



Building Your Marketing Plan:

A Self-paced Guide to Developing Your Business

Successful marketing plans support company goals. The following worksheets can be completed in detail or can be used as a tool for brainstorming or group discussion. Not every element suggested is appropriate for every company or every product.

Topic	Page
Defining Company Needs.....	2
Defining Current Customers.....	4
Defining Potential Customers.....	5
Marketing Brainstorm Starter	6
Public Relations Laundry List.....	8
How to Get Started	9

If you choose to complete the worksheets, fax your answers to K Squared Communications at 773-774-7857 for assessment and further discussion. Contact K Squared Communications at 773-774-7847 if you have any questions.

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Defining Company Needs

Company goals can be as simple as “Make more money.” Outlining the goals and needs of the company provide a framework for determining appropriate and effective marketing efforts.

What are the top two goals of your business?

1.

2.

To what degree have these goals been met?

1.

2.

What needs to happen to completely reach these business goals?

Overall, what are your company's greatest strengths?

What have been your major problem areas?



If you had to do it all over again, what would you do differently?

What are your priorities for the next 12 months in terms of growth for your business?

What are the two most important marketing objectives that you want to accomplish?

1.

2.

How will measure if your marketing plan has met your objectives?

Other marketing issues or objectives:



Defining Current Customers

Outlining your current customers and potential customers behaviors helps target the audiences the plan will be designed to reach.

What publications do your current customers read?

What meetings do your current customers attend?

To what associations do your current customers belong?

In what other activities do the majority of your current customers participate?



Defining Potential Customers

What publications do your potential customers read?

What meetings do your potential customers attend?

To what associations do your potential customers belong?

In what other activities do the majority of your potential customers participate?



Marketing Brainstorm Starter

The consumer must be reached on his or her own terms, where and when he or she wishes to be reached. Effectively reaching and touching the consumer through a variety of contact points can be particularly effective. This can include traditional and nontraditional activities such as advertising, events, sales promotion, public relations and direct marketing.

Listed below are some ideas on ways to reach new customers and reconnect with existing customers. Check off the items that you feel would be effective in reaching your customers.

- Media Tour** – Invite key publications staff to company headquarters and to customer sites or make appointments for your company spokesperson to travel to the cities where the reporters and editors work.
- Event Marketing** – Create an event, possibly in connection with an industry convention. Invite current and potential customers.
- Coupons** – Provide discounts to readers and responders to ads or newsletters.
- Referrals** – Provide incentives for current customers to recruit new customers.
- Cause Marketing Programs** – Tie your product offering or service to a cause that is valued by current and potential customers.
- Contests or Sweepstakes** – Create incentives for your customers to review demo disks or for them to make an effort to promote your product or service.
- Spokesperson Presentations** – Pursue opportunities to speak at trade shows, regional association meetings and at affiliated-company customer conferences.
- Trade Show Participation** – Make your presence known at conferences with attractive and unique booth décor, product-related and desirable giveaways as well as staffing the booth with friendly, outgoing employees.



Marketing Brainstorm Starter - *continued*

- ❑ **Event Sponsorship** – Find events that will truly be appreciated by current and potential customers.

 - ❑ **Demo Diskettes** – Make your product easily accessible, attractive and transferable.

 - ❑ **Other Ideas:** _____
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Public Relations Laundry List

It is important to provide a consistent, professional image of your company using a wide range of promotional materials and delivery methods. Review the following list to determine what items you already use and what you may want to begin using.

Use	To:
Press Releases	Announce news about the company, product, service or event.
Press Kits	Provide in-depth company information to reporters, investors or customers. Press Kits can include press releases, executive biographies, company fact sheets, milestones, logos and pictures.
Promotional Gimmick	A gift or product packaging to remind customers or press of your company.
Association Promotions	Work with key industry groups such as ASTA, ICTA or consortiums to provide educational materials, posters, brochures or contests that subtly promote a designated product or service while providing a valued benefit to the recipient.
Endorsements	Work with leading corporations or associations that already have a relationship with your potential customers to gain endorsements. Work with the corporation to actively reach the targeted customers and publicize the endorsement.
Exhibit Space	Participate in trade shows using fresh materials or booth ideas to encourage repeat attendees to always visit your booth.
Sampling Event	Invite area customers to see the product in action.



How to Get Started

Start Small.

Don't launch an expensive, large-scale marketing program if you will not be able to sustain it long enough to reap the benefits. Determine whom you want to reach and work within your time and financial budgets to reach them. Use the "Marketing Brainstorm Starter" on page 6 and the "Public Relations Laundry List" on page 8 for some ideas.

Who Do You Know?

Use your current customers and business associates to expand your business or to develop new markets. Customer referral promotions or partnering with another business to create joint marketing programs can help you reach new potential customers.

Who Knows You?

Have you differentiated your offering from your competitors? Do you have a unique name, logo or product offering? Have you promoted your organization at community events, local and industry publications or at tradeshow and within industry organizations?

Use Quality Marketing Programs and Materials.

You may only have one chance to win over a new customer. Make sure you have corporate materials that appropriately reflect your organization such as well written and well designed brochures and fact sheets. Find out what your competitors use and make yours better.

Polish Your Corporate Image.

Make sure you project the image that works for your target audience. For example, look objectively at your workplace, your company stationary and the way employees answer the phone. Make sure that all facets of your customer's experience are positive.

Get Your Story To The Press.

Get positive stories written about your company in local and industry publications. Learn how to work with reporters to get the coverage that you need to build your corporate image and win new clients.

Contact K Squared Communications at 773-774-7847 or at inquiry@ksqrd.com if you have any questions or need further assistance in creating your successful marketing program.



