



STRATEGIC  
**MARKETING**  
PLANNING TEMPLATE

How to Build a Marketing Plan and Marketing Strategy

## Introduction

Marketing is a broad term, there are also many interpretations of a marketing plan and go-to-market plan. There is a difference between a marketing plan and go-to-market plan. To get started with the topic, let's use the following definitions:

**Marketing** – how a company creates value, builds strong relationships and captures value in return.

**Marketing strategy** - the marketing rationale that a company uses to create customer value and achieve profitable relationships.

**Marketing plan** – the plan that provides the strategy and details of how to achieve the business' strategic objectives.

**Go-to-market plan** – a subset of the marketing plan that provides the details of how to approach a new market or launch a new offer (e.g. product, service, brand, pricing model).

## The Marketing Plan

A marketing plan supports the business strategy and business objectives. It must also align with the company values. For example, L.L. Bean believes in selling good merchandise at a reasonable profit and treating customers like human beings. If one of the business objectives was to increase profitability by 2%, the marketing strategies put forth in the marketing plan should not recommend significant price hikes or cutting back on customer support.

## Marketing Plan Template

For purposes of this outline, a product refers to product, service or brand. The outline can be adapted to any industry and does not include all possible categories (there is no one size fits all). In terms of length, think quality over quantity. Keep in mind that it is a tool and shared across the company. It should not require so much effort that it is avoided and/or not implemented. Lastly, it should be agile and updated as feedback is received.

To set your focus, briefly define your business, products, services and markets. Outline the purpose of your plan and who it's intended for.

## Executive Summary

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## Current Position

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## Key Issues

Highlight the key issues and challenges the organization and individual departments face. This can be taken from your audit and might be best completed once you've finished your plan.

## Organization Vision, Mission & Values

This section should set your organization's destination and tone. Taking time to write this will help you focus on how your plan is going to get you there.

### Mission

Aiden Marketing example: To deliver up to date and interesting content on Digital Marketing, supporting academics and professional to succeed in this progressive profession. To practice what we preach and have a strong digital presence; being found, clear and memorable.

### Vision

Aiden Marketing example: Delivering up to date information on all things Digital Marketing; we have thousands of visitors each month and support academics and professional achieve their Digital Marketing goals.

## Values

People	Brand
Positive Professional Pioneering	Responsive Expertise Trustworthy Reliable Progressive

## Marketing Vision & Mission

Now that you know where your organization is going, you need to set your marketing department's purpose. This should support your organization's vision and mission.

### Mission

Aiden Marketing example: To support Aiden Marketing and ensure a strong digital presence through SEO, Social Media and Display Advertising. Raise brand awareness and be recognized as a leading resource for academics and professionals.

### Vision

Aiden Marketing example: We are a fully functional Marketing department delivering a strong brand, message and presence. Our Marketing team has all the skills required to generate hundreds of quality leads each year through inbound marketing

## Situation Analysis

Your current situation will be driven from the analysis in your audit. The following sections are suggestions on what to include, but you only need to include the analysis which will become the foundation of your plan. It's important to review all of your internal and external environments to highlight where you need to focus in order to improve your competitive situation.

## Learnings from last year

It's worth starting by summarizing what you've learnt over the past year so that you can build off your experience.

E.g. Social Media proved to give a strong advertising ROI

## External Environmental Analysis

You would do most of this in your audit, but it's worth summarizing your external environments. You could consider the STEEPLE framework for this:

Factor	What's Happening	Impact	Term	Options Moving Forward
Social	e.g. Consumers want value for money and are negotiating more	E.g. Less profit on actual product. Greater opportunity to up sell services	e.g. Long	e.g. Develop the augmented product; value add services & finance options
Technological				
Economic				
Environment				
Political				
Legal				
Ethical				

You may also choose to use Porters 5 forces to outline your external environments:

FORCE	WHAT'S HAPPENING?	PRESSURE	IMPACT
Competitive rivalry	e.g. new competitor	e.g. high	e.g. less market share
Bargaining power of customers			
Bargaining power of suppliers			
Threat of new entrants			
Threat of substitute products			

## Market Overview

Summarize your market – this will set your focus for the next few sections:

E.g. we're in a competitive, fast moving market with a number of strong competitors offering similar products and services to us. The demand for XX is on the increase, however better resources are expected for free....etc.

## Current Target Markets

Who are your high level markets? You may choose to write a summary of each, or simply list them here. This section will ensure that you're clear on who you're communicating with.

Academics	Professionals
-Universities	-Professional Bodies

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### Current Audiences

This is the next layer down from your markets, where you can break them down into specific audiences.

### Academics

### Marketing Professionals

### Customer Touch Points

Who/what engages with your clients? Evaluate this to check for gaps and improvements.

Touch Point	Department	Does it meet their expectation/need?	Competitive Edge
Website	Marketing	Could be clearer on what we do Easy to find information Good call to action	Customer Centric
Social			
Email			
Direct Mail			
Telephone			
Meet Ups			

Conference			
Trade publications			
Fax			
Paid Search			
Search Engine Optimization			
Affiliate			
Trade publications			



## Competition

Understanding your competition and what they're good at will help you develop a marketing plan which will add more value than your rivals. You may have an information system in place which holds this, or indeed you may conduct a full competitor analysis in your audit – but it's still worth adding at least your main competitor's profile in here.

	Who are they?	Brand	Marketing Mix	Potential competitive advantage on us
Now	Name <i>Founded in</i>	Details about their brand	<b>Product</b>  <b>Price</b>  <b>Placement</b>  <b>Promotion</b>	What do they offer which is better than you?
Up and coming				
Dropping Off?				

## Internal Environmental Analysis

Internal marketing is as important as external, so it's important that you consider your internal environments. Once again it's your audit which will hold the full details, but you could use McKinsey's 7S's to summarize the situation.

Element	Where you are now	Where you want to be	The gaps
Strategy	e.g. international network	e.g. global differentiation	e.g. Need local head quarters

Structure			
Systems			
Style			
Staff			
Skills			
Shared Values			

## Internal Relationships

Use this section to ensure the whole business is working together to deliver what you hope to promise your audiences.

Department	Emphasis	Marketing Emphasis	Relationship/Link
<b>Sales</b>	Short term sales- Monthly targets	Longer term markets	Product and Service pricing. Marketing provides Sales with leads, Sales convert leads

## General SWOT Analysis

SWOT Analysis is a great way of highlighting what you're good at and what you need to invest time and resources into.

**Strengths**

E.g. Strong and clear website

**Weaknesses**

E.g. Weak organic presence

**Opportunities**

E.g. Build a strong Digital Marketing brand

Threats

E.g. Large number of free resources already available

## **Assumptions**

Any non-factual information about your environments go in here; these should ideally turn into facts over time.

## **Organization & Marketing Objectives**

Now that you're clear on your current situation, you're in a position to clearly outline your short, medium and long term objectives. It's recommended that you use the SMART framework when setting your objectives, so that each one is:

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Realistic

Time bound

## Short Term (1 – 3 years)

	Objective	Strategy
Organizational 2020- 2023 (Over 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Double the size of the business to \$x million turnover</li> <li>2. Objective 2</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide the best range of products to key market segments</li> <li>2. Strategy for objective 2</li> </ol>
Marketing 2020-2023 (Over 3 years)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase number of new business Sales by X% year on year</li> <li>2. Objective 2 relating to organizational objective 2</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide the best range of products to key market segments</li> <li>2. Strategy for marketing objective 2</li> </ol>
<b>Marketing Mix</b>		
Product	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Place	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Price	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Promotion	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
People	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Physical Evidence	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Processes	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1

## Medium Term (3 – 5 years)

	Objective	Strategy
Organizational 2020- 2025 (Over 5 years)	1. Double the size of the business to £x million	1. Provide the best range of products to key market
Marketing 2020- 2025 (Over 5 years)	1. Increase number of new business Sales by X%	1. Provide the best range of products to key market
Marketing Mix		
Product	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Place	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Price	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Promotion	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
People	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Physical Evidence	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1
Processes	1. Objective	1. Strategy 1 for objective 1

## Strategy

What is your marketing strategy going to be? How are you going to achieve your objectives? It can be useful to take each objective and outline what you will do at a high level to achieve it within the term. This section can have as much detail as you need, but you can fully break your strategy down in the tactics and actions section.

There are so many possibilities it's worth keeping this as an open section, but here are some pointers to get you thinking:

- Raise brand awareness
- Increase internal communication
- Develop a distribution channel
- Develop a new product
- Go global

## Tactics

The finer details of your strategy should go in here – this could include breaking down each strategic line above, for example raising brand awareness through online, TV and Radio advertising.

## Resources

Detailing the resources you require to deliver your plan will help you identify areas for internal or external recruitment. You can detail each resource here and the role they will play in delivering your plan.

Title	Occupant	Responsibilities
Marketing Manager	Name of occupant or Vacancy	Planning/Strategy/Tactical

## Budget

Once you understand the tactical elements of your plan you can put together the budget you require to deliver it.

Annual costs	Annum	Quarter	Month
Google adwords (PPC)			
<b>Sub Total</b>			
One Off			
Software - Adobe Creative Suite - Demo Builder			
<b>Sub Total</b>			
<b>Grand Total</b>			

## Activity Plan

This is where you can really break your plan down into clear actions. If you're experienced in project management you may choose to create a full project plan, which could include Gantt charts, network charts etc. - however there are other options such as the ones shown below.

## Marketing Mix

The marketing mix is a key set of tools for you to use as part of your plan - you can detail the specific actions for each element of the marketing mix here

Objective	Strategy	Actions
Product	Strategy 1 from objectives section above	Main actions to complete

<b>Placement</b>		
<b>Price</b>		
<b>Promotion</b>		
<b>People</b>		
<b>Physical Evidence</b>		
<b>Processes</b>		



## Campaigns

Write the detail of each campaign you plan to run over the next year or so.

Campaign	Line of Business	Strategy
<p><b>Generate 50 new customers</b></p>	<p>New</p>	<p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 600 leads required (380 in 2020)</li> </ul> <p>Target</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ All target markets</li> </ul> <p>Key messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Affordable products</li> </ul> <p>Placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Social Media</li> </ul> <p>Evaluate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No of leads</li> </ul>

## Digital Advertising

Write up the details of your display advertising activities here.

Placement	Target	Actions
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LinkedIn	-Today's audiences (as well as tomorrow's) -Professionals	-Set up trial

## Social Media

Write up the details of your social media activities here.

Tool	Target	Actions
LinkedIn	Today's audiences (as well as tomorrow's)  Professionals  Targeted marketing by location, sector, job title, groups	Set up company profile
Facebook	Tomorrow's audiences (as well as today's)  More casual  Targeted marketing by location, likes and interests	Set up welcome page
Twitter	Engaged users/prospects	Link with company blog
YouTube	Engaged users/prospects	Set up video channel

Instagram	Tomorrow's audiences (as well as today's)  More visual  Targeted marketing by location, likes and interests	Set up welcome page
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## Email Marketing

Write up the details of your email marketing activities here.

Many other factors need to be considered and reviewed such as:

- Tone of messages and content
- Promotions/incentives offered
- Call to actions
- Content of "From" and "Subject" lines
- Length of email
- Campaign themes
- Timing and frequency of your emails

These are the current suggested timings and frequency of XX's emails.

Emails	Timing	Frequency
Update/News/General communication	Monday afternoon for optimum open rate	Monthly
New business (Nurturing prospects)	Monday morning for optimum open and click through rate	Monthly
Existing business	Friday or Thursday afternoon for optimum open and click through rate	Monthly

## Other Activities

You can detail as much or as little as you like about other activities e.g. Radio Advertising