

## **Marketing Your Business 101:: The Basics of a Marketing Plan**

If you don't have a marketing plan, you are seriously overlooking a critical element to your organization's success.

Make the time. Do your research. Check out your competition. (***Think you don't have competition? Trust me, you do***). Analyze. Adapt. Take Action.

***What can a written marketing plan do for your business? Here are the basic elements of a well crafted, well executed marketing plan.***

- 1. Background.** Details about the organization the marketing plan was prepared for. When was the company founded? Be sure to include the mission statement and/or purpose of the organization. Who prepared the marketing plan? What's the purpose or intended outcome of the marketing plan?
- 2. Market Research.** What do you know about your audience and what methods/strategies can be used most effectively to reach them?
- 3. Target Audience.** What do you know about your audience? Give details on your core audience demographics.
- 4. Critical Success Factors.** What are the key factors necessary to achieve success?
- 5. Internal Analysis.** What factors will impact the marketing plan? List both positive and negative factors.
- 6. Environmental Analysis.** What forces beyond your organization's control could impact the effectiveness of the marketing plan?
- 7. Competitor Analysis.** Who are your competitors? And what do they do well? Include any identified weaknesses that could serve as an opportunity for your organization.
- 8. Marketing Objectives/Strategies.** This is the ACTION portion of your marketing plan.
  - *What mechanisms will you use to deliver your marketing message?*
  - *What will the message be?*
  - *What will be the focus of your media outreach?*
  - *What if any events will you host or sponsor?*
  - *What will be your overall methodology?*
    - *Corporate sponsorships?*
    - *What other opportunities exist?*

**9. Timeline and Action Steps.** Get specific. This is the accountability and "delivery" portion of your plan. Assign dates and accountable staff or representative.

**10. Follow Up.** Check-in against the progress you're making with your marketing efforts vs. the plan, each month. This should be a living document that keeps the organization on point, and also helps to guide marketing efforts.