

# mof3's Plan for SME Marketing Success



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## Plan

Often seen as 'the boring bit' planning is fundamental to kicking off any successful marketing strategy. Think of it like loading an address into your GPS, so you're guided on the most direct route to reaching your goal.

### 4 steps to consider

#### Step 1.

Look at your overall business plan and decide what you want marketing to help you accomplish.

- Start at the end and work backwards e.g. If your target is increased revenue year on year, how will your marketing strategy contribute to meeting that goal?
- Since revenue comes from sales, marketing might define whom you should be selling to and when. Define specific marketing goals. Only then should marketing tactics (tools to help you achieve these goals) be agreed, such as direct mail, social media campaigns, better slides for the sales team etc.

#### Step 2.

Agree specifics in advance, so everyone knows what to expect.

- Get the main stakeholders in a room and discuss – timeline expectations, budget restrictions and the definition of 'success', so you know when marketing has achieved what it set out to do (in the eyes of the company)
- Document and circulate your findings. Include as much information as possible (charts, links, bullets etc). Maximum of 10 pages, or no one will ever read it
- Remember to include a statement of why you're doing what you're doing and what your current situation looks like, as well as what you hope to achieve by implementing the agreed plans
- Set a cut off date for all feedback. While this should be a working document, it needs a start date and end date, so better to begin work and tweak along the way, than fail to finish anything other than the planning document

## **Step 3.**

Build a SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time driven) action plan, which gives the detail on how you will achieve the objectives you've outlined in the marketing plan. This is often the most referenced document. It keeps you on course and builds confidence across your company that you're on target.

- Excel is a great tool for producing a summary of the steps you'll take with agreed dates for each action
- A month by month overview of marketing activities will highlight any gaps or clashes with projects from other departments in the company
- Remember to show who each activity is aimed at (existing customer, new leads etc.) and what you expect them to do as a result of the marketing activity (buy now, sign up for webinar, attend conference etc.)

## **Step 4.**

Engage. Think of your marketing as a conversation between you and your customers across the time period you've selected. Double check that your outreach makes sense to the group(s) you're targeting and choose your tactics accordingly. Also make sure they're consistent both off and online.

- Consider real time marketing which creates specific messaging for customers according to their needs and where they are in the buying cycle
- Make sure to consult those involved in sales/customer services before crafting content to increase it's relevance and usefulness
- Have a clear path in mind for each outcome but remember that people are not robots and might not want to follow the system you've created. Have a strategy to put leads back into the sales funnel at a later date if/when they drop out
- Try to craft content, which can be repurposed e.g. a whitepaper can be carved up for twitter and facebook posts, referenced on your website/blog, printed out as a sales tool and quoted in the press.

## **In Summary**

Marketing is generally deemed a success when it meets the targets, is under budget and preferably over delivers on expectations! That's a tough call but not impossible, as long as you plan first. Can you really afford not to?