

Marketing Plan Outline

Executive Summary:

(Brief intro about company. Summarize major points of marketing plan. Write this part *after* completing the rest of the plan)

Situation Analysis:

(Explain total marketing environment in which your business competes)

- **Market Summary** (Demographics, trends, needs, growth)
- **SWOT Analysis** (Internal strengths & weaknesses; external opportunities & threats)
- **Products and Services** (Summary of what you offer; features and benefits)
- **Competition** (Competitors, price, location, visibility, image, service, brand names, quality, market share, marketing strategies)
- **Target Market** (Age, gender, residence, family structure, income, education, profession, lifestyle, motivation, size of target market)

Marketing Strategies:

(Based on what you learned through your situation analysis, give an overview of what sets your business apart and how you will market it to reach your target market.)

- **Mission** (Your mission statement; if you don't have one, simply one or two sentences explaining your company's purpose)
- **Goals** (Narrative of what you want to accomplish from a business, marketing and financial standpoint; goals should be clear, measurable and have a set time frame for achievement)

Unique Selling Proposition (What sets your product or service apart from the competition? Your situation analysis should help you with this. Does your product offer better quality or lower price? Is your service more convenient? Once you know what features give you an edge, figure out the benefit to the customer. This is your USP.)

- **Positioning** (Using your Unique Selling Proposition, how will you use your marketing to communicate your company's uniqueness? Use your USP to create a tag line or positioning for all advertising. For example, a company sells low-fat ice cream that tastes like the real thing. Their USP and tag line could be, "Stay Slim Eating Great Ice Cream." Fed Ex's USP and resulting tag line is "Absolutely, Positively Overnight." Stouffer's is "Nothing Comes Closer to Home." If you don't have a USP, maybe you need to change something about your products or services to develop one.)
- **Target Marketing** (What marketing will you use to target your identified target segment?)
- **Pricing Strategy** (How does your pricing compare to the market price of similar items? How will you be competitive but allow reasonable profit? What are your breakeven costs?)
- **Advertising Strategy** (Give a general summary of your advertising strategy, with more detail to be given in the Marketing Tactics section.)
- **Promotional Strategy** (Give a general summary of any promotional strategies [PR, community involvement, etc.], with more detail to be given in the Marketing Tactics section.)
- **Sales Strategy** (If your company employs a salesperson or sales force, outline your general sales strategy here, such as what clients you will target.)
- **Research Strategy** (Provide a general summary of how you will monitor your marketing efforts and track the success of your marketing tactics.)

Marketing Tactics:

(Marketing tactics are the nuts and bolts. What specific actions will you take to market your company?)

Advertising Action Plan (by month or quarter)

- Media used to reach target market
- Web
- TV
- Radio
- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Yellow Pages
- Billboards
- Direct Mail

- Collateral (brochures, business cards, fliers, etc.)
- Other

Promotional Action Plan (by month or quarter)

- Public Relations
- Community Involvement
- Specialty Items

Sales Action Plan (by month or quarter)

- Sales call goals
- Costs associated with any incentive programs or sales collateral materials

Research Action Plan

- Method of tracking advertising, promotional and sales tactics to ensure acceptable response rate and return on investment.
- Method of monitoring customer demographics, to ensure you are continuing to target the right market segment(s).

Expenses/Budget (Outline your specific costs associated with advertising, promotional, sales and research plans. This is important to help you stay within budget.)

Target Dates and Assignments (Create a calendar outlining deadlines to complete specific marketing tactics and the person responsible for doing so. Revisit this calendar monthly.)

Remember! A Marketing Plan is a work in progress. Revisit it often. It does you no good if it sits in your desk drawer or on a shelf all year. Follow your plan. Act, observe, adjust and act again.



This sample marketing plan written and provided by Mustard Seed Marketing. Find more sample small business marketing materials at <http://www.marketing-small-business.net>.