

Competitive Analysis Canvas

Framework: Competitive Analysis Canvas

Use for: Mapping the competitive landscape before a product launch, pricing decision, market entry, or strategic review. Produces a structured view of where competitors are positioned and where your differentiated response should focus.

Time required: 90–120 minutes for initial analysis; plan for a review pass after gathering data. Don't fill this from memory — verify competitor claims against current public information.

How to use this template

- 1. Define the competitive question first.** "Who are our competitors?" is not a useful frame. "Who are the alternatives a buyer considers when evaluating what we sell?" is. The answer changes based on whether you're defending existing customers, entering a new segment, or repricing.
- 2. Limit to 4–6 competitors.** More than six creates noise and false precision. If you have more candidates, run a quick ranking pass on market overlap and customer-set similarity, then select the top four to six.
- 3. Fill the matrix with current data, not assumptions.** Competitor websites, G2/Capterra reviews, sales call notes ("they said X when comparing us to Y"), and investor decks (if public) are the primary sources. Assumptions should be labeled.
- 4. Complete the matrix before the strategic response section.** The response framework only holds if the matrix is honest. Teams that fill the response section first anchor on what they want to say, not what the data shows.
- 5. Revisit at each major decision point.** Competitive landscapes shift. This canvas is a dated snapshot — label it with the date and review it when a competitor makes a notable move.

Analysis context

Product or offering being analyzed: ____

Competitive question (*what decision or action is this analysis informing?*): ____

Primary market / segment: ____

Date of analysis: ____

Analyst: ____

Candidates considered and screened out (*document who you looked at but decided not to include and why — prevents "what about X?" debates later*):

Competitor considered	Reason excluded

§1 Competitor matrix

Add a column for each competitor (4–6 max). Fill each cell with a specific, verifiable claim — not adjectives. "Charges \$500/seat/month" is useful. "Expensive" is not.

Positioning overview

Dimension	Us	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Company name					
Founded / stage					
Primary value prop					
Target customer					
Primary use case					

Pricing

Dimension	Us	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Pricing model					
Entry price					
Mid-market price					
Enterprise / custom					
Free tier / trial					

Capabilities

Rate each with: ✓ (present, works well) / ~ (partial or mixed) / X (absent or weak) / ? (unknown — note source gap)

Capability	Us	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Capability 1:					
Capability 2:					
Capability 3:					
Capability 4:					
Capability 5:					
Capability 6:					
Capability 7:					

Distribution and go-to-market

Dimension	Us	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Primary sales motion					

Dimension	Us	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Customer acquisition					
Key integrations / partnerships					
Market presence / brand					

Strengths and weaknesses

	Competitor A	Competitor B	Competitor C	Competitor D
Top strength				
Second strength				
Primary weakness				
Second weakness				
Source / confidence level				

§2 Our differentiators

For each competitor, name the 1–2 dimensions where we have a genuine, defensible advantage. "Better product" is not a differentiator. "Native integration with X that they don't support" is.

Competitor	Our advantage vs. them	Their advantage vs. us	Customer reason to choose us
Competitor A			
Competitor B			
Competitor C			
Competitor D			

Shared differentiators (advantages that hold across all competitors — these are your core positioning claims):

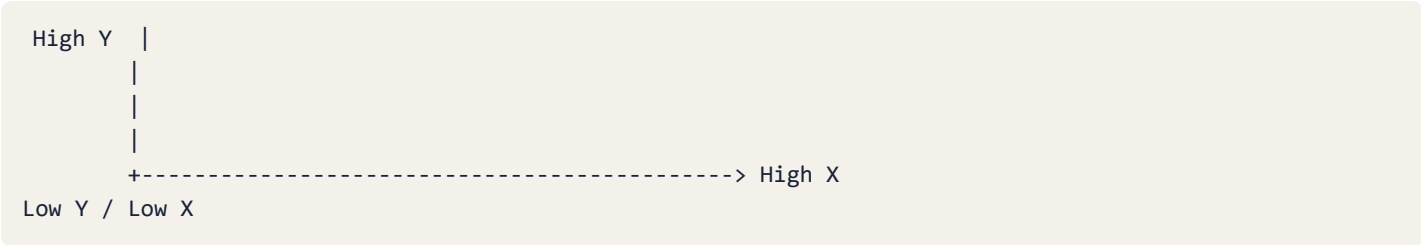
Weaknesses we need to address (things multiple competitors do better — if two or more competitors share an advantage over us, it's a structural gap, not just a competitive edge):

§3 Competitive positioning map

Place competitors on two dimensions most relevant to your competitive question. Label axes with the actual dimensions — price vs. feature breadth, ease of use vs. enterprise power, self-serve vs. high-touch sales motion, etc.

X-axis: __ (Low → High)
Y-axis: __ (Low → High)

Use the grid below as a reference — annotate with competitor names:



Clusters or white space visible from the map:

§4 Strategic response

Where to compete

Segments, use cases, or buyer types where our position is strongest and the competitive density is manageable.

Opportunity	Why we win here	Priority
		High / Medium / Low

Where to avoid (for now)

Segments or use cases where a well-funded competitor has a durable advantage. Competing here requires winning on their terms.

Area to avoid	Reason	When this changes

What to watch

Competitor actions or market signals that would force a reassessment of the above.

Signal	What it means if it happens	Our response

Near-term competitive moves

Based on the analysis above, what should we do in the next 60–90 days?

1.
2.
3.

Key assumptions and data gaps

Label the parts of the matrix that are based on assumptions, secondary research, or outdated data — so the team knows what to validate before acting on the analysis.

Assumption or gap	Section	How to validate	Owner

For frameworks referenced in this canvas, see the Porter's Five Forces canvas (competitive forces) and the Ansoff Matrix (market expansion strategy) in this templates folder. The Business Models Guide on biztechprimer.com covers market positioning vocabulary.