



MARKETING PLAN 101

Reach your goals and grow your business
with 5 simple steps

What you need to know
to build a strategic marketing plan to reach your goals.
Here's a simple breakdown of the steps



1- Decide on your objectives/goals | What are you trying to accomplish?

This is the most important step and the very first one you need to take. Determining your goals will help get clear on what you want and how to accomplish it. *Sooo... what are your objectives?*

Be clear and precise. For example, if you would like to increase sales, be more specific, “I want to increase sales by 5% this quarter, or 10% this year”. Or “I want to increase my list of subscribers”, here too, apply quantifying numbers “ I want to increase my mailing list by 1000 people this year”. Applying a quantifying number will not only help you stay focus on your goal and efforts to reach it, but it will also help with measuring your success on your marketing and sales journey. It will help answer questions such as “am I close, I am on track, am too far behind?”. This invaluable information will also help correct course or do more of the same to reach your goals.

Be realistic with your goals. When setting your goals, consider your challenges, such as staff, skills, budget, time. Don't get me wrong, setting high goals is not a bad idea, to the contrary, but simply consider all that you will need to accomplish that. However, don't let challenges or obstacles deter you from pursuing them, everything has a solution. If you feel overwhelmed by the simple thoughts of having to figure all this out, simply take it one step at the time and spread the exercise over a couple of days. You've got this!

2- Determine your audience/tribe | Who exactly are your people?

Who are your People? Who are you trying to help with your product or services? It's critical to know who you're marketing to so that you can design your messaging accordingly. Here are 2 ways to identify your Tribe:

Ideal Customer 101: This is a popular and effective method. You basically build a persona of your ideal client. You give her a name, an age, a story, you figure out what she likes to do etc. By figuring this out, huge amount of information will emerge such as, how to reach her (advertising channel), how to talk to her (messaging) etc.



Market Research: It's been used since the dawn of marketing and can get pretty expensive, however, thanks to the online revolution, you can now conduct market research very cost-effectively, and even free. Use Survey Monkey to create your questionnaire to see what people think of your product or service, to inquire about their problems, pain points, figure out what they are trying to accomplish etc. Then you can send it to your list, friends and family, facebook groups or networking groups etc. Craft your questions based on what YOU NEED and WANT TO KNOW about your audience/tribe. If they love yoga, maybe ask them what would make their yoga experience even better, or what do they wish they had to help their practice.

3- Choose your messaging | How, where and when will you reach out to your tribe?

Now that you know who your people are, it's time to talk to them by designing your messaging accordingly. Use engaging and helpful content and please don't forget to include calls-to-action (CTA) such as, "To learn more about _____, contact us today!" And please make sure to include contact information in a very obvious and easy way for your clients to take actions. Messaging is also an important part of the marketing plan because you want qualified leads to actually convert, ergo reaching your goals, so it is critical that your messaging is crafted to reach your audience in a way that will compel them to take action.

4- Build your strategy | How will you reach your goals?

Almost there! Now that you have determined your objectives, found your tribe, and crafted your brand messaging, it's time to determine strategies that will help you reach your goals.

For each objective you chose, list a strategy for accomplishing that goal. Your strategies will involve multiple steps or tactics, but setting benchmarks will help you measure your success along the way and adjust if necessary. So get creative!

For example, if one of your goal is to increase your mailing list subscriber by 1000 people. What can you do to achieve that. You can start by breaking it down, 1000 a year is 84 people per month. That's an easier number to work with, less overwhelming and easier to manage. So what can you do to get 84 additional subscriber each month?



You could create free and helpful content and share it with your now known target audience, which leads you to what content will they find helpful (answers will be from your market research and ideal client exercise). Then you'll move to how you will reach them, and here too, the answers will come from your market and ideal client research.

5- Calculate your budget | How, where and when will you reach out to your tribe?

Budget is also another important step in preparing your marketing plan. It can be an unpleasant exercise for some, but it is a necessary step and piece of your overall marketing plan puzzle. If you are already established as a business, you can start by determining what percentage of your revenue you are willing and able to invest in marketing. This amount will vary depending on how quickly you want to grow your business. It's important to be clear, realistic and smart about how you choose to allocate your marketing funds – consider that the U.S. Small Business Administration says a proper marketing budget should fall between 2% and 10% of sales.

But what if you are just starting, and you don't have revenue yet to base your marketing allocations upon? In both cases, research how much your advertising (getting your message to the right people) will cost you. Choose the advertising channel that makes the most sense cost and audience wise. If your people are mostly hanging out on Facebook or Instagram, you can start with free advertising first and see how it goes, or you can right away choose an amount to spend each month on social media advertising. See how your ads are doing, and revise your budget or advertising channels. Design sales promotions and see how much it will cost to implement them. Also remember, that advertising your brand should also be part of your budget and marketing efforts to reach your goals. Consider items like web design, brand advertising etc., which are also essentials as your brand is your business identity, and the first impression potential clients will have of you and your business. Use an Excel spreadsheet to list all of your marketing items and allocate a budget figure to each. This will help you see where you are and come up with a realistic figure. Always remember that there is a lot of free resources out there, so only pay if you feel you absolutely need to and it makes the most sense.

In conclusion, make sure to keep track of your progress and adjust according to your results. Remember, your marketing strategy is ever changing, so don't feel bad if you adjust as you go.