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PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

Playbook & Toolkit



Follow this simple step-by-step playbook to develop a **product marketing plan** that achieves your **goals** for a **product**.

Table of Contents

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

Framework _____ 03

Introduction _____ 04

STAGE 1  Establish Objectives _____ 06

STAGE 2  Product Detail _____ 08

STAGE 3  Understand Your Market _____ 12

STAGE 4  Size Up The Competition _____ 16

STAGE 5  Build Your Plan _____ 18

STAGE 6  Launch Your Product _____ 26

Conclusion _____ 28

About This Playbook _____ 29

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

Framework

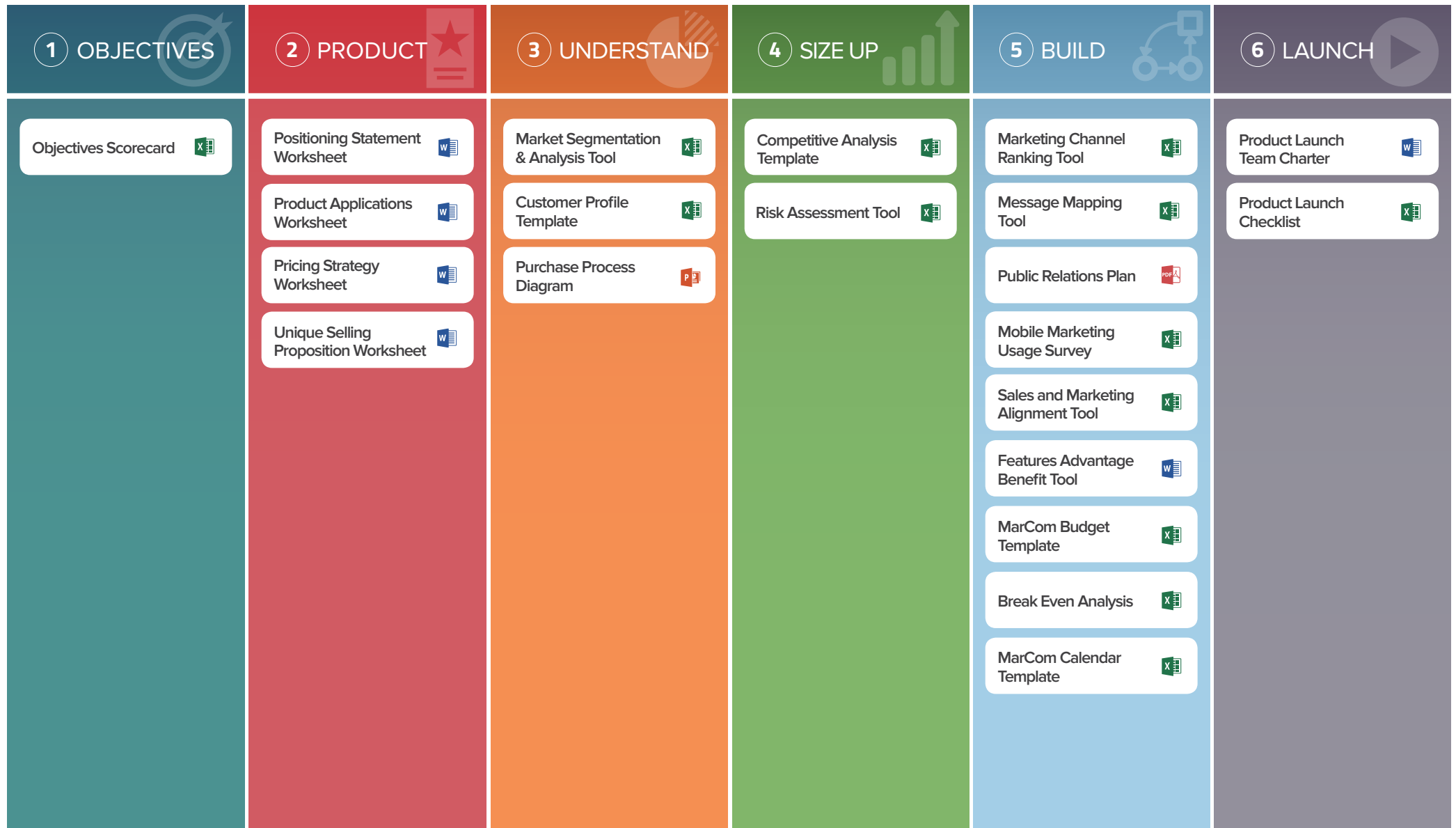
Leverage the framework below to quickly empower your organization's product marketing strategy.



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Click the buttons below to access all related training, tools, templates, and other resources.





What is the Purpose of this Playbook?

To create a comprehensive, effective **Product Marketing Plan** that:

- A. Achieves your goals for the product
- B. Is aligned with your company's marketing strategy

This Product Marketing Plan assumes the existence of:

- A corporate marketing strategy that drives all marketing activities in the company, including this plan you will develop.
- A marketing communications plan that coordinates all product and corporate marketing communications.



How to Use This Playbook

This playbook is made up of six stages. Each stage includes a description, steps, and action items. Action items include reading our How-to Guides or doing activities with our premium tools and templates. These resources were designed to help you do three things:



Understand each step in the product marketing process very clearly.



Adapt these proven best practices to your organization, on your own steam



Complete analysis and activities faster than starting from scratch with blank documents



Scope of the Product Marketing Plan

This playbook will help you develop a plan to market a specific product or service and will work for:

- **New Products** that have never been introduced to the market.
- **Existing Products** for which you are announcing new versions or features, or that were not effectively launched when initially introduced, or are not achieving their goals.

To develop a strategy to govern marketing at the company level, please use our **Marketing Plan Template**.



Outputs from This Playbook



Stage 1 - Establish Objectives
Product Objectives



Stage 2 - Product Detail
Product Positioning, Product Applications, Pricing, and Unique Selling Proposition



Stage 3 - Understand Your Market
Market Segmentation Analysis, Customer Profiles and Purchase Process



Stage 4 - Size Up the Competition
Competitive Analysis



Stage 5 - Build Your Plan
Message Map, Promotion Strategy, Sales Guide, MarCom Budget & Calendar



Stage 6 - Launch Your Product
Product Launch Checklist

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 1

Establish Objectives

Your company develops, launches and manages products to achieve certain business objectives. As you begin the process of drafting your product marketing plan, you will need to identify these objectives or create some if none exist. The ultimate use of these objectives is to determine whether a product is successful.

As you identify or develop your product's objectives, make sure they are consistent with corporate strategy and vision, **appropriate** for where the product is in its lifecycle, and **complementary** to the positioning strategy for the product.



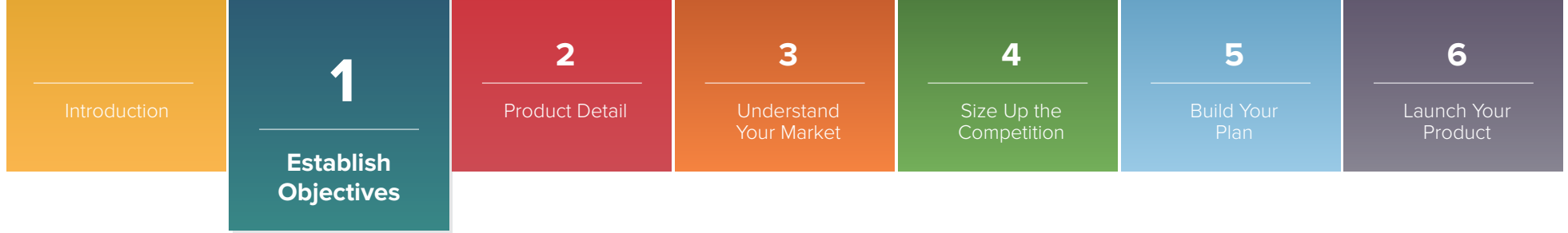
| **STEP 1:** Set Your Product Objectives



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STEP 1

Set Your Product Objectives



Action Item

Use the **Product Marketing Objectives Scorecard** to document your objectives.

Objective 1 - Increase Market Share		
Programs, Initiatives, & Actions	Key Performance Indicators & Metrics	Target Timeframe to
Special introductory pricing	# of units sold vs. competitors	100% increase in # of units
Competitive trade-in program	# of competitive units traded in	
Objective 2 - Increase Brand Awareness		
Programs, Initiatives, & Actions	Key Performance Indicators & Metrics	Target Timeframe to
Brand awareness benchmarking survey	Obtain brand awareness benchmarks	
Social Media Marketing - Brand Awareness Campaigns	# of Facebook "likes"	100,000 likes by end of Q3
Objective 3 - Secure Testimonials from Beta Customers		
Programs, Initiatives, & Actions	Key Performance Indicators & Metrics	Target Timeframe to



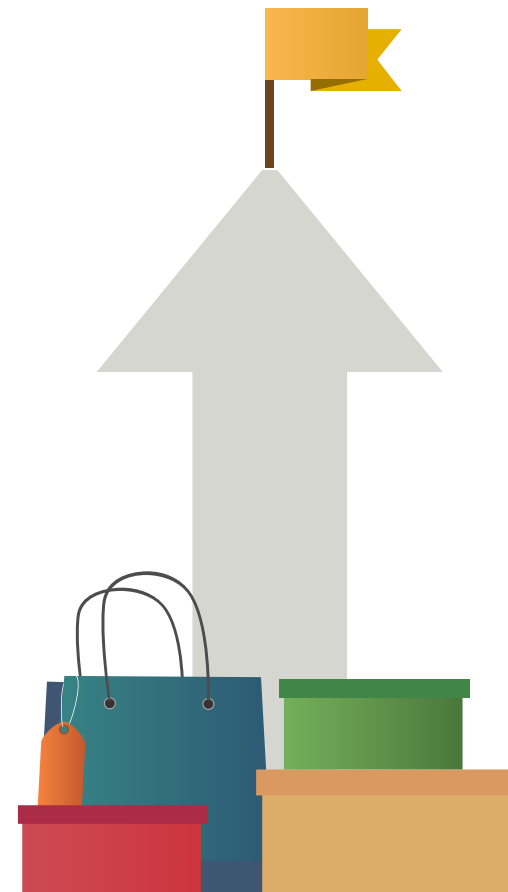
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Begin this step by asking whether there is a vision for how this product should contribute to the success of the business. If a product was developed with a specific mission in mind, understand that mission and set your objectives accordingly.

Typical product marketing goals are listed below. Observe that some of these objectives conflict with each other:

- **Revenue** – achieving predetermined levels of sales
- **Market share** – to grow your share of the market, often by taking it from a specific competitor
- **Other** – profit, initial orders, perception of market leadership or other goals can exist for a product



PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 2

Product Detail

Establish a baseline for use in the balance of this playbook by ensuring there is a shared understanding and an appropriate level of detail with supporting data for each of these areas:



STEP 1: Develop Position and Definition

STEP 2: Define Product Applications

STEP 3: Identify the Differentiators

STEP 4: Define Your Pricing

STEP 5: Draft Your Unique Selling Proposition



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Introduction

1

Establish
Objectives

2

Product
Detail

3

Understand
Your Market

4

Size Up the
Competition

5

Build Your
Plan

6

Launch Your
Product

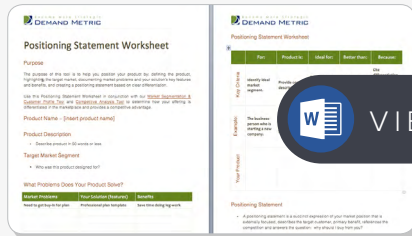
STEP 1

Develop Position and Definition



Action Item

Stake out a defensible market position for this product and craft a Positioning Statement to serve as a platform for your marketing communications. Use the **Positioning Statement Worksheet** to help complete this step.



What elements are included in your Positioning Statement?

- Who your product is for
- What it is
- How it's different
- What primary benefit it provides
- Evidence that supports your claims

STEP 2

Define Product Applications



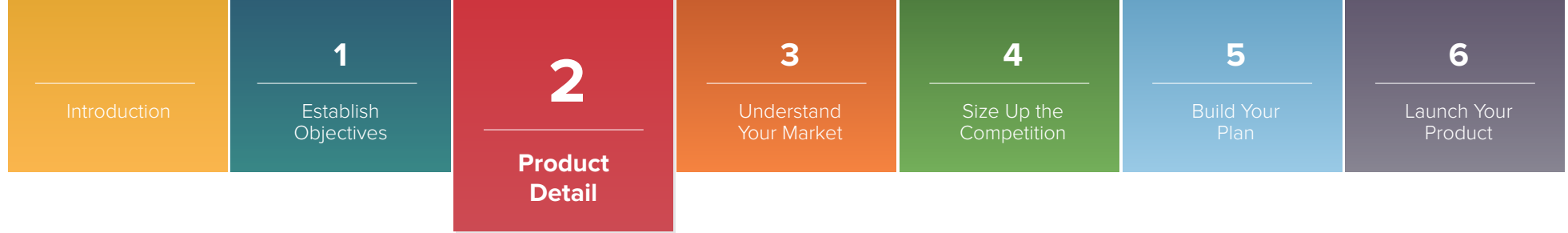
Action Item

Define the primary application for the product and any secondary applications. Use the **Product Applications Worksheet** to help complete this step.



What elements are included in the Product Applications Worksheet?

- Applications description
- Type
- User
- Impact
- Value Proposition or Benefit



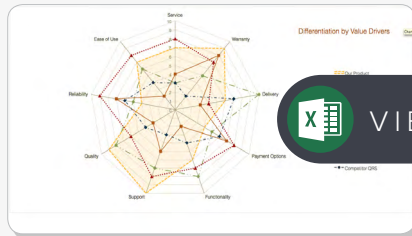
STEP 3

Identify the Differentiators



Action Item

What product features provide you with a competitive advantage and create value for the customer? Use the **Competitive Analysis Tool** to help complete this step.



Differentiation doesn't come from only technical product innovations. Other sources of differentiation are:

- **Terms**
- **Pricing**
- **Packaging**
- **Distribution**



Helpful Hint – Don't proceed beyond this step until you have identified some differentiation that is meaningful to your market.

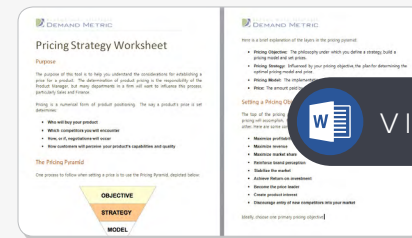
STEP 4

Define Your Pricing



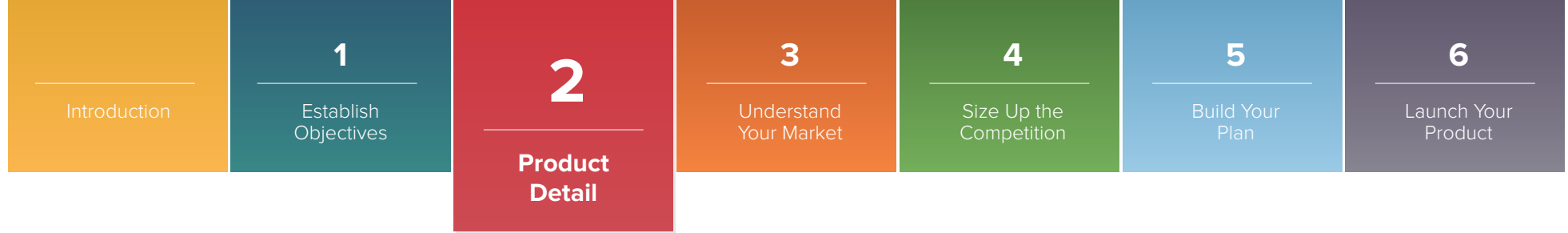
Action Item

Use the **Pricing Strategy Worksheet** to complete this step.



As you determine your pricing, consider these factors:

- What is your pricing objective (e.g. to maximize profit, maximize share, enhance brand perception)?
- How does the proposed pricing compare to the competition?
- Based on sales projections, how soon will you reach Break Even? Use the **Break Even Analysis Tool** to help determine this.
- How profitable are the other products in your portfolio? Use the **Product Profitability Analysis Tool** to help determine this. What discounts, rebates, coupons, or special pricing will you use and for how long?



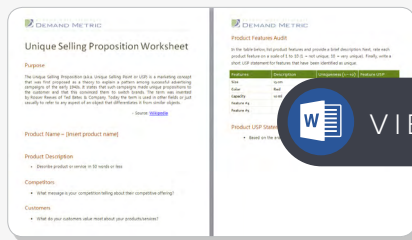
STEP 5

Draft Your Unique Selling Proposition



Action Item

Use the **Unique Selling Proposition Worksheet** to craft your product's Unique Selling Proposition (USP).



[VIEW RESOURCE](#)

Your USP should reflect your positioning (Step 1) and should answer the customer's question, "Why should I buy from you?"

- **Unique:** describes your differentiators
- **Selling:** directed toward customers and is for use in sales encounters
- **Proposition:** invites action on the part of the customer in favor of your product



Example – Domino's Pizza: "Fresh, hot pizza delivered to your door in 30 minutes or less – or it's free."



PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 3

Understand Your Market

Is the market for your product substantial, and against whom will you compete?

The steps in this stage will have you consider your market, your customer, market size, purchase process, access, and priority.



STEP 1: Identify Market Segments

STEP 2: Profile the Buyer

STEP 3: Analyze the Purchase Process

STEP 4: Ensure Access to Customers

STEP 5: Validate Your Market Position



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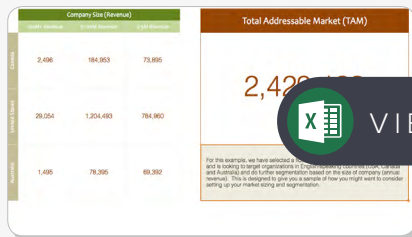
STEP 1

Identify Market Segments



Action Item

Use our **Market Segmentation & Analysis Tool** to analyze the markets your product could serve.



Why segment the market?

1. Few companies have the resources to vigorously pursue all markets for their products.
2. Segmentation leads you to the market niche that represents the best opportunity.
3. You can fully commit to owning the top priority segment and more easily say "no" to distractions.

It is typically more useful to define and describe your target market segments more narrowly than broadly. At the conclusion of this step, you will have defined your segments and estimated the Total Available Market for your product.

STEP 2

Profile the Buyer



Action Item

Use the **Customer Profile Template** to describe the buyer for your product.



Create Customer Profiles based on market research data, not intuition. Each of the following types of buyer should have a profile:

- End-user
- Economic buyer
- Technical buyer

Introduction

1

Establish
Objectives

2

Product Detail

3

Understand
Your Market

4

Size Up the
Competition

5

Build Your
Plan

6

Launch Your
Product

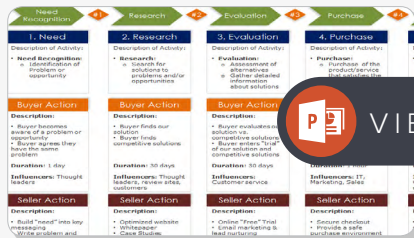
STEP 3

Analyze the Purchase Process



Action Item

Create a process map to illustrate the purchase process for your product. Use the **Purchase Process Diagram** to help complete this step.



Your purchase process map should include:

- The stages in the purchase process and what happens in each one
- The influencers in the decision to buy
- The length of time estimated for the process to complete

STEP 4

Ensure Access to Customers



Action Item

Make sure you can effectively access customers in your target segment(s).

Consider the following as you evaluate your ability to access customers in your target segment(s):

1. What types of media do they consume?
2. What are their trusted sources of information?
3. What professional associations do they belong to?
4. What types of promotions have been effective?



STEP 5

Validate Your Market Position



Action Item

Based on the completion of the first three stages of this playbook, does the market position you defined using the Product Positioning Worksheet ([Stage 2, Step 1](#)) still make sense? If not, refine your positioning now.

Consider the following questions as you validate your positioning work:

1. Is the differentiation identified in [Stage 2](#) substantial and capable of providing a sustainable competitive advantage?
2. Is the target market segment identified in Stage 3 still valid?
3. Is your market position defined narrowly enough that only your product can occupy it, at least initially?
4. Have you tested your market position with an external audience, ideally with your target segment? (If you are considering the use of a focus group, read our [Focus Group Guide](#))

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 4

Size Up the Competition

Your product marketing plan must consider the competition – direct competitors, indirect competitors, and substitutes. In addition to knowing who they are, you will compare: features, function, price and quality, advantages and disadvantages.

The goal of this stage is to know where each competitor is vulnerable and to exploit that in your product marketing plan.



STEP 1: Complete a Competitive Analysis

STEP 2: Anticipate the Competitive Response



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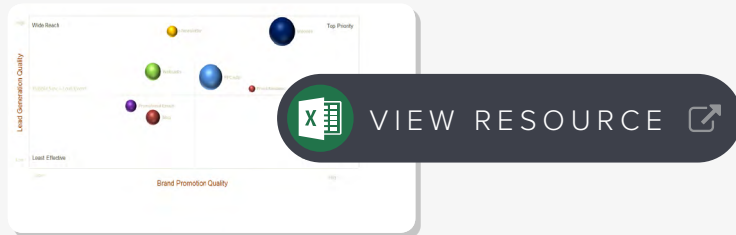
STEP 1

Complete a Competitive Analysis



Action Item

Refer to the analysis completed in STAGE 3, Step 2 using the **Competitive Analysis Template** to understand the extent to which competing solutions are meeting the needs of your target market segment.



Areas of focus for this analysis:

- Why are customers buying competing solutions?
- From the customers' perspective, what are the differentiators for each competing solution?
- How is each solution positioned in the market?

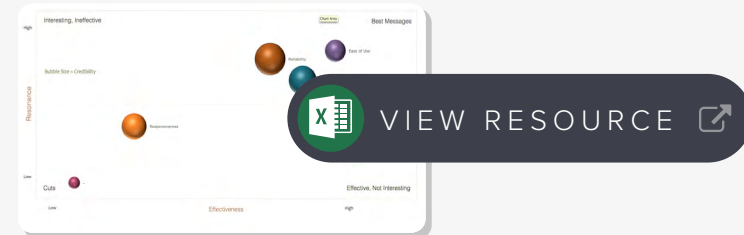
STEP 2

Anticipate the Competitive Response



Action Item

Discuss the possible range of competitive responses to your product announcement, and plan a set of responses should they occur. Use the **Risk Assessment Tool** to complete this step.



Common competitive responses to new product threats:

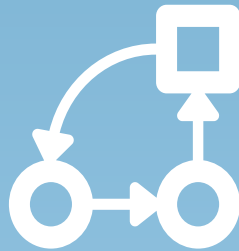
- Public relations or advertising to blunt your product's advantages
- Pricing actions
- New product announcements or feature enhancements
- Litigation over patents or other intellectual property

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 5

Build Your Plan

Using the work you completed in the previous stages of this playbook,
you will now describe how you will achieve sales.



STEP 1: Select your Channels

STEP 2: Draft and Prioritize Key Messages

STEP 3: Create an Promotion Strategy

STEP 4: Ensure Sales & Marketing Alignment

STEP 5: Prepare a Sales Guide

STEP 6: Build your Budget

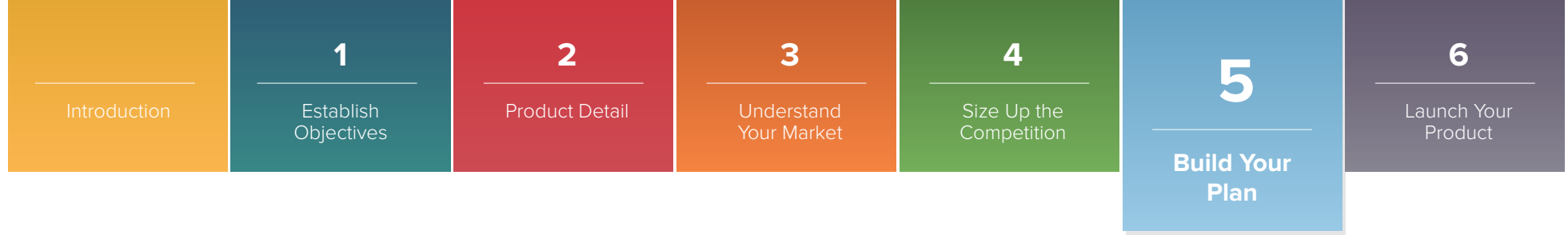
STEP 7: Create a Schedule



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STEP 1

Select your Channels



Action Item

Use the **Marketing Channel Ranking Tool** to prioritize ways to generate leads and create sales.

Description of Activities	✓	Completed
Create Short-list of Potential Publications to Advertise With	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Conduct a Media Audit for Key Publications with BPA Worldwide	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Assess Publication Circulation and Reach to Target Audience	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Document publisher topics by month for short-listed publications in Media Relations Database. Identify topics of interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Select Topics that Reinforce your Key Advertisement Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Align Ads among Channels with a Consistent Theme	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Add Advertisement Due Dates to Media Relations Database	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date
Insert Print and Online Rate Info and Specs to Database	<input type="checkbox"/>	Enter Date



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Use what you've learned during the preceding Stages and this tool to narrow the approaches you could take. Areas of focus for this analysis:

- Brand Promotion Quality
- Lead Quality
- Cost Per Event

STEP 2

Draft and Prioritize Key Messages



Action Item

Use the **Message Mapping Tool** to document the key messages that are important for your target audience to hear about your product.



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What are message maps?

- Message maps provide a method for brainstorming and prioritizing potential message based on their credibility, effectiveness, and resonance.
- Once you have analyzed the relative strengths and weaknesses of each message, a bubble chart message map is automatically generated.

Use the results of the Message Mapping tool to guide your promotional activities.

STEP 3

Promotion Strategy (Advertising)



Action Item

Briefly outline your advertising strategy and key publications. If you are planning to do online advertising and pay-per-click, include some of the keywords you will be targeting.



Key templates in this section include:

- **Advertising Plan Checklist**
- **Competitive PR and Advertising Analysis Template**
- **Advertising Calendar & Budget Template**
- **Creative Brief Template**



Helpful Hint – Complete your ad planning far enough in advance to secure ad space to coincide with the launch date.

STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Public Relations)



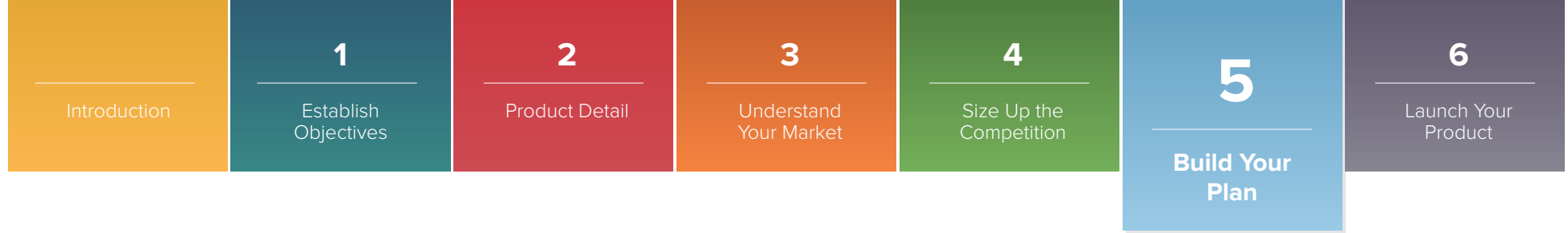
Action Item

Include information regarding the key publications and newswire services you will be using to get exposure in relevant mainstream media. Use our **Public Relations Plan** for additional tools and templates.



PR planning tips:

- Consider pre-announcing to select members of the media to boost your chances of coverage.
- In addition to a press release, have product photos, customer testimonials, and other resources that make it easy for the media to cover your product announcement.



STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Web & Online)



Action Item

Provide a description of major website improvements and projects that will be completed in the following 12 months.

Web promotion tips:

- Ensure you have the technical resources committed to load web content on your site at the time of your launch and product announcement.
- Make sure all new content is optimized for search.
- Test content and cart solutions with all popular browsers.

STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Social Media)



Action Item

Document your social media strategy. Consider leveraging existing social networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Social Media promotion tips:

- It is better to choose one or two social media channels and do them well than to try to do them all without the resources to do them all well.
- Promoting a contest related to a product or product launch is an effective way to gain a following.
- Use discounts and coupons that are exclusively for social media followers.



STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Mobile Marketing)



Action Item

If you are doing mobile marketing, talk about how the program will work, who it will target, and what the key success metrics will be.

Mobile Marketing tip:

- Mobile marketing is as simple as having a website optimized for mobile browsers, or as intricate as developing a specialized mobile app.
- Before investing in a mobile marketing initiative, understand what your customers would like to see in the way of mobile content. Use the [Mobile Marketing Usage Survey](#) to research this.

STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Events)



Action Item

List the key events, conferences, and tradeshows that you plan to attend.

Key templates in this section include:

- [Tradeshow ROI Calculator](#)
- [Events Database Template](#)
- [Conference Budget Template](#)
- [Event Planning Checklist](#)



Helpful Hint – In addition to tradeshows, events can also include ribbon cutting, seminars, and online events (webcast), etc.



STEP 3 (cont.)

Promotion Strategy (Other)



Action Item

Join marketing programs with partners, email marketing, content marketing, special pricing, coupons, sponsorships, inbound marketing strategy, etc.

Make sure that your promotional strategy considers the communications and timing of those communications to Employees, Current customers, Business partners, Channel partners.

Key sections of the Demand Metric Website include:

- Email and Content Marketing
- Partnerships and Channels
- Customer Management

STEP 4

Sales/Marketing Alignment



Action Item

Use the **Sales and Marketing Alignment Tool** to make sure these functions are prepared to work together to facilitate the success of this product's marketing plan.

Sales & Marketing Alignment Criteria	Marketing	Sales	Sales & Marketing
Organizational Relationships	3.0	3.8	
Metrics & Value-Measurement	2.2	3.2	
Lead Generation & Pipeline Management	1.7		
Culture	1.5		
Systems & Technology	1.5		
Messaging & Materials	1.5	4.0	
Weighted Sales & Marketing Alignment Score	40.5	75.9	

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This assessment will consider, from both the Sales and Marketing perspective:

- Relationships
- Culture
- Systems
- Messaging & materials
- Metrics & value measurement
- Lead generation & pipeline management

Introduction

1

Establish
Objectives

2

Product Detail

3

Understand
Your Market

4

Size Up the
Competition

5

Build Your
Plan

6

Launch Your
Product

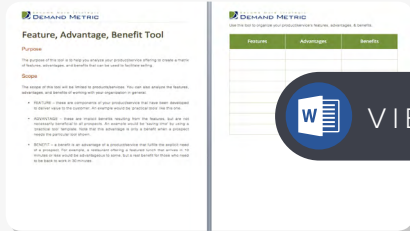
STEP 5

Prepare a Sales Guide



Action Item

Leverage the **Features Advantage Benefit Tool** by using the differentiators and USP (Unique Selling Proposition), publish a guide for internal use by the sales channels based on these differentiators rather than on price.



Provide the rationale for the USP. For each product differentiator, describe:

- A definition of the feature
- The advantages it creates
- The benefits it provides

Using the product applications identified in Stage 2, provide use scenarios.

STEP 6

Build your Budget



Action Item

Use the **Marketing Communications Budget Template** to create a budget for the promotion strategy you developed in Step 4 of this Stage.

Budget Categories	Total Budget	Year To Date Spend	Budget Remaining	% Remaining
Software & Subscriptions	\$85,000	\$81,000	\$24,000	28%
Public Relations	\$35,500	\$30,500	\$4,000	11%
Advertising (print)	\$12,000	\$60,000		
Advertising (online)	\$60,000			
Content Production	\$36,000			
Events & Sponsorships	\$180,000			
Creative Agency Fees	\$240,000	\$240,000	\$0	0%
Contact Lists	\$36,000	\$14,300	\$21,700	60%
General Admin	\$15,000	\$3,280	\$11,720	78%
Memberships & Associations	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000	20%

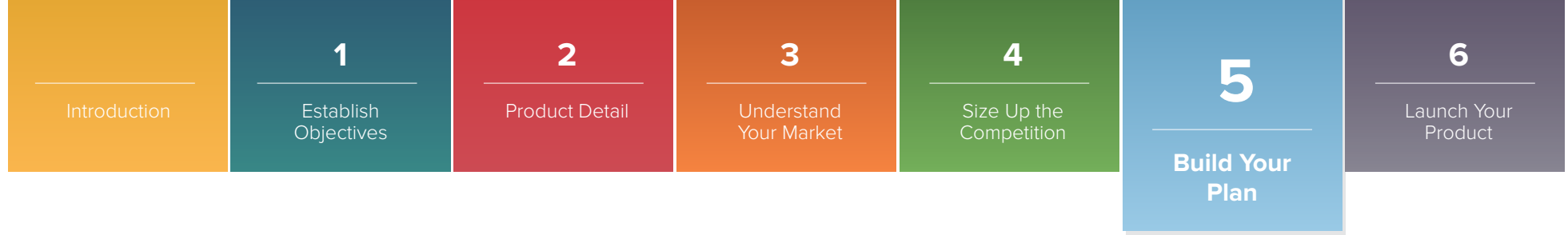


Why is developing a Marketing Budget important?

- Increases credibility for Product Manager
- Organizes cost categories in a logical manner
- Ensures proper allocation of resources



Helpful Hint – If you completed a **Break Even Analysis**, make sure that your budget reflects those assumptions.



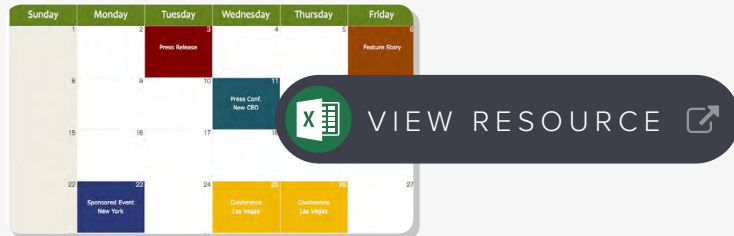
STEP 7

Create a Schedule



Action Item

Use the **Marketing Communications Calendar Template** to create a schedule for the promotion strategy you developed in Step 4 of this Stage.

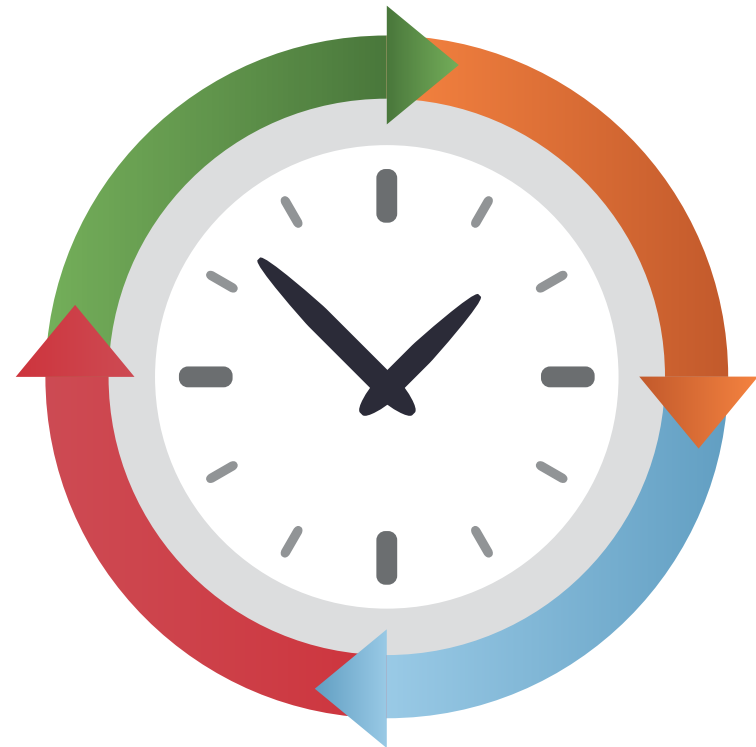


The communications you prepare may include:

- Advertisements
- Public Relations
- Social Media
- Mobile Marketing
- Events
- Other



Helpful Hint — Ensure that each communication properly reflects the key messages you identified.



PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

STAGE 6

Launch Your Product

What type of launch is appropriate?

- For a new product, a formal product launch process is recommended.
- For an existing product with significant new functionality, a formal product launch process also is recommended.
- For an existing product with minor enhancements, a product announcement is probably adequate.

A formal launch process often takes months to plan and execute properly.

Leave yourself plenty of time to do a launch well.



STEP 1: Form a Launch Team

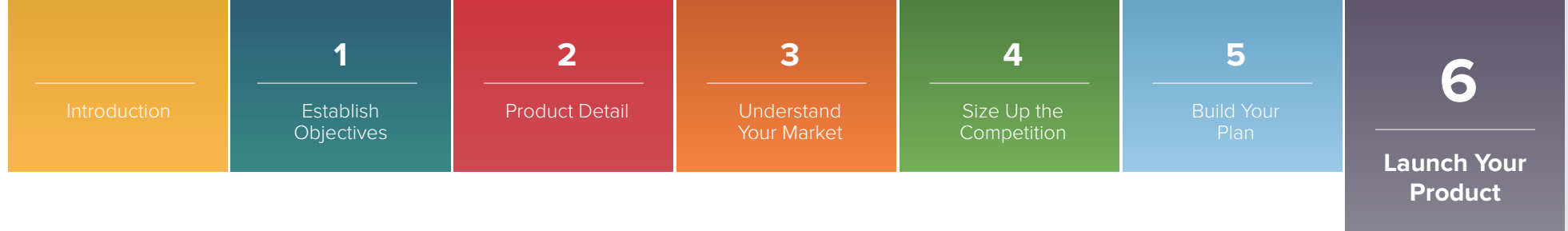
STEP 2: Launch Event



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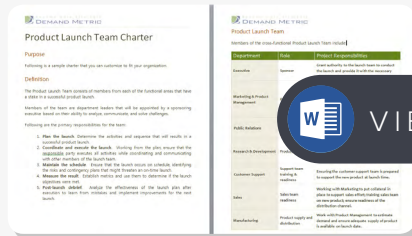
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STEP 1 Form a Launch Team

Action Item

To conduct a formal product launch, select members for the launch team from each of the functional areas that have a stake in a successful product launch. Use the **Product Launch Team Charter** to define roles and responsibilities.



Your cross-functional launch team should include a representative from:

- Marketing
- Public Relations
- R & D
- Customer Support
- Sales
- Manufacturing

STEP 2 Launch Event

Action Item

Write your launch plan using the **Product Launch Checklist** to document responsibilities, due dates, and launch activities.

Scope	Department	Task	Description	Owner	Start	Duration (Days)
1 Market Problems	Product Team	Market Needs	Validate the understanding of Market Problems that the new product was developed to address	Sally	08 Jan-11	35
2 Customer Requirements	Technical	Requirements	Review the customer requirements that resulted in the product's feature set			
2 Customer Requirements	Product Team	Feature Specs	Make sure that the Marketing and PR have been the product specification and have been ready to craft supporting marketing messages, press releases, etc.			
2 Customer Requirements	Product Team	Support	Make sure that the Support function understands the new product's features set to prepare new documentation, training and support materials			
3 Competitive Analysis	Marketing	Competition	Review the competitive analysis to understand the differentiation that exists in the new product. Make sure that the product launch messaging messages reflect this differentiation	Jan	21 Apr-11	21
4 Positioning	Marketing	Positioning	Understand the market position that will be observed for the new product. Verify the positioning is still valid and the product's	Sally	10 May-11	21



A comprehensive Launch Plan is built around a detailed set of launch activities:

- Each activity is assigned to a responsible member of the Launch Team
- The Launch Plan serves as the project management document for the launch
- It is helpful to include a Launch timeline as a communications tool and to keep the Launch on schedule

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

Conclusion



- ✓ **At the end of any business process, it's always a good idea to review it and identify areas for improvement.**
- ✓ **We can help. Demand Metric has the tools and expertise to help you successfully market your products:**
 - Create or audit your product marketing plans
 - Assist with using any of the tools referenced in this playbook
 - Provide hands-on marketing assistance to accelerate achieving your product's goals

To learn more, contact Demand Metric: [**info@demandmetric.com**](mailto:info@demandmetric.com)

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

About This Playbook



The **ANA (Association of National Advertisers)** makes a difference for individuals, brands, and the industry by driving growth, advancing the interests of marketers and promoting and protecting the well-being of the marketing community.

Founded in 1910, the ANA provides leadership that advances marketing excellence and shapes the future of the industry. The ANA's membership includes more than 1,000 companies with 15,000 brands that collectively spend or support more than \$400 billion in marketing and advertising annually. The membership is comprised of more than 750 client-side marketers and 300 associate members, which include leading agencies, law firms, suppliers, consultants, and vendors.

Further enriching the ecosystem is the work of the nonprofit ANA Educational Foundation (AEF), which has the mission of enhancing the understanding of advertising and marketing within the academic and marketing communities.

PRODUCT MARKETING PLAN

About This Playbook



Demand Metric is a marketing research and advisory firm serving a membership community of over 106,000 marketing professionals and consultants in 75 countries.

Offering consulting playbooks, advisory services, and 500+ premium marketing tools and templates, Demand Metric resources and expertise help the marketing community plan more efficiently and effectively, answer the difficult questions about their work with authority and conviction, and complete marketing projects more quickly and with greater confidence — thus boosting the respect of the marketing team and making it easier to justify resources the team needs to succeed.

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