

mof3's Implement for SME Marketing Success



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Implementation

Assuming you've now got a marketing plan in place (if not, download PLAN from the helpful stuff page of mof3.com), then implementation is the obvious and fun next step. So, where do you start?

Your marketing plan should have outlined the strategic business objectives, which your marketing efforts will support, as well as the target audiences and timelines that will guide your outreach. Now implementation can begin.

Implementation is the tactical piece. It's selecting the right tools to do each job and combining them in a way which builds a framework for the rest of your business.

4 steps to consider

Step 1.

What are your marketing objectives?

In other words, look at your marketing plan and remind yourself of what has been agreed as the definition of marketing success. Keep this on your desk, stick it to your pinboard and refer to it often. Once you start to implement, marketing resources can quickly find themselves stretched to accommodate new ideas and opportunities. Keeping your agreed objectives insight helps the business understand where and when you can be flexible.

Marketing is generally expected to support at least one of the following categories and more often than not, a combination of the goals below

- Increase revenue by X
- Drive business growth by Y through an expanded customer group/targeting a new audience/focusing on a particular geography, industry or sector etc.
- Produce Z number of new leads per month/quarter/year

How and when you implement will be driven by what you're trying to achieve, so be as specific as possible about your goals.

Step 2.

Communications.

Think about what you have to tell the world and who will care enough to listen. Good tactics always think long term. Assume you have 10% less in your budget than you actually do and allocate your spend accordingly.

- Look at the months ahead as an ongoing conversation with your target audience(s). Your outreach ideally needs to take them from strangers to your product/service to advocates of it and that doesn't happen overnight or with one email blast
- Make your messaging clear, concise and consistent. Stay away from business speak and make it conversational if possible. Your customers are just as smart as you are, so don't send communications that you wouldn't be delighted to receive
- Talk benefits rather than features. The only person really interested in your product/service is you. For everyone else you have to create a need, solve a problem or generate enough excitement that they decide to buy and you're not going to do that by listing product features
- Quality of your content should be the driving force. Before you send anything, think – so what? Never send an email to your installed base telling them you have updated your website, unless there's an actual benefit to them knowing that (i.e. downloads, discounts etc.). Otherwise you've just interrupted their day for nothing and that's a wasted opportunity
- Think about your 'call to action' on each communication and prioritize next steps in your outreach based on how your customers respond to the last one, rather than pigeon holing them too early. Make sure to work with your sales team on this one.

Step 3.

Which tool(s) are most likely to help you meet your objectives and why?

I know this sounds like a university essay question, but I'm constantly amazed when companies launch into social media campaigns without knowing why they're doing them or indeed if the people they're trying to reach are even on facebook, twitter etc.

- Think combination campaigns, which use multiple channels to reach your audience e.g. if you're staging an event, you could send an email, set up a micro site, link to this from your blog entry, tweet, post details on facebook, google+ and LinkedIn. You'll also want to produce a printed document for the sales team to leave behind and if you use great imagery you might even get picked up on Pinterest!
- Go where your audience are. If your target group read a particular publication then you'd obviously want to advertise there. In the same way, influential bloggers can make or break an idea or campaign. You don't have to be everywhere - just where your customers are.
- Look at how your various customer groups have engaged with you in the past. You've probably got multiple data stores, (even if its just excel spreadsheets on each sales persons laptop). Revisiting this information can really help you personalise your outreach
- Before selecting, draw up a pros and cons list for each tool which might do the job e.g. Twitter is great for immediate, small amounts of information and interaction, but the immediacy means information is quickly out of date or lost and 140 characters might not do your message justice

Step 4.

Use your marketing tactics to not only achieve your goals but also to enhance the overall customer experience. Build for the future.

- Make sure that all outreach adds value to your brand. In this wonderful world of information sharing, you can never really predict where your messaging might go, so craft each piece to reflect your brand values and what your company stands for and you'll always be proud
- Make it clear how customers can contact you, not just to take up the offer, but to provide feedback, ask questions and engage. Remember long-term relationships are built on trust and hiding behind an 'info@' email address doesn't inspire confidence, unless you respond to it within an hour or less (which would then be a definite 'wow' factor)

In Summary

Make sure your implementation results in delivering the promises you've made to your business. Future years marketing budgets are won or lost based on this fact (I discuss more about this in the EVALUATE pdf on the helpful stuff page of mof3.com).

That said, implementing your marketing plan should be fun. It's exciting to engage with each target group and communicate with them using tools and techniques they respond to. Keep ideas fresh by adapting to new opportunities as your plan unfolds and remember to inform the rest of your business on progress. Success is a great motivator.