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| A picture of a winding road and trees  Business plan  Flooid | Authors:  Nikita Gavrilov, Yaniek Martens, Agorasteva Gergana |

# **Management summary**

The business of Flooid will be a collaborative learning environment in the form of a graph database powered by Neo4j and Natural Language Processing (NLP) technology. A digital part of them can be seen as a digital twin of the real-life network where people interact and exchange information and collaborate with each other.

The product aims primarily on B2B market and targets the following industries:

1. Knowledge institutions

2. Governments

3. Private business partners

4. Social institutions

5. Startup participants

6. Partnerships that unite groups mentioned above

To promote the product among the parties mentioned above several promotional strategies will be used such as Word of Mouth (Marketing), Earned Media and Paid Media, Industry events, and direct selling.

The software will be distributed using the software-As-A-Service (SaaS) model. Using SaaS the application runs on a Neo4j server and users access them using any internet-connected device. The payment model in this case is based on subscription. The subscription model offers flexibility in being able to subscribe per month, quarter or year.

The market research used as a validation of the main idea of the product. The Datastic looked through different aspects of Micro, Meso and Macro environments. First of all, the Microenvironment shows the factors that could influence the performance result of the company. The target setting of the product Flooid wants to establish on the market is a digital twin of the real-life network. Thus, the main market strategy aims at the B2B sector with the focus on the business with the use of sales agents. Secondly, the Meso environment indicates that there are a couple of platforms and applications that offer similar functions. However, the platforms that Flooid wants to establish is new and it contains a lot of functions that are new, thus, it cannot be placed in the same category as other platforms. Taking this into consideration, there is a certain demand on the main idea of ​​collaborative learning among the companies, without any direct competitors to the Flooid’s solution, meaning that Flooid can fit in the market quite easily. Last but not least, the Macro environment consists of factors that are in the play where the business is active. The socio-cultural research has shown that nowadays what regular COVID-19 outbreaks, people are working from home. All meetings, conferences, and communication, in general, take place online. With an online way of working, it is hard to figure out who is involved in a certain project. This situation creates an opportunity for the solution that Flooid has.

# Preface

This document serves as strategical accountability towards Flooid and remaining stakeholders, in regard to the Flooid project. Stefan Groenendal and Rene Katerberg, CEO’s of Flooid wish to launch a scalable learning platform into the market. Therefore, they have hired Datastic company. A group of professional data scientists will develop the backend, the frontend of prototypes and will advise Flooid on the execution of the project and launching their business into the market. The goal of this project is proof of concept of an information network that the community can and wants to use.

A special word of thanks goes out to the Flooid company and its CEO’s. The Datastic group would like to thank Stefan Groenendal and Rene Katerberg for their trust and the opportunity of taking on this promising challenge. Special thanks to Carolina Rubio and Philippe Forest for the provided workshops and help with the technical part of the project.

For any further inquiries, please reach out to Datastic group regarding this business plan. Our team of professionals will respond as soon as possible. The business plan of the Bloomers ICR project begins here.

Datastic 18/01/2021

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# ****Business description****

## Context and Background

Flooid is a start-up company that mainly functions as a consulting partner in the networking industry with platforms using natural language processing and knowledge graphs. Flooid acts as a catalyst in the shift of systems creating an impact on how people work, live, and care for our environment. Their sense-making indicates that many systems have reached their highest potential in relation to their context and need to shift. They do this by bringing people, knowledge and artificial intelligence together augmenting human capabilities, seamlessly integrating on- and offline worlds.

Flooid has its very roots in learning about reinventing organizations through communities. It has been the cradle for a model of community-based learning and innovation supported by a platform using the Natural Language Processing concept. Creating contexts for making explicit what is implicitly known resulting in collective learning Flooid has a list of partner universities and mindlabs that are ready to be a part of the networking environment (Annex).

The main idea of this network is to share partners’ knowledge and connect people to work together based on needed skills with a help of neo4j graph data platform. This network is also supposed to prevent time-wasting problems while two or more parties are working on similar projects apart. The network will be designed with the help of Flooid’s partner EyeOnText, which provides workshops on the Wowool SDK. It is a cross-platform tool and comes with language bindings for Python, C++. This tool helps to Ingest unstructured textual data and deliver structured semantic objects, such as entities, sentiments, profiles, facts, and links.

# ****Strategy****

In this chapter strategy will be discussed. First the promotion strategy will be discussed. This means the advertisement, packaging, public relations and personal sales. After that, there is a SWOT analysis which shows the weaknesses, strengths, opportunities and threats for the company. At the end, there are some KPI’s described which will measure the performance in sales, finance & retail customer areas.

## Promotion Strategy

### Advertisement

Considering the specifics of the product and B2B market that Flooid aims for, we can consider the following advertisement models:

•Word of Mouth (Marketing)

Datastic always must take into consideration the power of word-of-mouth (WOM) advertisement. Essentially, it is free advertising triggered by customer experiences, usually something that goes beyond what they expected. Flooid can encourage WOM marketing through exceeding expectations on a product, providing good customer service, and staying in close contact with customers. WOM marketing is one of the most powerful forms of advertising as 92% of consumers trust the experience of family members, friends, and colleagues.

•Earned Media and Paid Media

Earned Media and Paid Media can take a variety of forms – a social media testimonial, a TV or radio mention, a newspaper article, or an editorial. While earned media is unsolicited and can only be gained organically, the paid media can be placed in the media with written and produced the Flooid’s key messages.

•Industry events

One of the most popular forms of marketing in the field of B2B are in-person or online tradeshows as they gather companies within a specific industry into one location, whether physical or virtual, to connect or demonstrate Flooid’s latest product. Trade shows give a possibility to establish or strengthen relationships with key industry partners, identify market trends and opportunities.

•Direct selling

Direct selling accomplishes selling products directly to customers. In this model, sales agents build face-to-face relationships with individuals by demonstrating and selling products away from retail settings.

### Packaging

The best approach to distribute the software using the Software-As-A-Service (SaaS) model. SaaS models use business applications in the format of internet services. Using SaaS, the application runs on the provider's server and users access them using any internet-connected device. In this case, the host of the server will be the Neo4j graph data platform.

SaaS business model is based on subscription. The subscription model offers flexibility in being able to subscribe per month, quarter or year. Besides that, Flooid may offer discounts to attract more companies or provide benefits for long term cooperation.

The major advantages of SaaS sales model:

* On demand service
* No need to install software on end users' devices
* Available for multiple end users
* Computing resources are managed be the server
* Suitable for collaborative working/learning

### Public relations

By using personal or online meetings, Flooid will sustain its relationships with its (potential) customers and partnerships as well as its corporate image. Customers can also receive updates and promotions through a newsletter.

### Direct selling

In order to advertise the product and increase sales of the product, the company will use the help of the sales agents. First of all, sales agents need to study potential clients, identify the company's specialization, products that it provides on the market, and specifics of the market. After that, the connection can be established. The sales agents will deliver the product and try to convince the customer to order the product. In order to convince the customer a live demonstration of the technology will be performed. During the demonstration, the possible benefits for the company are discussed.

## SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis will help Flooid organization to understand strengths, weaknesses and identify both opportunities that are available and possible threats. This analysis also helps to see what niche is covered in the market.

|  |  |
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| Strength | Weaknesses |
| **Untapped markets:** Brings new ideas on the market.  **New technologies**: usage of modern methodologies and tools.  **Mission:** The main goal of the technology is to bring people together.  **Flexible:** Can be adjusted according to customers’ needs. | **Experience:** No previous project planning experience.  **Organizations**: The content of product depends on the content that organizations are willing to provide.  **New name on the market**: Flooid is a small and young startup company and thus, not yet receive much attention. |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| **Investments:** increased investment opportunities.  **Partners:** encourage more people to engage in the project.  **Market:** To be first who establishes its positions on a new market.  **Brand recognition:** become well known in industry | **Technical realization:** Errors and exceptions my occur during exploitation of product.  **Maintenance:** maintenance of product requires additional time and effort.  **Customer unknowingness:** Lack of engagement from customer side. |

## TOWS Analysis

A TOWS analysis is a way of taking SWOT Analysis further, to provide actionable links between the different parts of business and the environment.

Treemap chart

Description automatically generated

## KPI’S

By stating several key performances indicators, the Flooid company can investigate the performance and key aspects of business that can be determine and measure success.

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| Customers | **Customer engagement:** number of companies that successfully integrate the technology. |
| **Active users:** Number of companies that use technology daily/weekly/monthly. |
| **Growth:** Growth in number of customers per year. |
| Costs | **Burn Rate:** expenditure of venture capital to finance overhead before generating positive cash flow. |
| **Cash Runway:** Measures the time that a startup has before they run out of finances. |
| **Customer acquisition cost:** The amount of finances that business must spend on research and development. |
| Revenue | **Funding health:** the number of generated investments should exceed the amount of costs. |
| Content Maintenance | **Number of complaints:** In order to keep customer satisfaction company needs to keep track of complaints. |
| **Maintenance:** In order to improve the product, the company needs to keep track of exceptions and errors that might occur during the first stages of implementation |

# **Marketing and sales plan**

There are many different ways on how to do market research. For instance, there can be looked into a micro, meso and macro environment that incorporate which each and other. This to give a broader view of how these environments behave in the market. But what is micro, meso and macro environments:

* Microenvironment – These are the factors where the company can respond on immediately;
* Meso environment – These are the factors where the company has no direct influence on. But it could directly play into the given factors;
* Macroenvironment – These are the factors where the company has no influence on. These are the factors that need to consider.

## Microenvironment

In a microenvironment there will be investigated the internal factors that could influence the performance result of the company. These factors are as followed:

* Target-setting
* Marketing strategy
* Organizational structure

### Target-setting

Flooid wants to establish Scalable Learning Digireal, a digital twin of a network built on knowledge, people, and interaction, and most importantly a shared interest, practice, or purpose. A digital part of them can be seen as a digital twin of the real-life network where people interact and exchange information and collaborate. This idea ends up in Neo4j Graph Database where knowledge and people are part of it. People’s data could be a profile such as a Linkedin profile or a resume whereas knowledge data objects could be anything: an article, a paper, a video, a book to a MOOC. The network itself consists of these data-objects.

### Marketing strategy

Flooid is aiming primary on B2B market. The customers are the companies or group of companies that are willing to cooperate not only with Flooid but with the other members of the community.

#### Market description

The market Flooid aims at consists of knowledge institutions, governments, private businesses, social institutions. Startup participants, partnerships that unite groups that mentioned above. Thus, the main market strategy aims at the B2B sector with the focus on the business with the use of sales agents.

#### Primary market strategy (B2B)

For the B2B model, Flooid is considering working with these different industries:

1. Knowledge institutions
2. Governments
3. Private business partners
4. Social institutions
5. Startup participants
6. Partnerships that unite groups that mentioned above

The expanded list of the customers and potential customers will be listed in Appendix section of this document.

## Mesoenvironment

The Meso environment relates to the factors with which the business cannot respond to the environment whether directly or indirectly. This is the industry where it is active.

### Distribution

The product distribution that Flooid is establishing with the assistance of the project group is online distribution. The basic idea is that users will be able to reach the platform online. This will allow the firm to quickly contact all of its consumers, as well as an opportunity to cover a large area if Flooid decides to extend the program in the future, allowing it to be used by individuals all over the world.

### Competition and Competitors

The general idea of the project is new and innovative – a way people can connect to each other based on shared projects, on topics they work on and so on. Of course, on the internet there are multiple apps and platforms that offer similar functions, but as was already mentioned, the platform that Flooid is establishing is new and it contains a lot of functions that are new.

### General industry factors

* User Experience - The user experience is the foundation of every program. If the application fails to give the consumers an outstanding experience, there is no incentive for them to return to the platform. When it comes to the digital world, user experience is becoming increasingly important.
* Security – The protection of user data is essential for every online platform. No app is safe to virus and malware threats. Data protection regulations are necessary for ensuring a fair and consumer friendly environment.
* Design - The first reason behind selecting any online platform from the users' perspective is its design. So, to create an attractive first impression, the design should be looked at in detail - a good design attracts more users.

## Macroenvironment

A macroenvironment consists of factors that are in the play where the business is active. To analyze this environment a DESTEP analyze is made. For economic, ecological and political no analysis could be made.

### Demographic

The target group for this project consist of the partners of the Digireal project. Other companies can join to become partners.

### Social-Cultural

Even before the corona crisis, it was not easy to know what kind of project a company was working on. You could only know by word of mouth or when it was finished that it might be posted somewhere. With corona, the chances of hearing word of mouth about it have become almost nil.

### Technological

NLP (natural language processing) has a lot of trends coming up. For example, NLP starts to get used for analyzing how a brand is conceived on social media (GOLED, 2021). Furthermore, NLP is not only used anymore on English articles. So are Google and Facebook working on making multilingual models. Other trends in NLP involve automation and deep learning, which are useful to advance the project.

## Conclusion market research

First of all, the Microenvironment shows the factors that could influence the performance result of the company. The target setting of the product Flooid wants to establish on the market is a digital twin of the real-life network. Thus, the main market strategy aims at the B2B sector with the focus on the business with the use of sales agents.

Secondly, the Meso environment indicates that there are a couple of platforms and applications that offer similar functions. However, the platforms that Flooid wants to establish is new and it contains a lot of functions that are new, thus, it cannot be placed in the same category as other platforms. Taking this into consideration, there is a certain demand on the main idea of ​​collaborative learning among the companies, without any direct competitors to the Flooid’s solution, meaning that Flooid can fit in the market quite easily.

Last but not least, the Macroenvironment consists of factors that are in the play where the business is active. The socio-cultural research has shown that nowadays what regular COVID-19 outbreaks, people are working from home. All meetings, conferences, and communication, in general, take place online. With an online way of working, it is hard to figure out who is involved in a certain project. This situation creates an opportunity for the solution that Flooid has.

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# **Appendix**

List of DR organizations involved in the Flooid Project

Universities:

**Breda University of Applied Sciences:**

<http://www.buas.nl/>

**Fontys:**

<https://fontys.nl/>

**Tilburg University:**

<https://www.tilburguniversity.edu/nl>

Mindlabs:

<https://www.mind-labs.eu/>

Partners:

**Mijzo**

<https://www.mijzo.nl/>

**WPG/Zwijsen**

<http://www.zwijsen.nl/>

**Interpolis**

<https://www.interpolis.nl/>

**Thebe and De Wever**

<http://www.thebe.nl/>

<https://dewever.nl/>

Junior Partners:

**Anyware**

<https://www.any-ware.nl/>

**Castlab**

<https://castlab.nl/>

**Genius Voice**

<https://geniusvoice.nl/>

**Ivy Works**

<https://ivyworks.nl/>

**Thoughtline**

<https://thoughtline.nl/>

**Blewscreen**

<https://www.blewscreen.com/>

**Flow Concepts**

<https://flowconcepts.nl/>

**Hi Lex**

<https://hallolex.nl/>

**Purple Mountain**

<https://www.purplemountain.nl/>

DigiShape:

**Rijkswaterstraat**

<https://www.rijkswaterstaat.nl/>

<https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-infrastructuur-en-waterstaat>

**Deltares**

<https://www.deltares.nl/nl/>

**Van Oord**

<https://www.vanoord.com/>

**TU Delft**

<https://www.tudelft.nl/>

**Boskalis**

<https://boskalis.com/>

**BZ Ingenieurs & Managers**

<https://boskalis.com/>

**Periplus Consultancy**

<https://www.periplus.nl/nl/home/>

**Marin**

<https://www.marin.nl/en>

**HKV**

<https://www.hkv.nl/>

**Witteveen Bos**

<https://www.witteveenbos.com/>

**IHM**

<https://www.informatiehuismarien.nl/>

**Maris**

<https://www.maris.nl/>

**Port of Rotterdam**

<https://www.portofrotterdam.com/nl>