

A Basic Marketing Plan

This is a basic marketing plan geared towards a business division or business unit. It assumes that the plan is being created for marketing the division or business unit as a whole, although tactics for individual products or services may form part of the plan.

The marketing plan template can be adapted for one product or for a number of products. If a multi-product plan is required, we suggest each section should contain an analysis of each product: i.e. a SWOT, value proposition, strategy and tactics for each product.

Executive Summary

The executive summary is an overview of the entire plan, normally completed after the remainder of the plan has been written. Is it a concise summary of where the business is heading. It is used to highlight the more important aspects of the plan to those who may not read all the detail contained in the various sections.

Key Assumptions

This should contain any assumptions you have made in compiling the plan. It highlights the fact that if a key assumption is incorrect, it may affect the effectiveness of the strategies and tactics. It may also mean the plan has to be reviewed if assumptions are proven to be incorrect.

Background

This section should contain:

- ▶ Business overview (what does the business do, what products or services does it offer, revenue, any relevant background information?)
- ▶ Business vision and mission (what is the business division/unit vision and mission?)
- ▶ Business objectives\goals (what are the business division/unit's objectives and goals?)

- ▶ Business strategies (what are the key business strategies the business will follow?)
- ▶ Previous marketing history (what major initiatives have we conducted in the past two years? Were they successful?)
- ▶ Other information

This information should be extracted from your organisation's business plan. It should be a summarised version of the information contained in that business plan and provide background information as to why decisions outlined later in this marketing plan have been made. This marketing plan and the strategies outlined in it should reflect and support the business plan.

Situation\Environmental Analysis

This section should contain the following sections:

- ▶ External (industry, economic, political, competitive etc)
- ▶ Internal (products, processes, price, distribution)
- ▶ Business SWOT

This should be a broad outline of all known information about internal and external factors. A SWOT can be used to summarise the key strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of the business overall (not of the marketing strategies and tactics).

The section should cover how large the market is, its current status (strong, weak, saturated, growing, declining) and recent trends.

Key Dependencies\Interdependencies\Issues

Briefly outline any key dependencies or interdependencies that may affect the business or marketing activities. These will also provide parameters for planning activities.

Marketing Objectives

The objectives list your goals over the next period. They should be precise and preferably measurable.

For example:

- 1 To achieve 10% market share in overall revenue terms in 2013.
- 2 To increase revenue and net profit by 15% in 2013.
- 3 To achieve brand recognition of 25% unaided recall in key target audiences by end 2013.

If it is inappropriate or not feasible to develop specific and measurable objectives, then general objectives may be noted.

Value Proposition

Why will people buy your products? Are you offering something different or the same as competitors? What differentiates you from others with the same or very similar products or services? This needs to be brief and to the point – it is sometimes referred to as the “elevator pitch” (the one minute description that would entice someone to buy your offering).

The underlying message in this proposition will need to be included (in some form) in many of your marketing activities and it is very useful to lock in the messaging in this planning phase.

Target Markets

Based on the market trends and profiles of your business and competitors, who is your customer? What market represents the best chance for success? Where are the opportunities?

Marketing Strategies

What are the marketing strategies to support the business objectives and strategies outlined in your organisation’s business plan and also to achieve your marketing objectives? For example:

- 1 Focus on key channel members including X, Y and Z
- 2 Enable partners
- 3 Drive brand awareness to all target markets/one key target market.

Marketing Tactics

What are the marketing tactics to support each marketing strategy and achieve the marketing objectives?

- ▶ Advertising (online, print, TV, radio, outdoor, other)
- ▶ Website
- ▶ Newsletters
- ▶ Direct mails/electronic direct mails

- ▶ Events
- ▶ Emails
- ▶ Sales tools
- ▶ Social media
- ▶ Anything else?

Marketing and Communications Strategy Matrix

Create a matrix which notes each strategy, identifies individual objectives for that strategy and lists tactics to support the tactics.

Objective	To achieve brand recognition of 25% unaided recall in key target audiences by end 2013.
Strategy	Drive brand awareness in the AB category
Tactics	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Press advertising campaign2 Direct mail3 Targeted LinkedIn direct promotion4 Microsite/landing page to support advertising messaging5 Etc.

Schedule of Tactics, Roles and Responsibilities

Create a table of tactics, roles and responsibilities (and estimate budget if possible)

Advertising campaign	Jan	Feb	Mar	Owner	Budget
Direct mail	✓	✓	✓	John	\$2,000
LinkedIn		✓		Judy	\$7,000
Microsite	✓		✓	Judy	\$1,000
				Total	\$10,000

Measurement of Outcomes

All strategies, if not all tactics, should identify a success measurement that is agreed by key relevant parties. If cost prohibits a sophisticated measurement i.e. advertisement recognition recall, then relevant parties should agree the tactic is deemed successful based on the client’s acceptance of the output.