

A C B

Attracting Customers Bootcamp

Week 10

Marketing Planning

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Marketing Planning

Before we get started let us recap the outcomes from the ACB course:

- Understand what marketing is
- Understand how marketing can benefit you
- Understand your client completely
- Learn how to identify the best products or services to increase sales
- Identify the best way to promote your products
- Discover how you can give your customers the best experience
- Work out how you can stand out from your competitors
- Create a realistic and relevant marketing strategy

Over the past 9 weeks we have looked at every element of marketing within your business. This week we will bring these elements together to create a realistic and relevant marketing plan and strategy.

Marketing Plans and Strategy

The words plan and strategy can be confusing to begin with. Let us look at what I mean by a plan or strategy:

Plan- A program with a definite purpose.

Strategy- How you put that plan into action.

The marketing plans which I will take you through this week will also include a strategy.

Why do you need a Plan and Strategy?

Imagine you are starting a journey knowing your destination. What would you do? Would you just set off in your car, or would you find out which direction you need to go in, and which route to take? Typically you would do your research and you would drive the quickest route. Well in marketing, your plan is your route and the strategy is the direction.

You need a plan and strategy to make it easier to attract more customers and sell your products and services. A marketing plan and strategy can also help you:

- Identify and use your ideal client research
- Stop you wasting time and money
- Focus on the activities that matter
- Measure results

A goal without a plan is like a car without wheels

Types of Marketing Plans

There are two types of marketing plans: a simple version which all businesses can use as a quick reference tool; and a full marketing plan which can be used as part of any official business plans you need to create and present.

The full marketing plan is useful to create if you are just starting out in business or if you plan to raise any finance in the year ahead. I will begin by helping you create a simple marketing plan. I will then help you create a full marketing plan.

Whichever choice you opt for, instead of enclosing questions throughout the workbook I have created PDF and word templates which you can work through alongside studying the workbook to enable you to write out your marketing plan.

I have created two videos for this week, one exploring the simple marketing plan, and one exploring the full marketing plan.

Marketing plans normally last for 3, 6, 9 or 12 months. The timescale depends on the goals you set and the activities involved. If you are unsure what timescale to start with I suggest creating a 12 month plan. Shall we get started?

Simple Marketing Plan

The simple marketing plan is a 2 page document which identifies:

- Your business name
- Dates
- Target market and ideal client
- Benefits
- Your product or services
- Your core marketing message
- Your goals for the period
- Marketing budget
- Activities
- Promotional methods
- Promotional activities
- Evaluation
- Strategy

Let us work through each section step by step:

Business Name

Write down your business name.

Dates

Write down the date the plan starts, and the date the plan finishes.

Target Market

In this section identify your target market and ideal client. Use the work from week 2 and describe your target market and your ideal client.

Benefits

Identify the benefits your products, services and overall business provides to your ideal clients. This is a great reference point for you to refer to.

Your Product or Service.

Describe your products or services and the benefits they provide to the client. If you need further assistance with this, please refer to week 3 where we explored the difference between features and benefits

Your Core Marketing Message

This is the message we crafted in week 6. As a reminder your marketing message can be created using the WIPS System:

- Who are you?
- Who is your ideal client?
- What are their pain points?
- What solution do you provide?

Make sure your marketing message is brief, and focuses on who you serve and what you do.

Let us recap some marketing messages to inspire you:

Parenting Training- Simple steps tailored to you, to help your family thrive
Membership course- Our mission is to help you grow a wildly successful business

Goals

Your goals can also be called aims or objectives.

Whether you call them goals, objectives or aims, your goals are vital.

Without goals you cannot have a plan. Without a plan you will find it hard to succeed.

Remember the journey we were going on? Without goals it is like not having a destination!

Goals will give you a clear direction and enable you to measure results.

Goals will also help you

- measure success
- make decisions easily- if it does not benefit the goal, don't do it!
- focus on the things that matter.

It is no use saying your goal is to build your business. You must explore deeper- do you want to raise awareness? Do you want to increase sales? Both of these grow your business, however they are entirely different goals.

The goals which you set must be SMART. In other words specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timebound.

- Specific- Your goals should be clear and specific. When devising goals work out:
 - who is involved
 - what resources you need
 - what you want to achieve
- Measurable- You must be able to measure your goals to track your progress. When writing your goals identify how much or how many results you want to achieve.
- Achievable- Your goal must be realistic and achievable
- Relevant- Ensure your goal matters to you, and is it the right time?
- Timebound- Give yourself a target date to make sure you know what to focus on first.

Your marketing goals may relate to profits, operations or awareness.

Let us consider some good examples of marketing goals now:

Increase sales by 10% by 1st March 2020

Sign up 4 new customers every month by 1st June 2020

Increase brand awareness by 25% by 1st June 2020.

Convert 10% of facebook followers by 1st June 2020

Increase website traffic by 25% by 1st June 2020

Increase facebook follower by 20% by 1st April 2020

Launch a new product or service by 1st July 2020

Increase customer service by getting 90% 5 star reviews

There is space to list three goals, a good number to begin with. Each goal will require a different budget, activities, promotional methods and evaluation. Let us consider each of these elements next.

Budget

In this space identify what budget you will spend on achieving those goals. You need to set a budget to ensure that you do not overspend. You can work out your budget based on:

- Projected return on investment
- Percentage of sales
- Number of customers

Whatever your budget make sure you do not loose money.

Activities

In this area list any non promotional activities you need to do to achieve your goal. This is the place to make note of any operations, process, physical evidence or pricing offers that you need to introduce or alter to achieve your goal.

For example:

Goal: Increase sales by 10 % by 1st March 2020

Activities: Ensure website is user friendly, ensure emails are answered quickly, employ three new staff for packing items.

Promotional Methods and Activities

For this section we need to revisit weeks 5 and 6 of the course. In weeks 5 and 6 we identified the best promotional methods for your business. Below there is a list summarising the methods which we explored. Tick the methods most suitable for your business and list these in your plan.

Offline Marketing

- TV Adverts
- Radio
- Newspaper/Magazine
- Outdoor Advertising
- Cinema Adverts
- Personal Selling
- Direct Mail
- Telemarketing
- Direct Response Marketing
- Catalogue Marketing
- Promotions
- Publicity

- Sponsorship
- Exhibitions

Online Marketing

- Display Advertising
- SEO
- Social Media
- Online PR
- Email Marketing
- Viral Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Influencer Marketing
- PPC Marketing

The next stage is to choose the best promotional methods to help you achieve each goal. Also write down the actions you will need to take to achieve your goals

For example:

Goal: Increase sales by 10 % by 1st March 2020

Promotional Methods And Activities:

Flyers

1. Create and distribute flyers

Organic facebook posts

1. Plan one months posts regarding benefits we bring to clients
2. Marketing Message
3. Create images relating to the marketing message.

Evaluation

At the end of the period set in the plan, you will need to evaluate the results based on the objectives you set and write down the results. Also note what you have learnt.

Once you have completed your campaign you may wish to use any of the following measurements:

- Response rate
- Sales
- Conversion rate
- Number of enquiries
- Number of followers
- Cost per contact
- Average sale

Strategy

Now you know your goals, you need to decide what actions to take and when to achieve your goals.

For each of your three goals there is space to write down every single action you will take to meet that goal, along with a deadline and a space to acknowledge when you have completed the activity. By identifying the exact steps you need to take, you will find the goal is a lot easier to achieve. If you were to send flyers you would need to:

- Write marketing message
- Design flyers
- Get flyers printed
- Distribute flyers

Professional Marketing Plan

Whether you are looking for finance, a grant, or you need to present a business plan, you will be able to use this plan as part of your overall business plan. This is also the perfect plan for any new businesses, or businesses who have not created a detailed business or marketing plan. Although this version will take you longer to do, it will help you gain clarity and direction.

You can also use any elements which you feel will be worthwhile to your business.

The professional plan includes the following elements:

- Business Name, Address and Website
- Mission Statement
- Goals
- Background
- Premises
- Market Research
- Target Market
- Competitive Analysis
- SWOT Analysis
- Client Perceived Benefits
- Products and Services
- Pricing
- Distribution Channels
- Promotional Channels
- Promotional Activities
- Budget
- Strategy
- Evaluation

Let us work through each element whilst you complete your plan. There are templates to help you create your marketing plans in this weeks resources.

Business Name, Address and Website

List the details as requested.

Mission Statement

Your mission statement reflects your business. It summarises everything about your business in a few sentences. Creating your mission statement can be one of the most difficult yet rewarding parts of the plan. To work out your mission statement you must consider:

- Why you are in business?
- Who are your customers and how do you change their lives?
- What image of your company do you want people to have?
- What are your products and services? What level of service do you provide?
- What makes your business so extraordinary?
- How do you differ from competitors
- What are your values?

Write down any notes based on the above points now

Your mission statement must convey: what you do; how you do it differently; who you do it for; and what value you provide. Consider each of these questions now.

What do you do?

How do you do it differently?

Who do you do it for?

What value do you provide?

I always find it helpful to look at other mission statements to inspire me. Here are a few mission statements to help you craft yours.

Coca Cola- 'To refresh the world in mind, body and spirit. To inspire moments of optimism and happiness through our brands and actions. To create value and make a difference.'

Ikea- 'To create better everyday life for the many people.'

Using the notes you have made write your mission statement. Put the statement in your plan. Make sure your mission statement is visible so that you will see it everyday.

Goals

Your goals can also be called aims or objectives.

Whatever you call them, goals are vital. Without goals you cannot have a plan and without a plan you will find it hard to succeed. Remember the journey we were going on- without goals it is like not having a destination! Goals will give you a clear direction and enable you to measure results.

Goals will also help you:

- measure success
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Increase brand awareness by 25% by 1st June 2020.

Convert 10% of facebook followers by 1st June 2020

Increase website traffic by 25% by 1st June 2020

Increase facebook follower by 20% by 1st April 2020

Launch a new product or service by 1st July 2020

Upsell to one customer in every 5 by 1st March 2020

I would suggest beginning with at least three goals.

Background

This is where you explain how you came to be in business. Identify what motivated you to start the business and what experience you can bring to your business. Remember you are the only one with your experience, and this can differentiate you from competitors.

Premises

Provide details on the location of your business and whether you operate online or from a bricks and mortar premises.

Market Research

No matter what business you own, you cannot be in business if no one wants your products or services. To work out if people want your business, you must conduct some market research.

Market research will help you find out about your target market, and if you are offering the right products or services.

How do I find the information?

The best way to do market research is to do it yourself. There are a number of ways you can do market research. Let us explore these now.

1. Conduct surveys to find out customer preferences
2. Check out online sites such as Quora. On Quora people ask questions and experts provide answers. Once you create a profile and select your favourite topics you will be able to see what people are asking. Reddit is also useful as this site contains communities and you will be able to see what people are saying.
3. Book reviews- Look on amazon for any books related to your subject. Browse through the reviews- what problems are people saying the books solved. What problems did the books not solve?

4. Facebook groups- Sign up to groups where your audience is and spend some time reading what people are saying. Once you have watched for a while go, add value and ask questions.
5. Google analytics- Browse through google analytics and see what topics are popular and what pages convert the most.
- 6, Interview a customer- Speak to ten customers and ask them what they want and what they like or do not like.
7. Count feet- thinking of opening up a store? Want to check out competition? Go and count how many people visit the area. Write down your findings in the plan.

Target Market

In this section identify your target market and ideal client. Use the work from week 2 and describe your target market and your ideal client.

Competitor Analysis

A competitor analysis can help you understand what does and does not work. Choose up to 5 competitors and for each competitor identify their:

- Strengths- what do they do well? What makes them stand out? What resources do they have? What assets do they have?
- Weaknesses- What do they lack? What limits them? Do they have a clear USP?
- Products or Services
- Pricing Range
- Promotions

Client Perceived Benefits

This is where we identify the benefits you will bring to your clients. You can base this on what you do differently from your competitors. This can be a list of bullet points summarising the benefits you bring your clients.

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis is a great tool to assess where you are and what is working well or badly.

A SWOT analysis looks at your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Let us consider each element of the analysis.

Strengths

What do you do well?
What advantages do you have over others?
What values do you have?
What do your competitors see as your strengths?

Weaknesses

What could you improve?
What disadvantages do you have compared to others?
What are you missing?

Opportunities

What does the industry want?
Market Trends
Government Policies
Changes in population and lifestyles

Threats

List anything which will have a negative impact on your business.
What impacts your sales?

When considering Opportunities and Threats think about: Industry standards; supply chain; market requirements; political situations; economic impacts; social changes; and technologies.

Products and Services

Describe any products or services which you have and who is your target market for each product or services. List the benefits they bring to your customers.

Pricing

Write down everything to do with your pricing- from pricing strategies to the actual prices you charge. Take each product or service and list:

1. How much are you selling products and services for
2. Is it competitively priced
3. Is it realistic for your customers budget
4. Will you offer any promotions?

Distribution Channels

Identify how you will sell your products or services and how will you collect payments. Use this space to recap how you will make sure your distribution channels offer the best customer experience. As a reminder, we looked at this in week 7.

Promotional Channels

For this section we need to revisit weeks 5 and 6 of the course. In weeks 5 and 6 we identified the best promotional methods for your business. Here is a list summarising the methods which we explored. Tick the methods most suitable for your goals. List the most suitable channels in your plan.

Offline Marketing

- TV Adverts
- Radio
- Newspaper/Magazine
- Outdoor Advertising
- Cinema Adverts
- Personal Selling
- Direct Mail
- Telemarketing
- Direct Response Marketing
- Catalogue Marketing
- Promotions
- Publicity

- Sponsorship
- Exhibitions

Online Marketing

- Display Advertising
- SEO
- Social Media
- Online PR
- Email Marketing
- Viral Marketing
- Affiliate Marketing
- Influencer Marketing
- PPC Marketing

Promotional Activities

In this section list anything you need to do to achieve your goal which relates to promotional activities.

For example:

Goal: Increase sales by 10 % by 1st March 2020

Channel: Organic Facebook

Activities:

1. Write one months posts regarding the benefits and pain points
2. Schedule one months posts regarding benefits we bring to clients
2. Create Marketing Message.
3. Create an image bank

Channel: Flyers

Activities:

1. Create flyers and include a Call to action
2. Choose where to distribute flyers
3. Distribute flyers

Budget

In this space identify what budget you will spend on achieving those goals. You need to set a budget to ensure that you do not overspend. You can work out your budget based on:

- Projected return on investment
- Number of sales

Whatever your budget make sure you do not loose money.

Evaluation

At the end of the period set in the plan, you will need to evaluate the results based on the objectives you set.

Strategy

This is where we decide on what you will do and when to achieve your goals.

For each of your three goals there is space to write down every single action you will take to meet that goal, along with a deadline and a space to acknowledge when you have completed the activity.

By identifying the exact steps you need to take, you will find the goal is a lot easier to achieve. If you were to use flyers as a direct mail promotion your activities would include:

1. Write message
2. Design flyers
3. Print flyers
4. Distribute flyers

Summary

Over the past ten weeks I have given you a tailored course in marketing to give you the tried and tested tools to help you grow your business. I really hope that you have found this course extremely useful. Whatever you take away from the course please remember:

- You can create the business of your dreams, you just need to start to take action.
- Results only come from actions.
- One marketing activity a day will have an amazing impact.

I would love for you to keep in touch with me and let me know how you are getting on. Please use the facebook group to share comments or opinions Thanks for being part of the ACB course, and if you have any questions please send them my way. I can't wait to see the amazing things you achieve.

Carrie x

P.S. I have also included a link to a free marketing planning template for this week.