

Meet Venture Planner, the platform turning your ambition into a business plan

As part of our quick founder questions series - or QFQs - we spoke to Alex Clansey and Nicola McKenzie, Co-Founders of Venture Planner, about AI, entrepreneurial vision and strategy.

What was the catalyst for launching Venture Planner?

We built Venture Planner because we realised there was a need for innovation in the business planning landscape. Traditional methods of drafting business plans are not only time-consuming but also fraught with the potential for human error – entrepreneurs often have a vision, but not the detail. We leveraged our expertise in artificial intelligence, which has already revolutionised our legal and financial services businesses, to transform the way business plans are created. Venture Planner is our answer to the outdated, manual data entry systems that have long been the industry standard. It gathers all the necessary data to write a comprehensive plan in a much more efficient manner.

Tell me about the business – what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

At *Venture Planner*, we are proud to offer an innovative AI-powered business planning platform that is designed to bring entrepreneurial visions to life. Our cutting-edge software meticulously analyses hundreds of data points to gain a deep understanding of a business idea. By doing so, it expertly manages and aligns assumptions with realistic financial projections, ensuring that the business plan is both robust and achievable. This level of detailed insight is invaluable for anyone looking to create a solid foundation for their business venture.

We support a wide range of clients, from ambitious entrepreneurs and dynamic startups to seasoned financial consultants seeking a reliable tool for their clients. Our platform is built with the user in mind, offering an intuitive interface that simplifies the complex process of business planning.

How has the business evolved since its launch? When was this?

The business launched in December '23, since launch the platform has been adopted in over 20 countries. The platform is currently attracting over 20,000 new businesses every month. Given the quality of the planning provided, our focus has shifted from the entrepreneur to the business consultant more recently.

Tell us about the working culture at Venture Planner?

At Venture Planner, our working culture is rooted in innovation and problem-solving. We are a team of ambitious software developers, lawyers and financial advisors who thrive on tackling challenges with a creative approach. Our passion lies in leveraging emerging technologies to devise novel solutions that address complex business planning needs.

We foster an environment where curiosity and the pursuit of excellence are encouraged. Our developers are not just coders; they are inventors who are

constantly exploring new frontiers in technology. This exploratory mindset allows us to remain at the cutting edge of the business planning industry, ensuring that our clients receive the most advanced and efficient solutions available.

What are the benefits of a mutual mentorship?

Instead of taking the perhaps more traditional route of talking with external mentors, we've often found the greatest source of inspiration and guidance in each other. This has allowed us to learn from each other's expertise and perspectives. That's not to say however that we don't allocate time to mentor our staff or anyone looking for some career advice. Mentorship both on an internal and external basis is very important to us.

How are you funded?

Our business is fully funded by The Dunham McCarthy Group. The Dunham McCarthy Group is an established provider of professional services in the legal and financial sector.

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

As with many companies, our primary obstacle lies in effectively promoting our platform. Our team consists of business consultants, lawyers, and financial experts. Traditionally, our business model has been cantered around in-person interactions, where clients seek our counsel, and our reputation grows through personal recommendations. However, we are now focused on showcasing the unique and advanced capabilities of our software to a worldwide audience. This transition to the global digital market is challenging and requires us to climb a steep learning curve.

To overcome this challenge, we are implementing a multi-faceted marketing strategy that includes targeted online advertising, content marketing, and strategic partnerships. We are focused on creating high-quality, informative content that showcases the capabilities and benefits of our software, and we will use social media platforms to engage with potential customers and industry influencers. Additionally, we have sought out partnerships with established businesses that can benefit from our platform, thereby gaining access to new markets and customer bases. Through these efforts, we are

making significant strides in raising awareness and adoption of our business planning software.

How does Venture Planner answer an unmet need?

Venture Planner addresses three unmet needs. Firstly, it makes a good strategy accessible to entrepreneurs who may not have experience in building sufficient business plans. Secondly, it provides guidance on realistic forecasts to help manage assumptions. Entrepreneurs might have lofty expectations about revenue figures in their first year, but it might not be viable. Thirdly, it helps to turn ideas into tangible businesses. People might have great ideas, but they may not know where to start or they lack the confidence to follow up on it. Venture Planner allows them to make the leap and turn an idea into reality.

What's in store for the future?

We are working hard on a number of tools that will help businesses actually implement their plans. From project management to planning and executing marketing campaigns.

Do you have any advice for setting boundaries with defined skill sets?

Alex: Having clearly defined and complementary skill sets between business partners is important for avoiding conflicts. At Venture Planner, for example, I'm involved in everything that's product related, whilst the marketing aspect is purely Nicola's domain.

Nicola: There's clear division in our work, and that's driven by where our individual strengths and expertise lie. I excel in places that Alex doesn't so much and vice versa. It's important that there aren't two people trying to do the same thing.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

Alex: I would say first and foremost that it's about having a strategy for distribution. Having a rock solid way of getting your products out there is by far

and away the most important thing in any business. If you've got customers, you can build your organisation. We've made relationships with councils, local governments and brokers via our other businesses which has been crucial to our success.

Nicola: Once distribution is sorted, it's all about people and processes. Hiring people that are more skilled than us in specific areas has allowed us to scale Venture Planner and our other businesses. In terms of processes, automated technologies have also allowed us to grow far beyond our headcount. On a personal level, discipline and consistency is vital for success.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

Nicola: Our drive to succeed professionally means that other things can fall by the wayside slightly when new projects materialise, but we share that passion together. We're both workaholics, so our goals are very much the same. Alex is the only person who truly understands this specific part of my life and vice versa.

Alex: I couldn't imagine getting home from work and not being able to talk about what's happened in the day. We've also had amazing opportunities to access personal experiences together due to our careers. We've travelled the world to collect awards. Everything we've done, we've done together, and that's been amazing.

Alex Clansey and Nicola McKenzie are the co-founders of [Venture Planner](#).