

Should you follow a marketing plan example?

[Business](#)



A marketing plan is used to identify current objectives and specific information about your industry. This often starts with an executive summary, target market information, marketing goals, budgeting and financial responsibilities. What more to add depends specifically on your industry and history of business.

Which brings the question: when writing your own marketing plan, should you be following a marketing plan example or create your plan from scratch?

Using a marketing example has benefits and negatives. So let's get into them.

The benefits of using a marketing plan example

Starting a plan from scratch, especially if it's the first time, is overwhelming. Objectives, mission statements, and budget plans are expected to be in any marketing plan. Though the level of detail to include isn't a specific number.

But following a marketing plan example helps to quickly create an outline. Most follow an executive summary, analysis, target market, future goals, and marketing budget guideline. The details and length of the entire marketing plan change depending on the example.

Examples can also take you through each section, step by step. While some are mockups of fake companies, other examples highlight key information and provide questions for the reader to answer. These are both great starters for your own guideline.

To summarize: a marketing plan example highlights...

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- Key information to include in your marketing plan.
- A guideline and structure to follow (basic or complex)
- Methods for answering key questions about your business to put in your plan

Every positive has a negative. Using a marketing plan example for your marketing plan isn't an exception.

The negatives for using a marketing plan example

Marketing plan examples should be used as guidelines only. They're not the 'be all, end all' for your own plan. Every marketing plan example, that is a mockup of a fake or existing company, is created to solve and highlight issues for that company. But not your company.

The structure in the plan example differs by the corporation. While the majority start with an executive summary — an explanation of the company, its history, and the reasoning behind the marketing plan development — everything past that depends on the creator.

Some plan examples put heavy emphasis on target markets. They spend pages upon pages explaining their target market demographics: who they are, where they are, previous marketing attempts, success and failure rates of said attempts...it goes on and on. While other examples do a brief buyer persona explanation and then move on.

This continues for other aspects. Many marketing plan examples include analysis — SWOT, PEST, and environment for example. While others skip

analysis completely and talk about hard facts — primarily sales, profits, and expenses.

What's included completely depends on the company, the industry, and reason for the marketing plan. If you take a marketing plan example at face value and only incorporate what you see, you may be limiting the potential of your own company.

For example, you may require in-depth analysis to pinpoint current weaknesses preventing the business from capturing the attention of your target market. Or you might need to focus primarily on costs and budgeting of expenses and leave the analysis to the side. It all depends on your goals.

To summarize: by following marketing plan example you might negatively affect your own by...

- Limiting what you include when following step by step
- Adding unnecessary sections you don't intend to use
- Keep you limited in what to write and expect

What to remember...

A marketing plan example is a guideline. It helps plan what to include and strike off what isn't necessary. If you don't take what they say as absolute for your own marketing plan, it'll be a great resource to start with.

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