

Below is a fictional version of a business case I made a few years ago for an SEO strategy while doing some work for a global travel corporation that owned several tour companies and hotel chains. While the example is for SEO, we have used this same format for creative, paid media and performance.

Keep it short. I have found it best to give enough information to capture the opportunity and advantage—not to go into all the details.

I break it down into seven sections:

- Background
- Opportunity
- Validation
- Debt
  - This can be man-hours, material costs, technical debt, or any resources needed.
  - Explain any additional budget needed.
- Open Questions
- Execution
- Outcome

## **Background**

*Give the background to set the scene for your pitch. Explain the problem you have, how this would solve it, and the issues with taking a simpler route or keeping things the way they are now.*

*Example:*

Competition is increasing from online competitors (Booking.com, Tripadvisor, etc.). While it is necessary to partner with these outlets for flash sales, this creates long-term competition for your main target keywords in Paid Search, such as hotels in [city]. The more popular the destination, the more search results are dominated by partner sites.

## **Opportunity**

*What it is: How ample is the opportunity? What page types are covered? How many [KPI] can be earned?*

*Example:*

While the highest volume of broader keywords is not a feasible opportunity due to competitiveness, there are still plenty of opportunities to explore:

Hotels in [location]: You're likely to rank for these keywords if you also provide a listing with several extended tour packages, add-ons, and value-added packages that the online competitors need to be in a position to offer.

By owning hotels and tour providers for each city, you can answer a broader search intent. Building relevance from adjacent searches is something a person does while planning a vacation, focusing on the destination and experience instead of a singular focus on lodging.

Hotels near [attractions]: The more focused a search is, the more likely your location comes into play. Hotels near [attraction] tend to display actual hotel pages more often. This is also an everyday refinement search users do and is likely to have a higher conversion rate than generic listings.

- Google Local Pack: You also have a significant opportunity to appear on map listings. These display four results just below ads but before organic listings.
- Secondary offers: We can also optimize pages for these extended offers, including tour and dining packages with exclusive access and experiences. We create unique keywords and topics for you in high-volume and captive areas.

## Validation

*What it is: Detail the most basic version of this initiative, which is just enough to prove its impact. Explain what is included and what is not included.*

*Example:*

Some hypotheses we'd like to test are:

- Does Google reward you by mentioning a nearby attraction on your homepage?
- Do reviews mentioning a nearby attraction help you be on the local pack?
- Should you display prices on page titles?
- Does building links to these [attraction] pages increase your rankings?
- Is your Google Business Page a higher source of non-branded traffic than your website?
- Does adding videos increase bookings?

- Should near [attraction] pages also be used in page search ads?

## **Debt**

*What it is: an overall view of tasks to be done. The teams or people executing them should double-check these to ensure they're relevant and representative of their work.*

*Example:*

## **SEO**

- Keyword research to map opportunities
- Map pages to optimize
- Map pages to be created
- Research potential structured data opportunities.
- Work with hotel staff to create a GBP review strategy.

## **Dev**

- Give SEO teams access to CMS.
- Implement dynamic title tags for prices.
- Install the [name] plugin.

## **Video**

- Create videos specifically for the organic web (GBP, TikTok, Instagram).

## **Additional Cost**

- The budget will range between \$500 and \$1,000 for a consultant who is an expert in XXX.

## **Open Questions**

*What it is: questions asked by stakeholders as they read the document. If a new task is required, keep answering them and address the questions in other sections.*

*Example:*

- What is a healthy percentage of non-branded traffic and bookings?
- How can you optimize to rank higher on online travel agency listings?
- Can you drive organic bookings via social media by creating demand as you promote an exciting but hidden attraction?

*Example:*

## **Execution**

*What it is: The scope of the release, the expected release date, and when and how results will be measured. Run a causal impact analysis; previous tests run internally; or an external study (e.g., see examples on the Case Study Database).*

*Example:*

After an initial technical audit and keyword research, these are our proposed deadlines to start rolling out updates:

- Optimize GBP (rollout 01/2024, measure results 03/2024)
- Create new [10] location pages (rollout 02/2024, measure results 04/2024).
- Example Task 3/4/5/etc

*Example:*

## **Outcome**

*What it is: run a causal impact analysis, run previous tests internally, or use an external study. Use tools like SEM to provide projections and potential outcomes. The key is to get as detailed as possible while still being factual and realistic.*

*Example:*

- We can rank for the following keywords and topics based on research: Creating a halo effect in paid search:
- Keyword/Topic One: Est Volume: Est Value
- Keyword/Topic Two: Est Volume: Est Value
- Keyword/Topic Three: Est Volume: Est Value
- Affect on PPC: a potential lift of 2%

Every company is different, but the best way to present your case is to clearly state the business impact and cost. This puts everyone on the same page and allows for a conversation around the idea and clear feedback.