

Marketing plan template: what needs to be included

[Business](#)



Every marketing plan needs a template to ensure every important aspect has been accounted for. It doesn't need to be complicated, but it does need to be specific.

Here's a template to follow as you create your own marketing plan.

1. Describe your USP simply

Your USP — or Unique Selling Proposition — is what sets your company and your products apart from your competition. This is what will attract customers and inform them how your product will benefit their lives.

Your goal is to limit your USP to one sentence. Because the simpler you can explain your USP, the easier it'll be for customers to understand it.

Slogans are one way to do this. Company slogans can incorporate USP and stick strongly in customer minds. In fact, slogans are a small group of words combined to identify a product or service [1]. They're crisp and includes a key benefit.

Think Meow Mix's slogan: "Tastes So Good, Cats Ask for It By Name."

Of course, your USP doesn't need to be in slogan format. But thinking of it in such a way will help when writing it in your marketing plan template.

Especially if you'll be marketing different products over a period of time.

2. State your marketing goal

Every marketing campaign requires a goal — how else will you know if the plan was a success or not, right?

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Your goal also needs to be specific. Whether it's related to a certain % of profit after a 6 month period. Or to double your email list in 1 month by creating a free course or demo product. For your marketing goal there needs to be:

- a method to deduce success or failure and,
- a timeline/deadline for the marketing goal

3. A dissection of your target market

Your “ target market” is the people you'll be marketing to. While it would be simple to say your product is for “ everyone”, it's not smart in terms of marketing.

For one, “ everyone” is far too broad. You'll have a difficult time reaching them with offline or online marketing methods because with so many places to look, you might not be able to start at all!

And for two, “ everyone” responds to marketing differently. Each person has a problem they want solved to live a better life — whether that means working less, making more money, or feeling more attractive and healthy. It's unlikely your product does all of these things. Even if it does, because customers are skeptical of such large promises, you'll have a difficult time gaining their trust.

And trust = sales.

Instead, create a buyer persona of your target market. Think of one person whom you can create a name and photo of. Include their occupation, income,

and the problem your product solves. Then look to where they hang out online and offline. Are they big into seminars? Do they spend all day on specific subreddits? Is Facebook their best friend?

Reaching your customers is a key piece of any marketing plan. Which means you need to understand where they hangout. If you use direct mail but your target market is on Instagram.... well, they won't see the benefits of your products.

Because they won't see your product at all.

4. Your marketing budget

You can do a marketing cost analysis to fully understand what your current budget is, what the expected profits will be, and whether your marketing plan will be a monetary success. But in general you need to understand:

- The costs for the marketing plan
- Your projected profits, and
- Your deadline (cut-off for the budget).

This will be included every step of the way, specifically when creating your promotion strategy and conversion strategy.

5. Promotion strategies

The promotion strategy's main feature is to bring awareness and interest for your product. That is the goal — profits don't come into play here, but expenses will, so keep the budget in mind.

Many methods are used to create interest:

- Webinars
- Free courses
- Challenges
- Discounts
- Social media ads

You want them interested enough to do something: click on your sales page or sign-up for more details (building your email list), for example. A promotion strategy is an introduction for new customers to learn about your product and see why they need it ASAP.

6. Conversion Strategies

A conversion strategy is when you have their interest, and now it's time to get customers buying. Essentially, you want to give a boost to your conversions.

Strong call-to-actions (CTAs) affect conversions. You know the buttons that you click to sign up or learn more? That color can affect conversion rates. Showing high reviews and testimonials for your products can greatly increase sales (in fact, 88% of user buying decisions have been influenced by reviews [2]).

Even the user experience of your website can make or break the decision to buy, especially if your website is hard to navigate. So create some conversion-boosting strategies and put them to the test.

7. Executive summary

This is a summary of every other part included in the marketing plan. Think of it as a highlight/overview to put at the end of the marketing plan. This is important when it's being passed around to team members, employees, and managers when the marketing plan is put into effect.

Sources:

<http://www.entrepreneur.com/encyclopedia/slogan>

<https://www.zendesk.com/resources/customer-service-and-lifetime-customer-value>

Image: dizain/Shutterstock.com