

Marketing plan template

Use this template to guide you through writing your own marketing action plan.

Introduction

What are the main objectives you want your marketing action plan to achieve for your business (ie, more sales, more customers, greater market share, etc - try to be specific)?

1. Your market

1.1 Who are your customers?

Answer the following questions:

- Who are your existing customers?
- What are their needs?
- What motivates them to buy your offer?
- Can you separate your customers into different groups of people with different needs or motivations?
- Are there people who aren't currently customers but could benefit from your product or service?

1.2 Who are your competitors?

Answer the following questions:

- Who are your competitors (NB, think about your direct competitors - ie, businesses who are selling a similar offer: and your indirect competitors - ie, businesses with a totally different offer but who are competing for the same customers)?
- Why might your customers or potential customers choose a competitors' their product or service over yours?

1.3 Other marketing activity

Answer the following question:

- Are there opportunities for you to be involved in marketing activities you don't already engage in?

2. Opportunities in your business and your market

2.1 What are our strengths?

Answer the following questions:

- What are the strengths of your product or service(ie, high quality, unique, cost-effective, etc)?
- How does your product or service compare to your competitors'?

2.2 What could we improve on?

Answer the following questions:

- Are there any aspects of your product or service which are weak?
- Have your customers complained about any aspect of your offer?

2.3 What opportunities are there?

Answer the following questions:

- Which of your strengths are you not taking advantage of?
- Are there any trends in your market that you and your competitors are not catering to?
- Are there any gaps in your market that you could fill?

- Are there any additional uses for your product or service which you could draw attention to?

2.4 What obstacles are there?

Answer the following question:

- What is preventing you from implementing your marketing plan (ie, money, time, resources, etc - think about internal and external obstacles)?

3 Your business objectives

Answer the following questions:

- What are your objectives as a business? Try to make these both specific and realistic.
- What are your deadlines for each objective?
- What resources do you have to help you fulfil your objectives?
- What extra resources will you need to help you fulfil your objectives?

4 Your marketing strategy and action plan

4.1 Target customers

Answer the following questions:

- Who are your target customers (choose existing and potential customers identified above)?
- What do you know about them (ie, where do they live? What age/gender are they? What sort of income do they earn? What other products do they buy)?
- Where are they likely to find out about your product or service?
- How do they prefer to buy your product or service (eg, face-to-face, online, etc)?
- Which are the most profitable customers?

- Which could become more profitable customers?

4.2 What products or services can we offer our target customers?

Answer the following question:

- What products or services can you offer each of your customer groups in order to achieve your objectives?

4.3 How can we encourage these people to take up the offer?

Answer the following questions:

- What aspect of your product or service will be most attractive to each of your target customer groups?
- Will you need to offer them an incentive to take up your offer?

4.4 How do we communicate our offer?

Answer the following question:

- How can we reach each of our target customer groups with appealing information about our product or service (NB, think about the different ways they receive information - this will help you understand the best ways to market your offer to each customer group)?
- Will it be cost-effective (ie, will the investment justify the likely return on investment)?
- Which is likely to be the most profitable marketing channel?

4.5 Marketing action plan

Use the table below to summarise your strategy.

[illegible]

5 Reviewing your marketing action plan

How will you know that your plan has been a success? Identify appropriate measures for success and put realistic timescales against each activity in your action plan. Review the action plan regularly to make sure you are on track.

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