

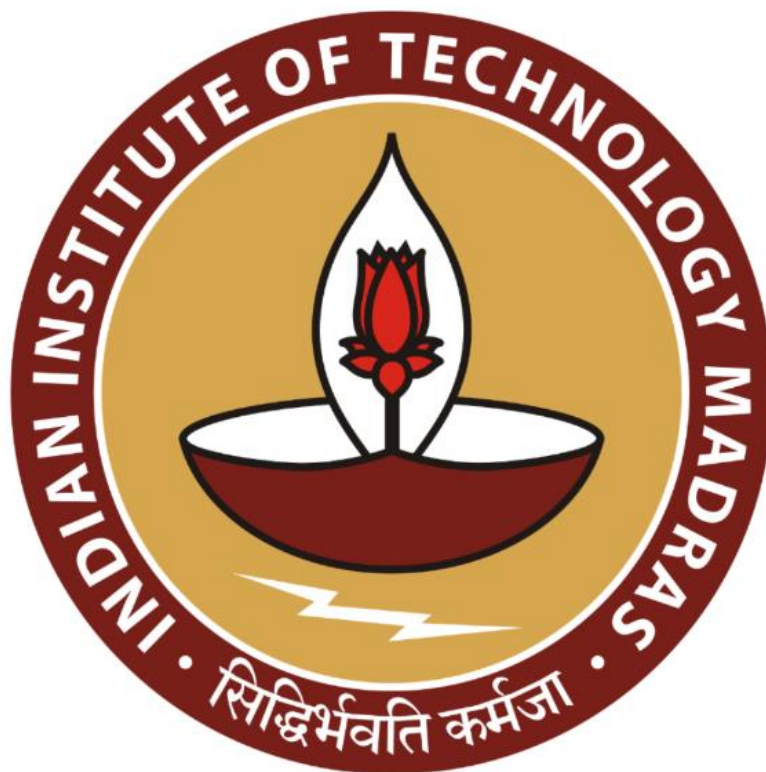
Business Transformation of a General Store: From Manual to Data-Backed Operations

A Proposal report for BDM Capstone Project

Submitted by-

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IITM Online BS Degree Program

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Declaration form

I am working on a Project titled “**Business Transformation of a General Store**”. I extend my appreciation to Verma general store, for providing the necessary resources that enabled me to conduct my project.

I hereby assert that the data presented and assessed in this project report is genuine and precise to the utmost extent of my knowledge and capabilities. The data has been gathered through primary sources and carefully analysed to assure its reliability.

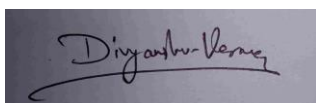
Additionally, I affirm that all procedures employed for the purpose of data collection and analysis have been duly explained in this report. The outcomes and inferences derived from the data are an accurate depiction of the findings acquired through thorough analytical procedures.

I am dedicated to adhering to the information of academic honesty and integrity, and I am receptive to any additional examination or validation of the data contained in this project report.

I understand that the execution of this project is intended for individual completion and is not to be undertaken collectively. I thus affirm that I am not engaged in any form of collaboration with other individuals, and that all the work undertaken has been solely conducted by me. If plagiarism is detected in the report at any stage of the project's completion, I am fully aware and prepared to accept disciplinary measures imposed by the relevant authority.

I agree that all the recommendations are business-specific and limited to this project exclusively and cannot be utilized for any other purpose with an IIT Madras tag. I understand that IIT Madras does not endorse this.

Signature of Candidate:

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature appears to read 'Dinyanthu Verma'.

1.Executive Summary:

“Verma General Store” is a small general store in Shahjadpur market, Ambedkar Nagar, which operates in B2C type that serves a diverse customer base with a variety of daily-use items ranging from Toothbrush to Large Household products. The store comes in unstructured business there isn’t any sales tracking, inventory management, and procurement. Despite being in a well-frequented area, the store struggles to grow due to inefficiencies in management and decision-making.

The key problems identified in the store’s operations are the lack of sales data analysis for demand forecasting, low revenue generation and poor profitability, and the absence of a proper supplier management system. These issues lead to overstocking or understocking, untracked

profit margins, and inconsistent supply, all of which reduce efficiency and limit business growth. The owner currently relies on assumptions rather than data, making it difficult to take informed business decisions.

To solve these problems, a data-driven approach will be adopted using simple tools like Microsoft Excel. Sales, inventory, and supplier data will be collected and analysed to develop practical solutions such as a basic sales tracking system, supplier database, and profit-loss tracker. The aim is to improve revenue, reduce costs, and help the owner make better, informed decisions to sustain and grow the business.

2.Organisational Background

Business name: Verma General Store

Address: Shahzadpur Market, Pahitipur road, Akbarpur, Ambedkar Nagar, (Uttar Pradesh)

Owner Name: Mr. Ritvik

The shop “**Verma General Store**” is a small, retail business founded eight years ago (since 2017). It was established with the goal of serving the daily needs of the local community by offering a range of essential products including personal care goods, and household supplies. The business is managed by the owner, Ritvik, with the assistance of one supporting staff member managing daily operations and handling procurement, sales, and customer service personally.

Currently, the store follows a traditional, manual approach to managing inventory and finances. There is no formal organizational structure or digital system in place, which limits operational efficiency. The business remains confined to a single location and caters primarily to walk-in customers from the surrounding area.

While the store has a consistent customer base, it faces challenges related to revenue generation, stock management, and supplier coordination. These issues are directly tied to the absence of structured processes and data-driven decision-making. This project aims to address those challenges by introducing simple tools and practices to improve business performance and sustainability.

The organization operates with clear vision of providing the better quality of product on a reasonable rate.

3.Problem statement

After discussing with the owner, I identified 3 major problems faced by the firm:

- **Lack in Sales Data Analysis for Demand Forecasting:** Analyse customer buying behaviour and preferences to understand their purchasing patterns and identify opportunities for targeted marketing.

- **Lack in revenue generation / Profitability:** To identify and implement effective strategies that enhance revenue generation and improve profitability,
- **No Supplier Management System Resulting in Delays and High Costs:** To establish an efficient supplier management system that ensures timely procurement, reduces purchase costs, and maintains consistent product availability.

4. Background of the Problem

After discussing with the owner of the shop, I got to know about the various problem that he is facing while doing the business and I decided to work on these 3 problems:

1. Firstly, The Business is managed using traditional business practices, with no integration of modern tools for tracking or analysing customer and sales data. The owner, being unfamiliar with digital solutions, maintains no formal records of purchases, customer preferences, or seasonal demand patterns. And this makes store unable to track sales trends results in frequent overstocking of low-demand items and understocking of high-demand ones.
2. Secondly, the general store is facing ongoing challenges in generating consistent revenue and sustaining profitability. Operated by an owner who uses traditional, manual business methods, the store lacks formal financial planning, pricing strategies, and performance analysis. The lack of profitability limits the store's ability to grow, improve customer experience, or invest in essential resources. In today's competitive, tech-driven market, adopting simple strategies to boost revenue and ensure long-term sustainability is crucial.
3. Thirdly, the general store currently lacks a structured supplier management system, relying instead on informal relationships and inconsistent communication with wholesalers. For a retail business that deals in a wide variety of daily-use products — from low-cost items to breakable crockery — efficient supply chain coordination is essential. Without it, the store cannot ensure good quality, and cost control and damages customer trust when desired products are unavailable.

5. Problem solving approach

The above stated are some of the problems that is limiting the business growth and profitability and to overcome this, we need to implement the following problem-solving approach.

Methods Used:

1. To address the lack of sales data analysis for demand forecasting

➤ Start with structured sales data collection: I will guide the owner to begin recording each sale (such as item name, quantity sold, time of sale, and customer type (regular/new)) using easy digital tools like Google Sheets, Microsoft Excel, or apps like KhataBook. This will help the owner to understand the demand and make strategy according to that.

- Categorize products based on demand like (high-demand, medium-demand, and low-demand categories.
- Identify customer buying patterns or trends based on weekdays, weekends, festivals, or seasonal changes.
- Use graphs and charts for easy understanding: I will collect the data daily over a period of 3 month and analyse them using visual tools like bar charts and pie charts (in Excel or Google Sheets) and make some interpretation/trends out of it and this make decisions making easier which product is fast moving and how much is needed.

2. To address lack of revenue generation

- Create a simple business and revenue plan: I will help the store owner develop a basic business plan that includes setting monthly sales targets, identifying key revenue sources, and planning how to achieve them. This plan will guide the store towards consistent growth and goal-oriented decisions.
- We will start recording daily sales, expenses, and profits
- We will analyse which products bring the highest profit margins and encourage the owner to promote or position them more prominently in the store. Also, identifying low-demand products and stop purchasing such items.

3. Addressing no supplier management system

- Create a supplier database: I will help the owner set up a digital or physical record of all suppliers, including their names, contact details, product categories, pricing, and delivery timelines. This will serve as a central reference to manage all supplier interactions efficiently.
- Compare supplier pricing, quality & delivery performance
- Using simple Tools like WhatsApp, Google Sheets, or notebook logs can be used to keep track of pending orders, expected delivery dates, and follow-up reminders. This improves visibility and reduces forgotten or delayed orders.

Data Collection: To solve problems like low revenue, lack of sales data, and supplier issues, we will collect sales records (products, quantities, dates, and prices) to track popular items and predict demand and manage stock better. Supplier information will help improve purchasing and supplier relationships.

Tools for analysis: Data analysis will be conducted using Microsoft Excel, taking advantage of its functions and features. Pivot tables will play a key role in organizing and summarizing the data effectively. To better visualize the findings, tools like pie charts and bar graphs will be used, providing clear insights into trends and helping to easily identify areas that need attention.

6.Expected Timeline

- Discussion with the owner: 11 March – 12 March
- Data collection: 15 March – 15 May,
- Preparation for proposal submission: 7 May – 10 May,
- Proposal Approval: 11 May – 13 May
- Data cleaning: 01 June – 03 June
- Finding Insights: 03 June – 04 June
- Preparing midterm submission: 01 June – 06 June
- Mid-term approval: 06 June – 08 June
- Finding problem solution: 27 June – 28 June
- Preparing final submission: 27 June – 30 June
- Final Approval: 1 July – 3 July

6.1 Work Breakdown Structure

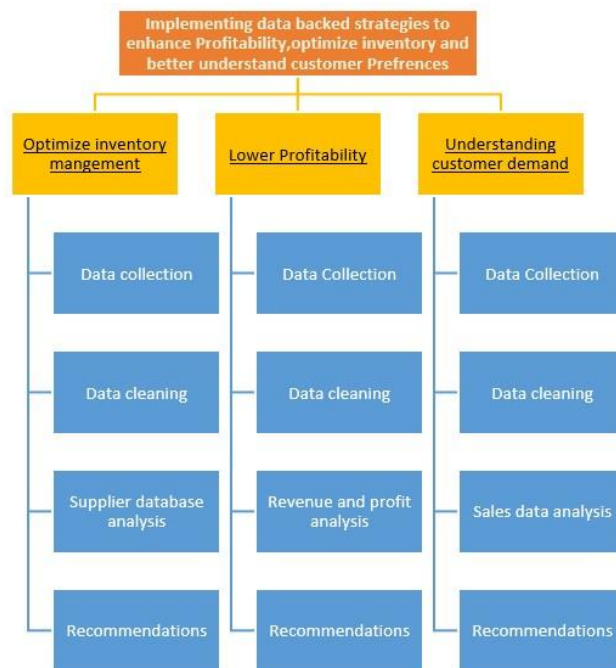


Fig. 1 | Work breakdown structure

6.2 Gantt chart

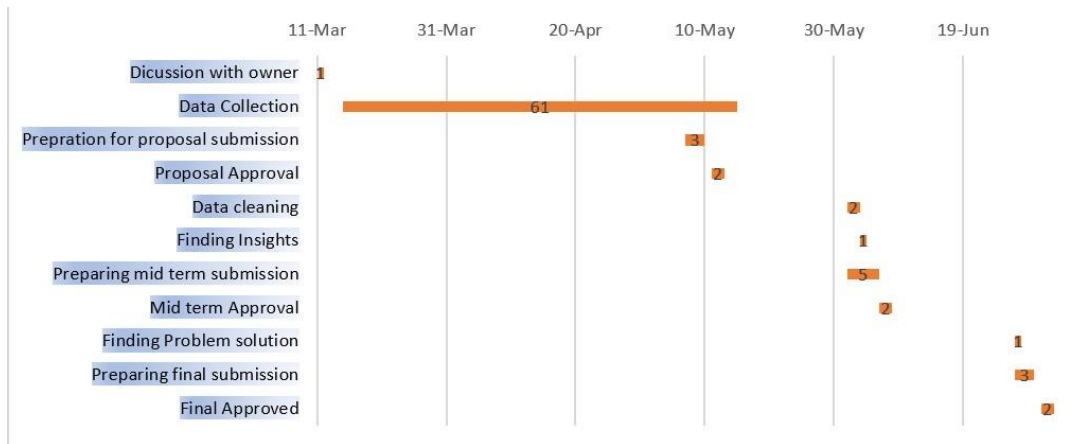


Fig. 2 | Expected Timeline to complete the project

7.Expected Outcome:

The aim of this project is to apply theoretical knowledge in a real business setting and gain hands-on experience in working with actual data using tools like Microsoft Excel. It will help bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical problem-solving.

The expected outcomes of this analysis are:

- Improve the store's revenue and overall profitability through better pricing and cost tracking, Encouraging high profit margin product.
- Help the owner understand customer buying patterns and manage inventory based on actual sales data and take decision accordingly.
- Build a simple supplier management system to ensure timely procurement and reduce unnecessary costs.
- Provide a clear financial overview of the store using data-driven insights from sales, inventory, and supplier records.

All insights will be based on real data collected from the store and will support smarter decision-making in daily operations.

