations **XXXXXX XXXXXX** is already involved in a thriving business and understands the start-up and developing a business to international standards. He is going to focus on improving business operations and increasing profitability and e-commerce acumen.

XXXXXX XXXXXX: Specialized in administrative work, with five years of administrative experience **XXXXXX XXXXXX**, will manage the key aspects of administration and companies paper trail. Her role is vital in showing key areas for improvement and understanding our key performance indicators (KPI).

XXXXXX XXXXXX: Is our **Customer service assistant** with seven years of experience in the field and an extreme ability to manage even the most demanding customers. He will ascertain our customers will return and refer and recommend our company to others. The front-line management of our customer-facing roles is vital to our company's image and reputation.

XXXXXX XXXXXX: Has a unique mix of technical skills, creativity and problem solving, that's why he will cover the **Web/designer role**. His focal and adaptive skill set enables us to have a key advantage of technical and graphical knowledge of being able to change at a moments notice. This will continue to be a success during the short notice changes in marketing and advertising our special offers or announcements for the business.

XXXXXX XXXXXX: Ambitious and organized **HR Recruiter**, with the belief that all employees should work in a productive and positive environment. **XXXXXX XXXXXX** can be proud to know that she created the idea behind this business and her knowledge and people skills set her apart. Business success is through people and **XXXXXX XXXXXX** is at home in this department.

7.Cash Flow Forecast

HouseCarers Cash Flow Forecast	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	Totals
Sales Income		£6,000.00	£6,500.00	£8,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£6,500.00	£6,500.00	£7,000.00	£8,000.00	£9,500.00	£9,500.00	£77,500
Grants	£50,000.00												£50,000
Bank Loan													£0
Investment by Owner													£0
Any Other Income													£0
Total Incoming	£50,000	£6,000	£6,500	£8,000	£5,000	£5,000	£6,500	£6,500	£7,000	£8,000	£9,500	£9,500	£127,500
Stock/ Materials	£12,522.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£123.00	£13,875
Rent & Rates													£0
Wages		£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£3,600.00	£39,600
Drawings and N.I.C													£0
Utilities													£0
Insurances	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£182.00	£2,184
Repairs and Renewals													£0
Motor Expenses	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£145.00	£1,740
Phone/Internet	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£90.00	£1,080
Advertising	£800.00	£250.00	£250.00		£250.00	£250.00		£250.00	£250.00		£250.00	£250.00	£2,800
Print/Stationery													£0
Miscellaneous	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£50.00	£600
Loan Repayments													£0
Bank Charges													£0
Accountancy Fees													£0
Total Outgoing	£13,789	£4,440	£4,440	£4,190	£4,440	£4,440	£4,190	£4,440	£4,440	£4,190	£4,440	£4,440	£61,879
Incoming less outgoing	£36,211	£1,560	£2,060	£3,810	£560	£560	£2,310	£2,060	£2,560	£3,810	£5,060	£5,060	£65,621
Opening Bank Balance	£0	£36,211	£37,771	£39,831	£43,641	£44,201	£44,761	£47,071	£49,131	£51,691	£55,501	£60,561	
Closing Bank Balance	£36,211	£37,771	£39,831	£43,641	£44,201	£44,761	£47,071	£49,131	£51,691	£55,501	£60,561	£65,621	

It is a fundamental concept of business: before you can generate money, you must first figure out how to spend it. Making a budget is an important step in making your company ideas a reality. Using the forecasting tool, we can keep track of our cash on hand, business costs, and how much income we need to keep our company expanding – or at least afloat.

By committing these statistics to paper, we improve our chances of success by forecasting future requirements, expenditures, earnings, and cash flow. It may also allow us to identify problems before they become major issues, allowing us to shift gears.

As can be seen in the image above, we have estimated the monthly earnings based on the most popular holiday periods. According to Giles (2020), the main reason why U.K. residents go abroad is holidays, followed by visits to relatives and friends and for work. So in the summer months, Christmas, Easter and the mid-term holidays, we would have a higher income.

Since we operate online, we have no rental costs. Initially, we plan to buy two used minivans, where we would attach our magnetic logo. This will help us save money in the future, in case we change cars. We allocated £2,522 for the startup materials that we will use for cleaning, taking care of the garden etc. Our startup costs are not high and we are within the budget to have a good start to this business.