

# Business Plan

## Acme Associates

### SCRUM Consulting Services

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#### Part 1

#### **Context**

Acme Associates was founded in July 2020 and is made of a team of three. The current focus of the company is to provide general business consulting services. The new focus is to provide consulting services on SCRUM implementation (agile methodology). Why is the focus on the SCRUM methodology? The founders have been managing companies for more than 10 years and tried different methods throughout the years, and they found that SCRUM was, by far, the superior method which delivered good results. The founders applied it in many different types of teams which faced the same problem: disorganization, deadline problems, free rider problems, etc. Every time SCRUM was applied, all these problems went away.

#### **Problem**

In Brazil companies are disorganized and are implementing management practices which result in low productivity. The problem is in the organization of the tasks and there is a need of an efficient methodology to increase productivity. It doesn't work to plan ahead when it takes a long time to reach the objectives, it becomes complex, one needs to be fast and agile and break down the objectives in smaller chunks.

#### **Solution**

The problem mentioned above can be resolved by implementing a SCRUM methodology in Brazilian companies. Acme Associates is offering complete guidance and consulting services on the agile methodology, with full practical implementation.

The product represents a packaged program which will offer an initial diagnosis of the current workflow of a specific team which will be followed by implementation of SCRUM methodology in that workplace, including assembling the team to execute the SCRUM methodology itself, after being trained. The training will be made of a theoretical part delivered to the team and the execution of the first sprint as a test, followed by individual support from Acme Associates. Weekly sprints will follow to prepare the leadership team in taking over the process. The consulting project

will come to an end when the management team is ready to take over the roles of SCRUM Master and Product Owners, which were performed by Acme Associates during the consulting phase.

### **Customer Focus Group**

SCRUM is currently applied mostly in software development, but it is widely adopted in several other businesses. Even the creators of SCRUM already applied the method in other types of companies.

The company will primarily focus on the clients representing the service industries (hospitals, law firms, educational companies), but also on other company, as SCRUM is designed for development of products and team management.

One of the customer personas could be described as being representatives of the middle management, companies who wish to transform or have a turnaround, lead by preponderantly more male than female, being between 30 and 60 years on the market already.

## **Part 2**

### **Strategy and competition**

Most of consultancies in Brazil are not focusing on SCRUM, but rather on traditional cascading management styles. Therefore, as such, Acme Associates is not competing with the majority of management consulting firms on this specific solution, strictly speaking. This solution is considered a niche in Brazil.

In the online world, Acme Associates faces competition from established companies, who provide SCRUM guidance and training of agile implementation. There are many of them, and the main advantage they have is references and certification in SCRUM.

### **Porter Analysis**

- **Identify competition:**

[MERITHU](#) - consulting services

[ASR Consultoria](#) - consulting services, they have a SCRUM product

[Conexao Agil](#) - consulting services, SCRUM is a product they offer

- **Threat of substitute products:** online courses

One of the main substituting competitors would be the many worldwide platforms which offer self-paced agile methodology online courses (Udemy, Edx, Coursera, Agile Academy etc). If the aim is to deliver the training by Zoom in an online environment, a brainstorming session would be needed to really see how your service would be better than those offered by other institution with references.

- **Threat of new entrants:** new online courses, more freelance trainers and professors, companies who want to offer SCRUM implementation as well
- **Bargaining power of customers/suppliers:** certification, experience, references

There are institutions which have references of already providing such in-house trainings in big companies and they do have SCRUM certification. It would be hard to compete with them without any official certification and without having references.

The question to ask is why should somebody choose you and not another trainer from the plenty of already existing SCRUM trainers who offer their services online?

Here, the values come in handy: expertise, flexibility, lower price, availability to travel on the premises, trustworthy. The founders have a history of applying SCRUM in different companies and also there are not many competitors of SCRUM trainers in Brazil. Another thing which could possibly give you an advantage is your current network and word of mouth. Consulting is not something a company goes to the internet and searches for; usually and often it is something you are recommended by somebody in your network. Trust is not easy to sell online, consulting is something you sell by word of mouth and through your network. So your main focus should be to enlarge your network, build connections, showcase knowledge by blogging, creating podcasts, commenting on relevant groups, using LinkedIn, attending events. The fact that the founder is already a podcaster with thousand of weekly listeners is a huge advantage in order to create networks (i.e. 160 donors from Brazil and overseas). Also, advertise, if possible.

## **Branding**

The Archetypes of *SAGE* and *CAREGIVER* apply for this business case.

Consulting services are shown by showcasing expertise and there are many tools to be used to show knowledge. Branding will be performed by showcasing expertise through case studies, blog posts, podcasts, writing studies and white papers, guest speaking and interviews with relevant platforms and publishers. You need to be present, be visible, have a network and maintain it, build relationships.

In consultancy it is good to put an emphasis on such values as impartiality, neutrality, independence.

PERSONALITY IS IMPORTANT TOO! It is not enough to just have a website, this will not bring you customers, you need to spread the word. It might take more than you think to get the customers. But in the long term, the effort put in will bring results.

## **Pricing**

There will be different prices, depending on the needs of the customer, time and size of company. Price up by the value you are bringing, not by the effort and cost you put into it. Make a study to see what benefits you are bringing: cutting costs, bringing efficiency, bringing more business etc.. and price up based on value

**A)** The best way to get a customer to buy is to let him have a free trial. **Free trial** in the form of initial first conversation and a little bit of diagnosis (this should not require a lot of human capital and

should be something easy for you to do). Studies show that if you give something for free to try out, people are more inclined to buy later or they get a feeling of the product and what they are getting. This is especially true for courses and training. So some chapters should be given as a free trial, or limited in time free access. But if you have a big audience the free part can be covered by newsletter subscription, blog posts, podcasts, articles, and then the actual training is charged for.

**B) Face to face training (for big companies with a budget):**

SCRUM does not require full time implementation. A proficient scrum team requires a daily meeting of 15 minutes and a weekly meeting of 1 hour. So for implementation, the consulting services will have the following duration (Total - 7h a week):

- 1 hour/ day
- 2 hours, once a week

Product Name	Duration	Price
Express	2 weeks	1,000 BRL /day x 10 = 10k BRL ( roughly 1,500 EUR)
Deep Dive	1 months	25,000 BRL ( 3,800 EUR)
Tailored Services	longer	On Request

**C) Online Courses - the same principle as above, just online (Zoom Sessions):**

Product Name	Duration	Price
Express	2 weeks	2,000 BRL (300 EUR)
Deep Dive	1 month	5000 BRL (750 EUR)
Tailored Services	On Request	

**Sales: Describe how you intend to find your customers and ultimately sell.**

- Networking on LinkedIn and commenting on relevant posts
- Exploring companies and how they do business and make them an offer by cold calling
- Word of mouth, referencing and recommendations
- Participating to workshops and events
- Social Media Advertising
- Register on Google My Business and post your products there
- Make yourself known through podcasts, events, articles, blogs, build your audience

It might take longer than expected, one needs to work on it, having a website is not enough. Networking is crucial, word of mouth is good in the long term. Have a structured sales activity action plan and follow it thoroughly. It can be part of a business plan or a separate document, but it needs to be structured.

**Goals**

- Get SCRUM certified in order to add more value to the product

- Become the relevant organisation in Brazil people contact to get SCRUM implementation
- Establish a good network outside of Brazil and get relevant international references
- Product Implementation targets per person in the company (focus on face to face, as this is more valuable than online, the online one would be extra bonus):
  - ✓ Express (2 weeks) – on person can have up to 4 parallel implementations in different companies per week to cover most of the time and still have some free time, so this is **158,000 BRL** per year (1,000 daily rates x 158 working days)
  - ✓ Deep Dive (1 month) – have at least 2 per year ( **50,000BRL**)

Totals:

Total target for the 1 <sup>st</sup> year of operations	<b>208,000 BRL</b> per employee (roughly 31,5k EUR)
Target for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of operations	increase prices, so subsequently revenue by 15%
Target for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> year of operations	increase prices, so subsequently revenue by 25 %

### **Moonshot**

- become the most beloved industry related consulting company which every customer wants to talk to, so then you will need to hire more people and train them so they can deliver excellence and expand the brand
- develop and establish the principles for having an unbeatable product in terms of value