

Marketing Plan Sample

This Marketing Plan sample is designed as a guide for use by members of the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce. It is part of a suite of resources to help businesses put in place effective practices and procedures for their organisations.

Please be aware that no generic document can cover all circumstances and you may need to adapt this to the needs of your business.

If you need further assistance with putting this resource into effect, or with other employment or business issues, please call the CECC Advisers on 03 366 5096.

© Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce, October 2013

This document and any accompanying information is subject to copyright and has been provided for the sole benefit of the recipient member on the condition that it may not be reproduced or distributed in any form to other parties. In the case of 'template' or 'sample' documents, their reproduction or distribution must be confined to use within the member's own business and not made available to third parties whether in payment of a fee or otherwise. IMPORTANT – DISCLAIMER – The Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce accepts no liability for any of the material or any reliance made on the material

Table of Contents

1. Business Overview

2. Market Overview

- a. Customer Information
- b. Market Information
- c. Industry Information
- d. Product/Services Information

3. Objectives

4. Strategy

- a. Product
- b. Pricing
- c. Distribution
- d. Promotion
- e. Operational Plan
- f. Sales Promotion
- g. Advertising
- h. Public Relations
- i. Direct Marketing
- j. Online Marketing

5. Budgets

6. Action Plan

7. Supporting Documentation



1. Business Overview

What does your business do and how long has it been operating? What industry is it in? What sets your business above your competitors e.g. different location, cheaper price etc.? Give an outline of the products or services, who will buy them, where you feel the business will be in two to five years?

2. Market Overview

What is the main market/industry you operate in? List major changes you predict could happen in these markets/industries? What impact will this have on your business success? What are the reasons or aims of developing this marketing strategy? What is the conclusion of this plan?

a. Customer Information

Describe the type of customers you want to reach? What useful target demographic information is available to assist in reaching them? Who are the customers you want to reach? Define main market/sector groups. What are their basic needs? What stimulates their decision?

b. Market Information

Describe the demand for your product (the size of the market/industry)? What are past trends and future predictions in the market/industry? Who are your competitors or alternate providers? How are they better, worse or different? What is your market/industry share?

c. Industry Information

Describe any factors relating to the area/industry? Is the industry growing? Are there rules, regulations or restrictions that affect the industry?

d. Product/Service Information

Describe the product or service and the major selling points and/or issues? What is the single most important thing about your product/service? How do people feel about the product now? How do you want them to think/act/feel? How is it currently promoted?

3. Objectives

Marketing objectives should be based on understanding your strengths and weakness and the business environment you operate in. Marketing objectives do not just involve trying to make more sales – your objectives can be about creating awareness, developing interest, motivating people to trial your business or getting clients to return to you. Make your objectives specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and tangible.

Make them high-level targets as they can be broken into action tasks in the Action Plan sections of the plan.

4. Strategy

Decide on a series of strategic aims to meet your main objectives and goals in the areas of Product, Pricing, Distribution and Promotion. These should all be measurable.

a. Product

You should describe your long-term product strategy in detail. If you are providing a service then you should consider your service(s) as your product(s).

You will need to consider:

- What features and benefits do you offer?
- Unique selling point (what makes your product/service different from everyone else's?)
- Potential spin-off products or services?

b. Pricing

Detail your pricing strategy and how it lines up with your market e.g. are you charging 'luxury' goods and services prices or appealing to bargain hunters. Include details such as discounts, specials, package deals and moving old stock. Check competitors' prices and policies to ensure you are being realistic with your policies. Determine and detail the costs to produce your products and services, profit margin, what part of the pricing will be transparent to your customers. The prices you set will affect the number of sales you will make, who will purchase from you, what service is required and how much profit your business makes.

There are four factors (cost, demand, competition and image) to consider in choosing a selling price, but there is no clear method of actually determining the correct price for the item.

c. Distribution

Distributing your services/products is part of successful marketing. Describe how you will deliver your end product or service. Your customers will expect to find suitable quantities of your products when and where they need them, in appropriate places and where they can compare your products with competitors.

d. Promotion

State how you currently promote and market your business now (or intent to). Compare (where applicable) what your competitors do for promotion, noting what does and doesn't work for them as well as yourself. Regardless of how good your business is, if you don't promote it and tell people you exist, it's unlikely you will make many sales.

Details of your promotion techniques into six categories:

- Internet
- Public relations
- Advertising
- Promotion
- Packaging or personal selling
- Branding
- Direct marketing is often added to the marketing mix despite being part of advertising rather than marketing

e. Operational Plan

Your marketing tactics should be based on understanding your strengths and weaknesses and the business environment you operate in. Marketing tactics do not just involve how to make more sales – your tactics can be about how to create awareness, develop interest, motivate people to trial your business or get clients to return to you. Remember to make your tactics specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and tangible.

Make them high-level targets as they can be broken into action tasks in the Action Plan sections of the plan.

f. Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is a tactical move where you persuade people to do something they normally wouldn't.

Detail any activities, like the ones below, that can be supported by a sales promotion strategy:

- Introducing new products through a trial
- Staying competitive through discounts or added benefits
- Encouraging year round use of products to reduce seasonal slumps
- Attracting new customers
- Increasing the perceived need for your product
- Increasing the number of items purchased in each transaction

g. Advertising

Describe the message you want to send, who the target audience is and the best way to deliver the message. For instance, to reach a young audience with an 'our product is fun' message you are better off using cinema advertising instead of advertisements in a business magazine. Also outline how often you will repeat the advertising in the same or different media.

h. Public Relations

Good public relations (PR) generates interest in your business in terms of enquiries and reminding existing clients of why they have used your business in the past.

PR is a long-term process, to do with developing an image and a reputation with your customers and the market as a whole. PR strategies can be focused to appeal to particular market segments and to send a particular message. All of your PR activities should then work towards promoting that message to the right people.

Describe how you would capitalise on 'newsworthy' events and opportunities. This includes using the press and radio to promote your message to your marketplace.

i. Direct Marketing

Describe any potential forms of direct marketing you may consider to launch or promote your business.

One of the most common forms of direct marketing, especially for small business, is direct mail. A letter or flyer is mailed to potential customers in order to build awareness, increase sales, offer a trial or engage them to contact you.



j. Online Marketing

One of the easiest ways of publicising your business, its products and/or its services is through the internet. Before you decide to set up a website, at the very least you need to decide what functions your website will have. Decide if you will do internet (online) sales, how much your budget is for setting it up, what message you want to send, whether you will use the website to create business, or merely act as a reference point for your business, and how you will make sure search engines (and customers) find it and your business

5. Budgets

What is the size and source of budget allocation for this plan and how was it determined?

Item	Date Completion	Cost	Measure of Success

6. Action Plan

Prepare an Action Plan. This should be done in a table (see sample). The purpose of the Action Plan is to act as a checklist of what has to be done, when, and by whom. The tasks should not be too detailed or else they become unworkable. See example below. The plan should be regularly reviewed and evaluated roughly every three months so it can be adjusted as required. Information collected during evaluations can also be used in planning future marketing strategies and objectives. Include annual budgets in the one year or mini operational plan.



Action	March	April	May	June	July	Who

7. Supporting Documentation