



Strategic Planning for Small Businesses in Central Asia: A case of healthy fast-food restaurant.

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis explores the strategic planning process for small businesses in Central Asia, with a specific focus on the case of a healthy fast-food restaurant in Astana, Kazakhstan. The study examines the key challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in the region when developing and executing a business strategy for a small food service venture. The business plan presented in this thesis outlines a restaurant concept designed to meet the growing demand for healthier, convenient, and affordable dining options in urban settings.

Key elements of the plan include market analysis, strategic decisions on different operational levels, establishing mission, vision and values. Additionally, the thesis highlights the importance of ongoing reflection and adaptability in the business journey. It highlights how revisiting past experiences, analyzing successes and failures, and listening to customer feedback are essential for continuous improvement and growth. Ultimately, the thesis argues that strategic planning for small businesses in Central Asia requires both forward-thinking and a willingness to learn from past experiences to drive sustainable growth and adaptability.

Key words: Strategic planning, vision, mission, value, small business

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1 INTRODUCTION

Case Company Introduction

A business case is used as a base of this paper. The case is a start-up restaurant serving healthy fast-food options in Astana, Kazakhstan. The company has started its operation in September 2024 and has already earned positive reviews and propensity of customers in small circles. (Appendices 1,2 &3)

Ministry of Health specializes in a range of nutritious, ready-to-eat meals, including customizable bowls, fresh salads, and sandwiches, aimed at health-conscious consumers seeking balanced meals without compromising on convenience or taste. Below, Figure 1 shows some of the products served. This fast-food concept aligns with emerging trends in the foodservice industry that prioritize nutrition, sustainability, and wellness, catering primarily to busy professionals, office workers, and individuals with an active lifestyle.



Figure 1. Ministry of Health bowls.

In terms of marketing and customer engagement, Ministry of Health utilizes social media platforms, particularly Instagram, as a key channel for brand promotion and consumer interaction. (Appendix 4)

2 Central Asian Market Overview

2.1 Central Asia

Central Asia is a vast region located in the heart of Eurasia, encompassing countries like Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Known for its rich history and diverse cultural heritage, Central Asia has long been a crossroads of civilizations, with influences from Persian, Turkic, Russian, and Islamic traditions shaping its cultural landscape. The nomadic lifestyle of the region's past, especially in Kazakhstan, has deeply impacted its cultural practices, values, and social structures. The region's culture reflects a blend of ancient traditions and modern influences, with a strong emphasis on hospitality, family ties, and respect for elders. The cultural identity of Central Asia, particularly in Kazakhstan, is also characterized by a strong connection to its natural landscapes, such as vast steppes and mountainous terrain, which have historically shaped the livelihoods and customs of its people (Qi & Evered 2008).

However, the cultural fabric of Central Asia has also been influenced by the region's environmental and economic challenges. Kazakhstan, the largest country in Central Asia, faces a range of environmental issues that have profound effects on its economy and society. According to Qi and Evered (2008), environmental problems like the depletion of the Aral Sea, desertification, and water scarcity have had significant social and economic repercussions. These challenges not only threaten the traditional way of life but also disrupt agricultural productivity and lead to health crises. Kazakhstan's economic development is deeply intertwined with its natural resources, and the management of environmental issues is critical to ensuring sustainable growth. The region's cultural resilience in the face of these challenges is a testament to the adaptability and strength of its people, who continue to navigate a complex blend of modernity and tradition while grappling with the consequences of environmental degradation and resource scarcity.

Kazakhstan's economy, driven by its vast natural resources, has experienced significant growth since gaining independence, particularly in the oil and gas sectors. However, small businesses face challenges due to the prevalence of nepotism, where economic power is often concentrated within elite networks. As Gregory Gleason notes, "The importance of family and clan relations is very real in Kazakhstan." (Gleason, 2003) The concentration of economic power in the hands of a few elite families poses a threat to entrepreneurship, as connections, rather than merit, often determine access to resources and opportunities. This undermines competition and creates barriers for small businesses seeking to thrive in the market.

2.2 Small Businesses

Kazakhstan's economy is still largely dependent on the oil and gas sectors, which leaves little room for smaller industries to grow. While there have been efforts to encourage diversification, the overall business environment remains dominated by large extractive industries, which control much of the country's wealth and economic influence (OECD, 2020). Small businesses in other sectors, such as agriculture and services, face challenges in accessing markets

and competing with larger companies that control supply chains and distribution channels.

Opening a small business in Kazakhstan has become relatively easier in recent years due to significant improvements in the country's regulatory environment, but challenges still exist. According to the World Bank's Doing Business 2020 report, Kazakhstan ranks 25th globally for ease of doing business, reflecting progress in simplifying procedures such as business registration, property registration, and tax compliance (World Bank, 2020). The government has implemented various reforms aimed at encouraging entrepreneurship, including reducing the time and cost required to start a business and introducing a single-window system for obtaining permits (OECD, 2018). However, despite these advancements, obstacles such as bureaucratic inefficiencies, corruption, and access to financing, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), remain significant barriers (Eurasian Development Bank, 2019). While the overall business climate is improving, these lingering challenges mean that while it may be easier to start a business, navigating the legal and financial systems still requires careful planning and persistence.

3 Strategic Planning

3.1 What is strategic planning and why is it important?

Strategic planning is a crucial process for organizations, particularly in the public and nonprofit sectors, as it helps define clear objectives, allocate resources efficiently, and guide decision-making. Bryson (2018) emphasizes that strategic planning enables organizations to establish a clear direction, align efforts with their mission, and improve overall performance. Through a comprehensive analysis of both internal and external environments, organizations can identify opportunities and challenges, set priorities, and design strategies that address key issues. By engaging stakeholders and fostering collaboration, strategic planning also ensures that all members are working toward common goals, ultimately strengthening the organization's capacity to achieve long-term success and sustainability (Bryson 2018).

3.2 Challenges

Strategic planning can be a challenging endeavor due to the complex and dynamic nature of the factors involved, as highlighted by Stephen G. Haines in *Successful Strategic Planning* (1995). Haines emphasizes that successful strategic planning requires navigating uncertainties, predicting future trends, and aligning diverse organizational interests, which often evolve unpredictably. The process involves gathering accurate information, analyzing external environments, and anticipating internal capabilities, all while maintaining flexibility to adapt to changing conditions. Additionally, there is the challenge of overcoming cognitive biases, organizational inertia, and resistance to change, which can hinder the execution of a well-devised strategy. As Haines discusses, the interplay of these variables, along with the inherent uncertainty of the future, makes strategic planning not only complex but also an ongoing process that demands continuous evaluation and adjustment.

3.3 Strategic decisions

Planellas and Muni (2019) introduce three levels of strategic management:

- Corporate strategy
- Competitive strategy
- Functional or departmental strategy

The Corporate strategy refers to strategic decisions within the operational levels or business units the company intends to enter.

Competitive strategy identifies paths which the business must take to compete in its market.

Functional strategy refers to both strategies on a functional/departmental level, covering marketing, operations, finances, human resources, etc. However, in small organizations corporate and competitive levels tend to overlap. (Planellas & Muni 2019)

4 Corporate and Competitive strategy

4.1 Mission Vision and Values

Mission, vision, and values are foundational components that direct an organization's technique, culture, and operations. These concepts give a clear sense of heading and reason, adjusting the endeavors of people and groups toward shared objectives. Agreeing to Jaffe, Gerould, and Tobe (2012), a mission explanation expresses the center reason of an organization, characterizing why it exists and what it looks for to accomplish. The vision articulation, on the other hand, diagrams the wanted future state, motivating partners with a compelling picture of what the organization points to gotten to be. Finally, organizational values serve as directing standards that shape decision-making and behavior, reflecting the moral measures and social standards that support an organization's actions.

The integration of mission, vision, and values is pivotal for organizational victory. As Jaffe, Gerould, and Tobe (2012) highlight, these components cultivate arrangement inside the organization, making a difference in accomplishing company's common goals. Together, they make a solid establishment for key arranging, decision-making, and organizational development. A well-defined mission, vision, and set of values empower organizations to explore challenges, make educated choices, and stay genuine to their center convictions, guaranteeing maintainability and long-term success. For example, Steve Jobs articulated a bold vision to restore Apple's leadership position and transform it into a dominant force in the personal computing, entertainment, and digital technology sectors. Apple's mission shifted toward creating "innovative, user-friendly products that seamlessly integrate hardware, software, and services." This vision emphasized Apple's commitment to high-quality design and technological innovation.

The company's revised vision and mission were closely aligned with values of simplicity, aesthetics, and usability. Jobs focused on building not just great products but a distinctive brand that would forge an emotional connection with consumers. (Meyer 2012)

Scott, et al. (1993) outlined a five-step visioning sequence which guides the order of setting values, mission and vision, which will be utilized in this paper.

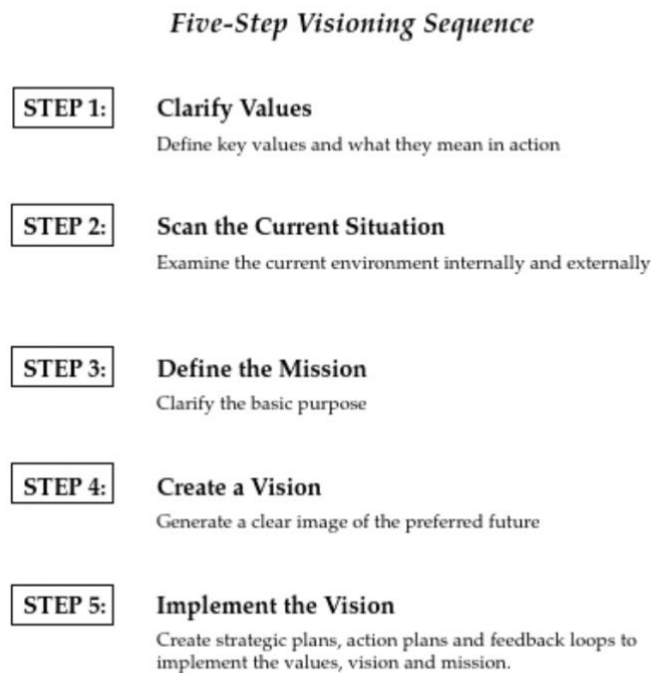


Figure 2. Five-Step Visioning Sequence. (Scott, et al. 1993)

4.1.1 Values

According to Scott, Jaffe and Tobe (1993) values form the core of a company's approach to achieving success. They serve as the foundation of its corporate culture, offering employees a shared sense of purpose and clear principles to guide their everyday actions. In their work the importance of identifying/clarifying values prior to solidifying mission and vision is highlighted. Values can also reflect what the company seeks in their partners as well as what customers its targeting to offer its solution to their problems. Therefore, the value proposition canvas has been utilized in order to clarify the customer jobs, pains and gains. (Osterwalder et. Al. 2014) (Figure 3)

According to Fernandes, Rosa, Queiroz and Rozenfeld (2018) they have adopted Osterwalder's guide (2014) into the process of using the canvas properly to maximize the productivity and make the process more agile. (Figure 4)

Starting from selecting customer segment the initial idea is to attract people interested in healthy lifestyle as well as those trying to improve their health. As the location of the store is in a business center filled with offices. Therefore, the targeted audience is office workers with little to no time to go home for lunch break. They have working time from 9 am to 6 pm, sedentary lifestyle which leaves less time and energy for consciously sticking to a balanced diet. Therefore, the age group is primarily working professionals aged from 18 to 45, health-conscious individuals, fitness enthusiasts, and busy professionals.

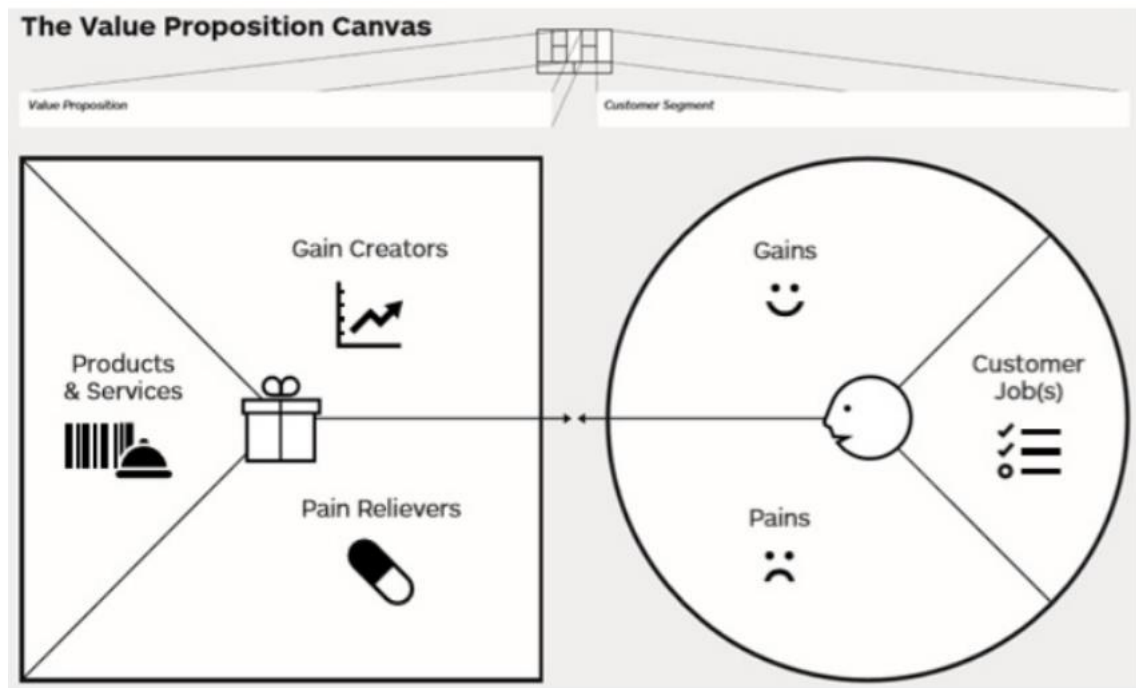


Figure 3. Value Proposition Canvas. (Osterwalder et. Al. 2014)



Figure 4. Process of filling the Value Proposition Canvas. (Fernandes et.al. 2018)

In the context of a healthy fast-food restaurant located in a business center, customer jobs revolve around a blend of practical, social, and emotional needs. Practically, customers are seeking fast, nutritious meals that fit seamlessly into their hectic workday—meals that are quick to prepare, easy to consume on the go, and aligned with their health goals. Socially, they may want to make a statement about their healthy lifestyle, aligning with peers who value wellness and conscious eating. Emotionally, they are looking for satisfaction and reassurance, knowing they are fueling their bodies with nourishing, wholesome ingredients. Additionally, customers desire flexibility and variety in their meals, preferring customizable options such as bowls, salads, and healthy sandwiches that cater to their individual tastes and dietary preferences. They are also drawn to an atmosphere that reflects their values, offering a modern and inviting space to enjoy a meal while feeling good about their choices.

Customers' pains may stem from several challenges. Time constraints are a significant pain, as many customers are looking for a quick meal that won't take too long to prepare or consume, but often find healthy options to be slower or harder to access during a busy workday. Additionally, some customers may struggle with limited healthy choices at typical fast-food spots, feeling frustrated by the lack of nutritious, convenient options that align with their dietary goals. Price sensitivity can also be a pain, as health-conscious meals are often perceived as more expensive than traditional fast food. There may also be concerns around taste, with some customers fearing that healthier meals won't be as satisfying or flavorful as indulgent fast-food options. Finally, finding a consistent level of quality in fresh ingredients can be a pain, as customers want

meals that are not only nutritious but also fresh and appetizing every time they visit.

Customers' gains from a healthy fast-food restaurant include convenience, satisfaction, and well-being. They benefit from quick, nutritious meals that support their busy schedules without compromising on health. These customers gain peace of mind knowing they are making better food choices, fueling their bodies with fresh, wholesome ingredients that boost their energy and overall wellness. The option for customization in bowls, salads, and sandwiches allows them to enjoy meals tailored to their specific tastes and dietary needs, enhancing their sense of control and satisfaction. Finally, the restaurant's ability to offer both quality and convenience results in customers feeling positive about their decision to choose healthy, fast meals over traditional fast-food options. Therefore, in order to fulfil the needs and relieve the pains of customers, the restaurant intends to offer the following:

Products and services

Products offered:

- Bowls- a mix of a crop of various choice, vegetables, protein (chicken, meat, eggs) as well as a pack of sauce. (Figure 1).
- Sandwiches on healthy alternative bread/bagels.
- Sugar-free iced tea.
- Healthy ready snack alternatives (chips, protein bars).

Pain Relievers

- Convenient, healthy and fast solution.
- Customizable products.
- Customer comes first service.
- Reasonable price for suggested options.
- Meals prepared strictly from fresh produce.
- Non-stop menu improvement/enlargement.

Gain Creators

- Saves time.
- Helps stick to the diet.
- Convenient location (downstairs).
- Can be customized to particular liking.

Values:

Based on the products, pain relievers and gain creators, these are the core values for Ministry of Health:

- Innovative solutions.

The menu must be updated regularly, with seasonal specials to show that eating healthy does not mean eating monotonous.

- Customer comes first.

Customer approach must be essential in order to ensure customer loyalty. It refers to fast and friendly service as well as serving only fresh produce every day.

- Reasonable price for reasonable portions.

Eating healthy is regarded hard and expensive and therefore must be proven wrong and the menu should always contain affordable options for consistent clients.

4.1.2 Mission

In Stephen G. Haines' *Successful Strategic Planning* (1995), the concept of "mission" is introduced as a foundational element of the Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) model. The mission statement serves as a clear and concise declaration of an organization's core purpose and primary objectives, outlining why the organization exists and what it seeks to achieve. It defines the organization's reason for being, guiding decision-making and aligning the actions of all stakeholders towards common goals. Haines emphasizes that the mission should be both inspiring and practical, providing direction and focus while serving as a benchmark for evaluating success. By establishing a strong mission, organizations can ensure that their strategic initiatives are purpose-driven and aligned with their overall values and vision for the future.

One of the worldwide giants on the food and beverage market Coca Cola has an established and clear mission statement: "Refresh the world. Make a difference". The mission states the main operational purpose to serve refreshing drink as well as make a contribution to change the world along the way. Such statement highlights the core values set by the company. (The Coca-Cola Company n.d.)

In this case mission represents the way business operates and it intends to achieve. Therefore, based on the restaurant's established values it is clear that the company's operations are centered around the customer. Ministry of Health prioritizes its customers and their needs and desires, helping them improve their well-being. Since most of the customers are office workers in the business center, their lifestyle is mostly sedentary, and they don't have time to go home for lunch. Thus, the mission is to offer nutritious and delicious meals that match the stressful lifestyle of health-conscious customers.

4.1.3 Vision

In *Successful Strategic Planning* (1995), Stephen G. Haines discusses the role of "vision" within the Mission, Vision, and Values (MVV) model as a critical component for guiding long-term organizational strategy. The vision statement articulates an aspirational view of the future, describing what the organization hopes to become or achieve over time. Unlike the mission, which focuses on the present purpose, the vision is forward-looking, inspiring stakeholders with a compelling picture of success. Haines stresses that an effective vision should be clear, motivating, and forward-thinking, providing a sense of direction that aligns with the organization's values and drives its strategic initiatives. By articulating a vivid and achievable vision, organizations can create a shared understanding of their desired future and foster alignment across all levels of the organization toward achieving those long-term goals.

Three horizons

According to Sharpe (2020) the Three Horizons is a framework for envisioning the future that acknowledges significant uncertainty while encouraging proactive engagement. It helps us better understand how our actions, as well as those of others we collaborate with, can influence the future we seek to create. McKinsey's 3 Horizon Model focuses on fostering growth and innovation by evaluating future growth opportunities while maintaining performance in the present. The model divides the timeline into three horizons: the first horizon represents the core business (short-term), the second horizon serves as a

transition phase for implementing innovation, and the third horizon looks at future business opportunities (long-term). (Markopoulos et al. 2019)

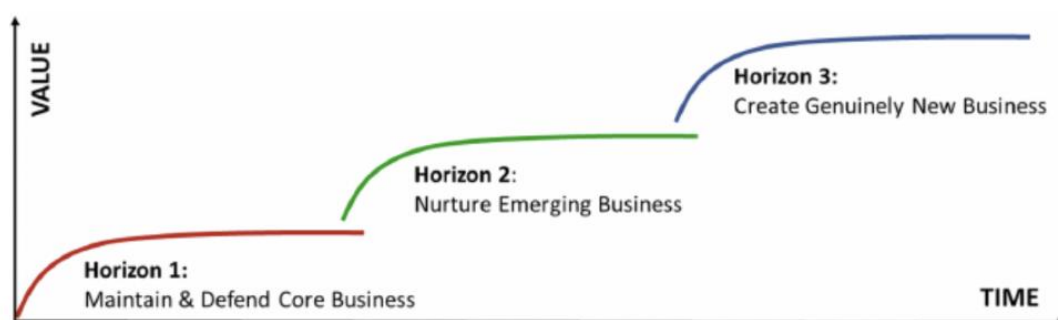


Figure 5. McKinsey's 3 Horizons model. (Markopoulos et al. 2019)

The restaurant's focus will be on delivering quality service, fair pricing, customer satisfaction, and innovative meal options, all while working towards significant growth.

Horizon 1 (0-1 year)

In the first year, the restaurant will concentrate on building a strong foundation by offering healthy meals at fair prices, ensuring high-quality food and excellent customer service. The goal is to generate 2 million tenge in revenue by targeting local office workers and professionals. Marketing efforts will include digital campaigns and partnerships with nearby businesses, alongside loyalty programs to encourage customers to return. Feedback will be used to refine the customer experience and ensure satisfaction.

Horizon 2 (1-2 years)

In the second horizon, the restaurant will focus on expanding its operations and obtaining 1-2 additional locations in high-traffic areas. The aim will be to increase brand recognition by promoting health-conscious meals through partnerships with local gyms and influencers. The marketing will be on its peak of productivity, while exploring innovative tech solutions. The production will be available online for ordering delivery.

Horizon 3 (3-5 years)

The long-term strategy involves positioning the restaurant as a leader in healthy fast food. This includes introducing innovative meal options, expanding into other cities, and adopting sustainable business practices. The restaurant will also explore new customer engagement tools, such as a loyalty app, and may diversify into products like meal kits or ready-to-eat options. Regional expansion and sustainability initiatives will be key to securing long-term growth.

5 Functional/departmental strategy

5.1 Business model canvas

Business model canvas is a tool for visualizing the value a company wants to deliver to its customer. It helps to view nine aspects individually and complexly as a whole model to spot the perspectives for innovations. (Planellas & Muni 2019) (Figure 6)

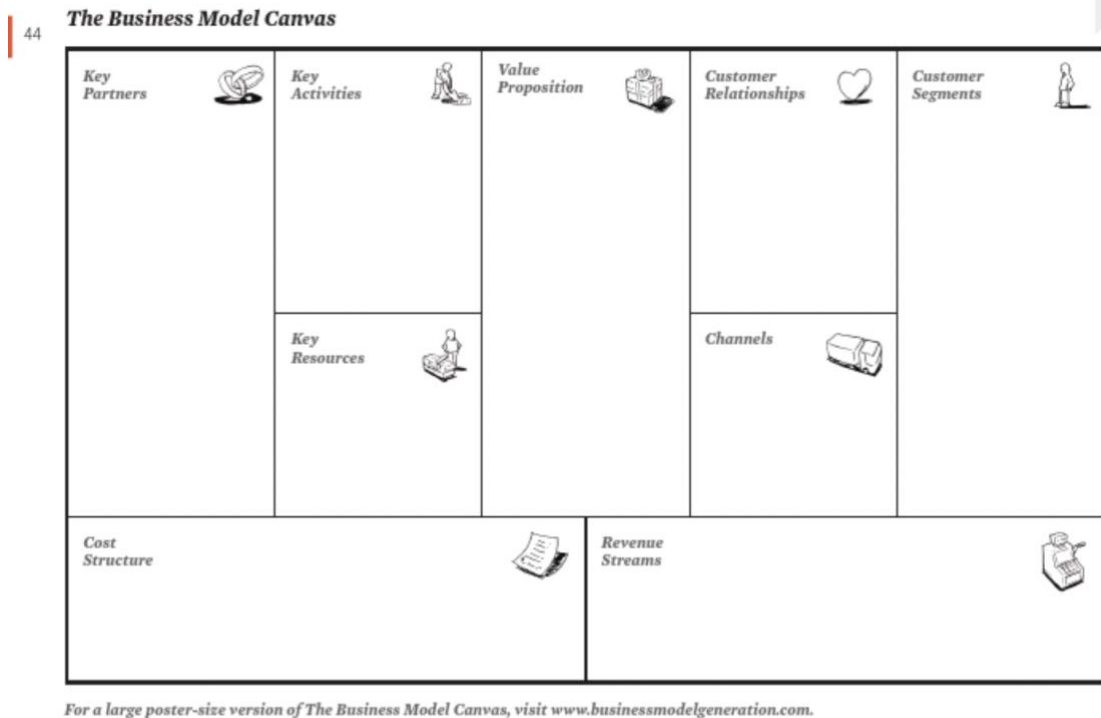


Figure 6. The Business Model Canvas. (Osterwalder & Pigneur 2010)

Value propositions:

- Customer comes first
- Innovative Solutions
- Reasonable Price- Reasonable portions

Customer Segments

Targeted audience is office workers with sedentary life who want to improve their health as well as people who care about their well-being for different reasons. Some may be curious of healthy lifestyle; others may be advised a certain diet by a doctor.

Customer Relations

- Personal Approach
- Customer oriented policy

Since one of the estimated values of the company is "customer comes first", customer relations are significant. The restaurant offers personalized help in a preferred form, whether its online or on site. Every meal prepared can be customized by client's wish, which they can personally inform the workers on site or text over online platforms.

Channel

The utilized channels are Instagram and a local map application 2GIS, which provides the core information about the company such as location, working hours, reviews, etc. The service is also offered through phone calls and a word

of mouth. However, there are intentions to open a website, Tik Tok account and appear in Google Maps in the future.

Key Activities

The key activities include cooking healthy food positions from the menu, delivering ready meals to the shop and selling these dishes in the shop, posting content and updates on social media. Other activities may not be everyday actions such as inventing new menu options and seasonal menu, launching marketing campaigns, groceries and dishes shopping, etc.

Key Partners

Key partners of any restaurant are suppliers and for Ministry of Health they are fresh groceries as well as disposable dishes and utensils.

Key Resources

The core value of customer coming first requires a lot of attention from employees and therefore, human resources are key in achieving customer satisfaction.

Cost Structure

The major cost drivers for the company are building up stock of groceries and utensils, rent for shop and manufactory facility, workforce.

Revenue Stream

Each product's cost of making was calculated, and its price was formulated accounting the cost structure attributes. The margin calculated averaged in 50-60%. The products used in each menu item are usually imported goods, therefore people would pay more.

5.2 Financial planning

In this paper the case company's operational planning started with a financial plan. The plan contains tables that calculate production costs, predicted average sales per day and probable net revenue after tax deduction. The plan Additionally, since the company operates in Kazakhstan all figures are in local currency-tenge.

From the Table 1 it is seen that the fixed costs include rent payments for production facility as well as for pick-up (shop) location. Utilities for both rents are paid separately. Two Employees' salaries are also fixed cost. Delivery of the products are performed by the owner and therefore the gas expenses are recorded.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
1	Fixed Costs														
2		September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	1 year Total
3	Production facility rent	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	3 900 000
4	Pick-up facility rent	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	312 000	4 056 000
5	Utilities	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	109 750	1 426 750
6	Employee №1 salary	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	200 000	2 600 000
7	Employee №2 salary	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	300 000	3 900 000
8	Delivery- gas expenses	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	110 000	1 430 000
9	Total	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	1 331 750	17 312 750

Table 1. Fixed Costs of Ministry of Health

In the Table 2 the production costs of each menu item were accurately calculated, as well as a margin from a set selling price. The gains are also calculated.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
23														
24	production costs and gain													
25	Product	Price in Teng	Price with potential reduction	Reduction(Sale)	Production Costs	Gain	Gain with reduction	Margin						
26	Dish 1 mexican bowl	2 500,00	2 250,00	10%	1 069,99	1 430,01	1 180,01	57%						
27	Dish 2 small mexican bowl	2 000,00	1 800,00		854,49	1 145,51	945,51	57%						
28	Dish 3 Asian bowl	2 000,00	1 800,00		675,20	1 324,80	1 124,80	66%						
29	Dish 4 small Asian bowl	1 600,00	1 440,00		536,40	1 063,60	903,60	66%						
30	Dish 5 vegan bowl	2 000,00	1 800,00		595,00	1 405,00	1 205,00	70%						
31	Dish 6 buckwheat bowl	1 800,00	1 620,00		471,24	1 328,76	1 148,76	74%						
32	Dish 7 Bagel	1 400,00	1 260,00		253,72	1 146,28	1 026,28	82%						
33	Dish 8 bagel	1 600,00	1 440,00		784,80	815,20	655,20	51%						
34	Dish 9 burrito	1 700,00	1 530,00		434,27	1 265,73	1 095,73	74%						
35	Dish 10 Burrito	1 800,00	1 620,00		408,83	1 391,17	1 211,17	77%						
36	Dish 11 salmon bowl	2 500,00	2 250,00		885,42	1 614,58	1 364,58	65%						
37	Dish 12 tuna bowl	2 500,00	2 250,00		725,27	1 774,73	1 524,73	71%						
38	Dish 13 greek high protein	2 600,00	2 340,00		572,76	2 027,24	1 767,24	78%						
39	Dish 14 Wrap	1 100,00	990,00		796,67	303,33	193,33	28%						
40	Dish 15 Wrap	1 100,00	990,00		300,72	799,28	689,28	73%						
41	Dish 16 Iced Tea	400,00	360,00		120,00	280,00	240,00	70%						
42														
43														
44														
45	Total	28 600,00				9 484,78	19 115,22	16 255,22	66%					
46														

Table 2. Production costs per menu item.

The company calculated volumes of production to cover fixed costs and make profit in the Table 3. The volumes were estimated approximately and the revenue per each day of the week was calculated.

	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	AA	AB	AC	AD	AE	AF	AG	AH	AI
45																			
46	(Average) daily sales of each item with revenue																		
47		Dish 1	Dish 2	Dish 3	Dish 4	Dish 5	Dish 6	Dish 7	Dish 8	Dish 9	Dish 10	Dish 11	Dish 12	Dish 13	Dish 14	Dish 15	Dish 16	Total 1 Day	
48	Monday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
49	Tuesday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
50	Wednesday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
51	Thursday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
52	Friday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
53	Saturday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
54	Sunday	74	8 580,06	5 727,55	7 948,80	4 254,40	5 620,00	6 643,80	6 877,68	4 891,20	3 797,20	4 173,51	6 458,32	3 549,46	4 054,48	1 819,98	4 795,68	1 680,00	80 872,12
55	Week Total	518	60 060,42	40 092,85	55 641,60	29 780,80	39 340,00	46 506,60	48 143,76	34 238,40	26 580,40	29 214,54	45 208,24	24 846,22	28 381,36	12 739,86	33 569,76	11 760,00	566 104,81
56	1 Month Total																		2 264 419,22
57																			

Table 3. Predicted daily sales volumes and revenue.

Table 4 represents the types of taxes and amounts the company is obliged to pay.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
47	Tax burden and profit														
48	Tax Type	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	1Year Total
49	commission for payment by terminal/QR (Kaspi Bank)	21512	21512	21512	21512	21512	21512	21511,98259	21512	21512	21512	21512	21512	21511,98	279 656
50	income tax and social contributions (3%)					203798							203798		407 595
51	Social contributions(3,5% of salary)	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	2 975	38 675
52	Compulsory social health insurance (5 % of salary)	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	5 950	77 350
53	Mandatory pension contributions from the employer	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	1 275	16 575
54	Pension contributions (10% of salary)	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	8 500	110 500
55	Total	40 212	40 212	40 212	40 212	244 010	40 212	40 212	40 212	40 212	40 212	40 212	40 212	244 010	930 351
56															

Table 4. Tax burden and profit.

After calculating the tax burden in Table 4, it was deducted from the month total from Table 3 to obtain the net profit values for each month of the year.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	
56	Net profit after all deductions														
57	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	1Year Total	
58	892 457	892 457	892 457	892 457	688 660	892 457	892 457	892 457	892 457	892 457	892 457	688 660	892 457	10 301 891	
59															
60	Total Before January					3 569 829									
61	After January					4 258 488									
62															
63															
64															
65															
66															
67															
68															
69															

Table 5. Net Profit after all deductions (net profit)

Overall, the net profit of each month is predicted to constitute around 892 000 tenges. The monthly revenue is predicted to exceed 2 million.

5.3 Marketing plan

There are three most utilized business models for retail in Kazakhstan: E-commerce platforms, pure play online retailers, and online-offline ecommerce. (Kazakhstan - Online Retail 2023)

5.3.1 Ecommerce

Ecommerce platforms serve as online marketplaces that connect sellers and buyers, enabling transactions across a global reach. Buyers can explore a variety of products from different sellers, including individuals offering used items and large manufacturers selling new products. These platforms primarily generate revenue through seller fees, such as listing and transaction fees, and also earn additional income from marketing fees paid by sellers to promote their products. The perks of using such platforms would be additional visibility and bust sales. Such platforms could be online delivery apps, such as Yandex food, Wolt, Glovo, etc.

There is also an opportunity of entering a platform that sells remaining products for reduced price. Such business model has shown a success in Finland. ResQ Club, launched in November, is an ambitious app aimed to reduce food waste in cafes, restaurants, and grocery stores. The app connects consumers with unsold food from local eateries and stores, offering affordable, high-quality meals. It was founded in Finland in 2015, and now operates in 4 countries, which evidence the success ResQ has had.

Unfortunately, there are no alternatives to ResQ in central Asia. However, founding a community/network of cafes and restaurants could become an asset to the company picture as well as first steps in the direction to corporate responsibility.

Online Presence

- **Website:** In the nearest future the company aims to develop a responsive website with online ordering capabilities, menu details, nutritional information, and customer reviews.
- **Social Media:** Utilizing Instagram and soon introducing TikTok to showcase the fresh meals, behind-the-scenes content, customer reviews, and health tips.
- **Content Strategy:** Post engaging content, mostly Reels, 3-5 times per week, including updates and seasonal menu promotions as well as funny skits to increase engagement.
- **Influencer Marketing:** Partner with local influencers, nutritionists, or lifestyle bloggers to promote the brand through paid collaborations or product reviews.

5.3.2 Loyalty programs

Any business wants its loyal customer base and would do anything to increase customer retention. Fook and Dastane define customer retention as a continuous will to obtain service from a particular provider or organization. (2021) Retention of clients is cheaper than attracting new clientele. A closed environment of the business center limits the number of new customers. Thus, it is essential to concentrate on establishing a strong connection with consumers while expanding the customer base in the market.

Ministry of Health offers personalized help to all its customers and a special treatment for its regular customers. In the beginning, during Horizon 1, the loyalty program will be simple since it is easy to spot frequent buyers and

therefore, the loyalty system can be primitive. Such could become loyalty cards for a free meal of choice after 10 purchases.

However, in the long-term perspective in Horizon 3, the loyalty program may transfer into a more sophisticated digital form. An App could be created that would store a digital bonus card with rewards and updates on menu items. For example, the Starbucks Rewards Program was launched in 2008, where customers received loyalty benefits through cards preloaded with specific dollar amounts. Members could earn Stars with each purchase, which could be redeemed for free food, drinks, and other rewards. In January 2011, Starbucks expanded the program by introducing mobile payments via the Starbucks Card Mobile app, allowing smartphones to function as Starbucks cards. By February 2011, Starbucks also introduced eGifts, enabling customers to send digital Starbucks gift cards via email, SMS, or the Starbucks mobile app. Consequently, it is evident that Starbucks utilizes its resources to reach high level of customer retention, integrating technologies and innovation in its operations.

5.3.3 Visuals



Figure 7. Ministry of Health Logo.



Figure 8. Ministry of Health's shop location design.

6 Practical implementation

6.1 Reflection: What? So What? Now What?

Rolfe et al. (2001) developed reflective writing model that encourages individuals to engage in a structured process of reflection, which allows them to better understand and evaluate their experiences. It consists of three prompt questions: What? So What? Now What? In "What?" the experience or event is described in detail without judgement or analysis. "So What" stage allows an individual to analyze, interpret the experience, examining the insights, lessons, or new perspectives that have been learned. During the "Now What?" stage an individual considers how to apply the insights gained from the reflection to future experiences.

Such model is useful to look back on an experience, assess the current state and come to conclusions for improvement in the future.

What?

Initially the team focused on operational and organizational aspects of the business, which did not take long time. Registration of a business was obtained swiftly, which led to a time-consuming search for locations for manufacturing facility and a shop. The locations for rent were also found quickly, which rushed all other operations to start immediately. The menu and concept were decided away back. The concept was built on providing nutritious, delicious meals for busy professionals, health-conscious individuals, and anyone looking for a quick and wholesome meal option. Thus, the business started running immediately. During first days of operation the volume of production of each menu item was decided to account around 20% less than planned and daily there were almost 50 items delivered to the shop. With the time passing the volumes were increased to the planned figures.

Then, after officially starting operations in both locations, the restaurant started its marketing performance on social media. An announcement of starting operations was posted as well as other important information.

So What?

Reflecting on the experience, there are several key insights. First, proper preparations would have made the first week of working easier and more efficient. There was lack of menu planning in a long perspective, lack of supply and operational planning. All these factors started creating chaos, deducting time, energy, and resources from all workers.

However, because there was such quick finding of locations and contract signing, which left no time for these preparations.

Secondly, the volumes of production and supplies were hard to predict correctly. The first weeks after opening sales were low, because the audience is new, and it takes time for people to switch from their old habits to choosing a new player on the market. Therefore, the sales pattern was unclear and unpredictable, making it a hard job to decide which product needs to be produced in higher quantity. The kitchen run out of fresh products very quickly, which disturbed the supplies ordering schedule.

Since the marketing activities did not begin earlier than the day of opening, nothing stirred up people's interest. Thus, it was hard to attract the customers on the location.

Now What?

Moving forward, I have learned a lot that will inform our next steps. One of the immediate actions to take is to revise menu and operational systems to make them more effective and structured.

Expanding marketing efforts will be essential. With the opening of new location, it will be easier to approach considering the past mistakes. The social media accounts should announce openings and updates in advance to raise visibility online and arouse excitement.

Overall, in the future the business should be more prepared for unexpected circumstances. The team should have been collected prior to starting its operations. Planning of the concept, developing values, mission and vision has helped not to deviate from the desired path in making all decisions. This experience has given an opportunity to test and reflect on company's operations, making it easy to see reaction for the action. For example, the prices the first few weeks were set for whole menu items, however for the new menu the prices were slightly raised. This has not affected the sales and the company became closer to reaching its goal of 2 million revenue in the first year.

7 Conclusions

In conclusion this paper has found that it is essential for small businesses to plan its strategic decisions on two levels: Corporate and Competitive, as well as Functional level. The planning of both levels should be done prior to starting its operations.

The strategic planning process for Ministry of Health has successfully outlined a clear and actionable framework for the company's future growth and sustainability in the competitive foodservice industry. Through the development of a well-defined mission, vision, and set of core values, the company has established guiding principles that will serve as the cornerstone for all future operations, ensuring that the brand continues to prioritize health, quality, and customer satisfaction in every aspect of its business.

Overall, the strategic planning report has equipped Ministry of Health with the tools, insights, and direction necessary to navigate the challenges of a rapidly evolving market.

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APPENDICES

SI Symbat Imangaliyeva ★★★★★
21 reviews
September 30, 2024



A VERY TASTY bowl!! Fresh ingredients, I liked the sauce! Thank you!

👍 Healthy 0

Mo Ministry of Health
October 2, 2024, official response

Symbat, good afternoon, thank you, it's very nice to receive feedback!!! And, of course, we are waiting for you again 😊

Yerik Maksotov · 19 reviews ★★★★★
September 30, 2024

Great place, delicious and most importantly healthy

👍 Healthy 0

Mo Ministry of Health
October 2, 2024, official response

Good day. Thank you, Yerik, for your review and rating!!! We will be glad to see

Appendix 1. Ministry of Health-2GIS Reviews Section. Screenshots. (Reviews for Ministry of Health-2GIS, 2024)

A.B. Aida Balganova · 5 reviews ★★★★★
September 27, 2024

Very tasty and varied assortment! I want to try everything! We will be happy to eat deliciously, and most importantly, satisfyingly and healthy!!!

Healthy · 0

Mo Ministry of Health
October 2, 2024, official response

Aida! Thank you very much for your trust 🙏👉 Come to us again, we are always glad ❤️

D.S. Dina Syrgabayeva · 1 review ★★★★★
September 20, 2024, edited

Delicious, healthy food 👍👍 We are glad that we found you. Now the whole family will order healthy food. Thank you for caring about...

[Read in full](#)

Healthy · 1

Mo Ministry of Health
September 24, 2024, official response

Good day. Thank you for your feedback and high rating. We will be glad to see you again!

Unverified reviews 1

Appendix 2. Ministry of Health-2GIS Reviews Section. Screenshots. (Reviews for Ministry of Health-2GIS, 2024)

AT Askar Tuleuov · 4 reviews ★★★★★
September 20, 2024

Great place and food. The selection is amazing in its variety and taste sensations. The price/quality ratio is excellent. The bowl with...

[Read in full](#)

Healthy · 2

Mo Ministry of Health
September 24, 2024, official response

Askar, good afternoon! Thank you very much for your feedback and high rating ❤️ We will always be glad to see you 🍷

G Gauhar · 5 reviews ★★★★★
September 19, 2024, edited

Very cozy and beautiful place, in the very center of the left bank! Incredibly tasty and healthy food! Very nutritious bowls, burgers!...

[Read in full](#)

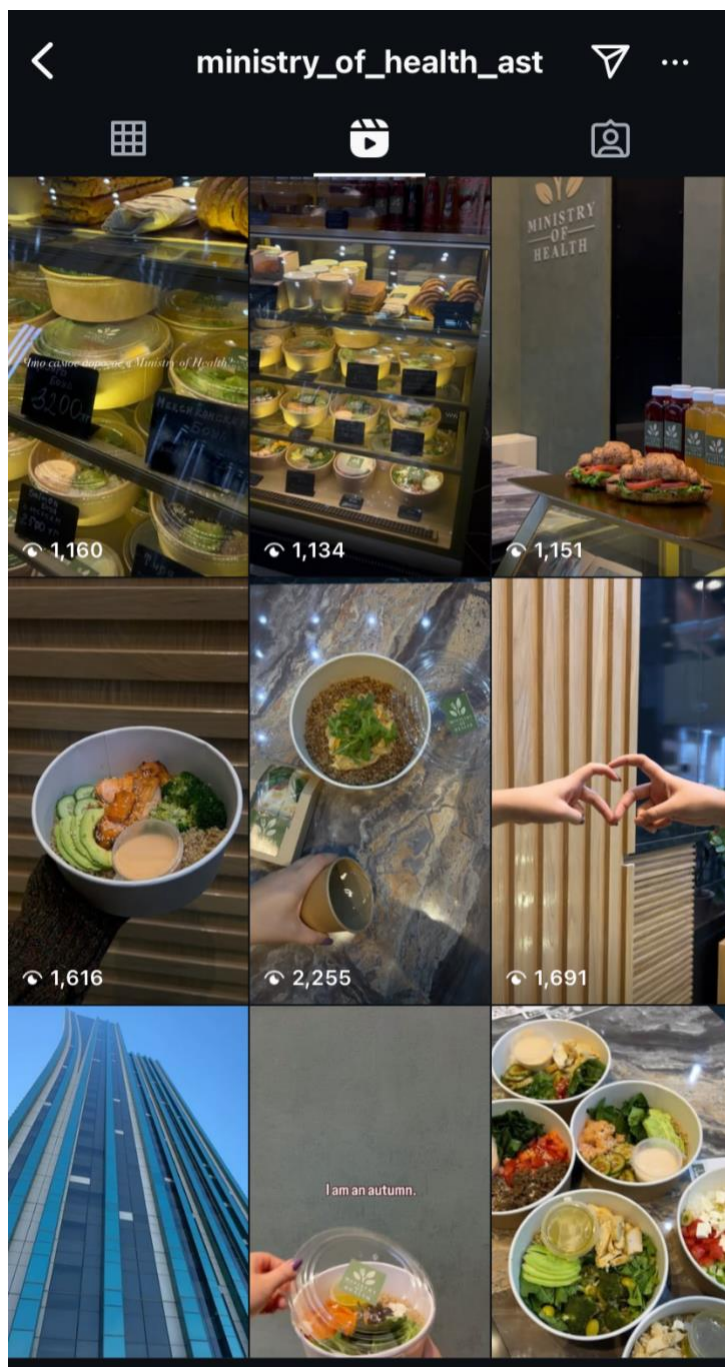
Healthy · 2

Mo Ministry of Health
October 2, 2024, official response

Hello, thank you very much for your kind words about our work 🙏. Come visit us again, we are always glad!

Jl Jamilya Imn · 4 reviews ★★★★★

Appendix 3. Ministry of Health-2GIS Reviews Section. Screenshots. (Reviews for Ministry of Health-2GIS, 2024)



Appendix 4. Ministry of Health Instagram Reel Feed.