Spreading the Word
- marketing your business

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The small business specialists
Spreading the Word - marketing your business

Small Business Development Corporation

About us

We are a Western Australian government agency that has been delivering relevant, practical support to small businesses since 1984. Our primary role is to offer free, confidential advice and guidance to small business owners at all stages of their business development from start-up to succession planning. We also provide a broad range of business resources (available in printed and online formats), business workshops, business licensing information and a dispute resolution service.

Led by the Small Business Commissioner, our team also works at State and Federal levels to advocate on behalf of the small business sector.

This workbook is designed to complement our Online Marketing workshop. Details of the full range of our workshops can be found at smallbusiness.wa.gov.au

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The quotations included in this workbook are drawn from clients’ case studies and success stories.

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Published by:
Small Business Development Corporation
Level 2, Gordon Stephenson House, 140 William Street
Perth WA 6000
T: 13 12 49
F: (08) 6552 3399
E: info@smallbusiness.wa.gov.au
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Introduction

Businesses survive and grow by selling goods and services that people want. Marketing is the process of getting your business noticed by the people (customers) who need or want your products or services. This workbook will provide you with the tools to develop an effective marketing plan to build a customer base, increase sales, and ensure a sustainable business.

When planning your marketing you need to think about five key things:
1. Who are my target customers?
2. What am I offering them?
3. Why should they buy from me?
4. How can I promote my business to my target market?
5. How can I continually review and refine my marketing?

Many small businesses come up with a fabulous business idea, but then fail to market it successfully. You need to get out there and spread the word about your product or service to the right people in the right way. Advertising and selling are part of the process, but there is much more involved.

Understanding your customer base is a key skill for small business owners. Developing a direct relationship with your customers is a priority. There are many low-cost ways to build a profile for your business and to evaluate their success.

Your marketing plan should be built on information you have included in your business plan. Our 12 Step Business Plan workshop will help you create a practical, tailored business plan that will guide the direction of your business and give you a clear vision to aim for.

Your marketing plan will help you focus on increasing sales volume and as a result guide your business to achieving its goals. By the end of this workbook you’ll be ready to get started.
The six ‘Ps’ of marketing

In marketing we talk about the ‘six Ps’ – the six key aspects that you need to focus on when marketing your products or services.

1. Product
   What are your core products or services?

2. Price
   How will you price your products or services to include all costs, make a profit and stay competitive?

3. Promotion
   What are the best ways to promote your products or services to your target markets?

4. Place
   How will your customers be able to purchase what you are offering? Will it be online, in-store or through other distribution channels?

5. People
   How many staff will you need to operate your business? What skills do they need? How will you train your staff to deliver the best service possible?

6. Processes
   Which customer service procedures and business processes do you need to establish to ensure that your sales process is smooth?
Activity 1 - Your marketing profile

The following questions will determine what stage you have reached in developing your marketing plan. Answer as honestly as you can.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a business plan?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your business plan identify sales forecasts and targets?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you clearly define what makes your product or service unique?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a clear picture of your ideal customer?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have a business brand (name, colours, logo etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you developed resources to present your business to customers (website, brochure etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you allocated funds for marketing and promotion?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you know which marketing tactics are likely to work for your business?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write down three marketing activities you currently undertake to build your business profile and attract customers.

1. [Write three activities here]

2. [Write three activities here]

3. [Write three activities here]
8 step guide to marketing your business

1. Conduct market research
2. Profile your target markets
3. Identify your unique selling proposition
4. Develop your business brand
5. Choose your marketing avenues
6. Set your marketing goals and budget
7. Nurture your loyal customers
8. Monitor and review your marketing
Market research is a key part of developing your marketing strategy. It’s about collecting information to provide an insight into your customers’ minds so that you understand what they want, how they gather information and where they are located. It is also important to research market trends and what is happening in your industry.

Successful businesses conduct regular research to keep up with market trends and maintain a competitive edge. Regardless of whether you’re starting or expanding your business, research is vital to understanding your target market and increasing sales.

### Step 1 – Conduct market research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why do market research?</th>
<th>Identify potential customers</th>
<th>Understanding your existing customers</th>
<th>Understanding your competitors</th>
<th>Set realistic targets</th>
<th>Develop effective strategies</th>
<th>Examine and solve business problems</th>
<th>Prepare for business expansion</th>
<th>Identify business opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Why do market research?</td>
<td>Who is likely to use your product/service? How old are they? Are they male/female, married/single/divorced? Do they have children? Where do they live? What is their level of education?</td>
<td>Why do customers choose your product rather than a competitor’s? What do they value? Is it the level of service, product quality or the prestige associated with consuming your product/service? Who influences their buying decision? What websites do they visit?</td>
<td>It is important to understand who your direct and indirect competitors are. Who is targeting the same market as you? Once you have identified your key competitors, analyse their marketing campaigns. Are they successful? What is/isn’t working?</td>
<td>From the information you collect you’ll be able to set realistic targets for growth, sales and introducing new products or services.</td>
<td>Use your research findings to make informed marketing decisions about how to price your products or services, how to distribute them, which promotional channels to use or whether to develop new products or services.</td>
<td>If you’ve identified a business problem, research will help you work out why it is happening. For example, if sales have fallen you might discover that brand awareness has fallen, a new competitor has entered the market or that a substitute product has become available.</td>
<td>Research will help you identify areas for expansion and test the market’s readiness for a new product or service. For example, you could be planning open a new retail store and need to find the right location, or you could plan to make changes to your distribution channels and need to determine how it will affect your customer base.</td>
<td>Your research could identify new business opportunities; such as an under-serviced market, changing market trends, population shifts, increasing levels of education or changes in leisure activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to research your market

Market research is collecting information about your chosen target markets or industry. Depending on your industry, a great deal of information is probably already available in published reports or studies. This is known as secondary data. However, to gain a better understanding of your target market it is a good idea to conduct your own research. The information you collect is called primary data. Thanks to the internet, it is now easier than ever to collect both types of data quickly and efficiently.

### Examples of secondary data sources
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Industry associations
- IBIS World (available at the SBDC)
- FMRC benchmarks (available at the SBDC)
- State and local libraries
- Local councils

### Examples of primary data sources
- Customer surveys
- Focus group discussions
- Feedback from customers – positive and negative
- Monitoring social media discussions and forums
- Talking directly with customers or potential customers

### Analysing your results

Once you’ve finished your market research, it’s time to analyse the results. Keep an open mind and be objective. Try to avoid conducting research just to prove your preconceived ideas. Remember these golden rules when interpreting the findings of your market research:
- flawed survey questions produce flawed results
- be aware of your own biases
- be honest with yourself
- the better the research, the more informed the decisions.

Don’t ignore the results if they turn out to be different to what you expected. If your research shows that a proposed business venture has a high probability of failure, then it would be unwise for you to proceed. If you are in business already, use the information to develop your strengths, eliminate your weaknesses and create new opportunities.

Above all, remember that market research, like any tool, must be used correctly to achieve a satisfactory result.

### Activity 2 - Conducting market research

As a group discuss the following questions:
1. Has anyone completed a survey of potential customers?
2. Who has already conducted market research on their industry?
   a. What avenues did you use?
   b. What did you discover?
3. Has anyone used social media or forums to research their competitors, business or target market?
In marketing, segmentation is very important. Trying to promote your product to everyone is costly and ineffectual. By splitting your potential customers into clear segments, you can tailor your message to suit each group and gain greater value from your marketing budget.

In this section we will show you how to segment your target markets. It is a good idea to complete a separate profile of each market segment, as the way you market to each of them will differ. Try to be as detailed as possible.

### Step 2 – Profile your target markets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Information that may be useful – this will vary depending on your type of business</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic information</td>
<td>• Are they male or female?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How old are they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where do they live?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work situation</td>
<td>• How educated are they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are their most common job types?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is their average income?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do they have any professional affiliations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle and values</td>
<td>• What are their family situations?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What parts of their lives are the most important to them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What do they value in their lives?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are their hobbies and interests?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do they have children?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do they have pets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your business appeal</td>
<td>• What are you offering?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What is the primary reason they would use your product or service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What appeals to them about your brand, product or service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing avenues</td>
<td>• Where do they typically source information about your type of product or service?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What formal and informal networks are they part of?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What types of marketing appeal to them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who is already marketing to this group effectively and what are they doing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Which industry groups do they typically belong to?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Target market example

Business: inner city cafe
Target market: brunch crowd

| Basic demographic information | • Mixed male and female  
|• Often couples or small groups of friends  
|• Age range 25 to 45  
|• Live close to the city, often in an apartment |

| Work profile | • Well educated, usually with a university degree  
|• Employed Monday to Friday in professional roles  
|• Average income above $80,000 |

| Lifestyle and values | • Like to brunch on weekends, preferably Sunday  
|• No children  
|• Have pets  
|• Value friendship and partnership  
|• Like eating out  
|• Price is a low consideration  
|• Usually like to pay by credit card  
|• Loves to travel |

| What do you offer that appeals to this target market? | • Unique and unusual menu  
|• Free daily newspaper  
|• Free Wi-Fi access  
|• Trendy décor  
|• Relaxed atmosphere  
|• Cafe is located close to their homes |

| What promotional avenues could work for this target market | • Online review sites such as urbanspoon.com  
|• Online location based sites such as foursquare.com  
|• Social media recommendations from friends  
|• Word of mouth referrals  
|• Media/news articles  
|• Promotion of awards e.g. ‘best barista in Perth’ |

The importance of generational differences in target markets

The characteristics of your target market drive your marketing plan. Aside from the demographic detail outlined above, generational differences can also be important.

According to the most recent Australian Census, more than a quarter of the population is part of Generation Z (born from the mid to end of the 1990s), a highly connected community dubbed ‘digital natives’ who have never known anything other than the internet, mobile phones and instant messaging as their way of communicating. If one of your target markets falls into this generation then you need to adjust your marketing to suit, particularly as they age and their spending power grows.
### Activity 3 - Identifying your target market

Break into small groups and try and identify two different target markets for each of the brands below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand</th>
<th>Possible target markets</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>contiki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOSE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathmandu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 3 – Identify your unique selling proposition (USP)

Your unique selling proposition (USP) is the reason your customers buy from you and not your competitors – it’s what makes your business stand out from the crowd. It is important to define what you do differently and convey that to your potential customers.

You should be able to state your USP in a short tag line; for example, Target have capitalised on the phrase ‘Expect More. Pay Less’. This appeals to their target market and sets them apart from other low-cost clothing retailers.

Creating your USP

When developing your USP it is important to consider the following.

Your customers
From your customers’ (target market) perspective what problem do you solve for them? What are their needs or challenges and how does your business help them?

Your competitors
Conduct a thorough competitor analysis to determine how you can differ from them.

Your personality
Are you the reason your business stands out from the crowd? If you are a consultant maybe your personality is what draws people to your business.

Your product or service
What do you offer that is unique, can’t be easily copied, and is exciting enough to attract the attention of your target market?

Answer the following questions to help determine what sets you apart from your competitors and what makes your customers return.

1. Why did you start this business?
2. What do you love most about your products or services?
3. What are the unique strengths of your business?
4. What makes customers come to you instead of your competitors?
5. What benefits do your customers get from purchasing your products or services?
6. Which aspects do you generally highlight when you describe your business to strangers?

“The elevator pitch

To develop your own USP it is a good idea to first define your ‘elevator pitch’. This is a brief overview of your business that could easily be conveyed in, for example, a short elevator ride. Being able to sum up unique aspects of your services or products in a way that excites others should be a key marketing tool.

Tips for developing your pitch

• It should be no longer than 30-60 seconds or, when written, a maximum of a couple of sentences.
• Use language everyone understands – don’t use fancy words or jargon.
• Tell a story and make it entertaining.
• Have a hook at the beginning – something to attract your listener’s attention and make them want to know more.
• Briefly describe your product but do not go into detail.
• Explain the benefit your product gives to people – ‘what’s in it for them.’
• Be passionate. This is your business; be proud and promote it!

“If you want to stand out from the crowd, give people a reason not to forget you.”

Richard Branson, Virgin
Common strategies to create a USP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offer something a bit different</strong></td>
<td>• A coffee shop that lets customers tweet their orders in advance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A hairdressing salon with a crèche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An accountant who organises for your car to be washed during your appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Provide exceptional service</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An online store that includes a small gift with each purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A cafe that surprises loyal customers with a free coffee or cake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Niche strategy</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A web designer who builds sites for the restaurant industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A swimwear retailer selling only plus-size swimsuits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A panel beater specialising in vintage cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Provide a stand-out product or packaging</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An invention that fills a gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unique and unusual packaging that appeals to your main target market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Something different that people will want to share on their social networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Be the quickest</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An electrician or plumber who arrives quickly in an emergency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A pizza delivery service with a ’30 minutes or it’s free’ guarantee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 4 – Develop your business brand

Every business, regardless of size, needs a brand. A powerful, easily recognisable brand can be one of the most successful marketing strategies you employ.

What is a brand?

A brand is more than just a name, logo, colours and tagline. A strong brand can elicit an emotional response from your target customers. Your brand should reflect your business; it is the foundation of your marketing. Once you have developed a strong brand you and your target market will both have a clear idea of what you stand for. This will lead to your advertising and promotion being easier to implement.

Why are brands so important?

• A quality brand instils confidence in customers and creates loyalty.
• It increases the value of your business.
• It delivers your core business message very simply, which saves money on expensive marketing.
• If the brand is recognisable and memorable customers will be able to share their experiences of it more easily.
• Your brand can focus employees and give your business direction.

How to use your brand

• Be consistent in the way you use your brand. Consider creating a style guide to help you manage how the brand is used across your marketing. The Virgin brand is an example of how a brand should be used consistently.
• Once you have chosen a name for your business, secure the relevant domain name/s and, if practical, protect your brand by registering it as a trademark (ipaustralia.gov.au).
• A graphic designer can take your basic details (name, industry, target market etc.) and produce a logo, colour scheme and other design elements that will help define your brand. Be sure to get at least three quotes before choosing a professional to help you. You might also consider using an online crowd sourcing platform like freelancer.com.au or 99designs.com.au to get quotes. If you’re struggling, consider employing a brand agency. They can be quite expensive, but depending on your circumstances the cost could be worthwhile.
• Remember to link everything back to your website or main communication platform. That way you can use multiple pathways to direct your customers to your key messages.
• Live the brand – make sure that the brand and what it represents is reinforced by the way you do business and all your interactions with customers, suppliers and other referral points.

Use your brand on all your promotional material, including:
• business cards
• website
• uniforms
• premises
• product packaging
• quotes and invoices
• marketing material
• advertising
• vehicles
• social media
Elements that make up your business brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand elements</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Business name</strong></td>
<td><strong>Google</strong>&lt;br&gt;Creative and quirky. A made up name that is now used as common English – &quot;Just Google it!&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>BRITISH AIRWAYS</strong>&lt;br&gt;Descriptive and functional. Clearly describes where the business is based and what they do.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Logo</strong></td>
<td>The fruit has nothing to do with the product, but the logo is simple, effective and memorable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The bird logo for Twitter is easily recognisable, very simple and relates to the name of the business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colours</strong></td>
<td>Virgin&lt;br&gt;Red instantly springs to mind when you think of the Virgin brand. Red also goes faster!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McDonalds&lt;br&gt;The McDonalds yellow theme with the golden arches is known throughout the world and has been used consistently for over 70 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tagline</strong></td>
<td>Nike appealed to their target markets’ state of mind;&lt;br&gt;‘Just do it’ encourages action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L’Oreal have the tagline ‘Because you’re worth it’ which appeals to their female target market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fonts</strong></td>
<td>The fonts you choose for your brand should be used consistently across all your marketing. For this reason it is a good idea to choose common fonts, such as Verdana or Tahoma, as they are easy to read and standard on most devices. Your logo font can be more creative as it is an image, but all other fonts should be generic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 4 – Brand recognition

Working in small groups, answer the following questions.

1. What is the tagline for American Express?

2. Which business has the tagline ‘Melts in your mouth, not your hand’?

3. Think of four businesses that use the colour yellow in their branding:
   1. ____________________________
   2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________
   4. ____________________________

4. List three well known quirky business names:
   1. ____________________________
   2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________

5. List three well known and functional business names:
   1. ____________________________
   2. ____________________________
   3. ____________________________
Step 5 – Choose your marketing avenues

Up until this point we have discussed how to:

• conduct market research
• profile your target markets
• identify your unique selling proposition (USP)
• develop your business brand

Now we will determine the best marketing avenues or promotional tools for your business. These can range from free options like social media, to paid advertising through TV or radio. This section will help you determine what is going to work best for you, your business and your budget.

Tips to get the best results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider your target market</td>
<td>Before deciding on any marketing tools think about your target market and what will work best to reach them. Determine how they acquire information and ensure you are ‘front and centre’ when they search. For example, an expensive print advertising campaign is a waste of money if your target audience sources most of its information online.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus your efforts</td>
<td>Don’t try and do everything, focus your spend on the marketing tools that will bring you the best results. This is most common in social media; small businesses believe they have to engage in every platform, when two or three avenues done extremely well can be a better option. Try and match the social media platforms your customers are already using.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t give up</td>
<td>So many small businesses overextend themselves with marketing, particularly social media, and then end up reducing their activity or stopping altogether. Marketing is about building relationships between the public and your brand, and like all relationships they need to be maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a coordinated strategy</td>
<td>The more frequently potential customers see your message, the better chance it has of making an impact. If they see an advert for your product or service in the local paper, then see you in their Facebook feed, and then hear one of their colleagues talking about your business, they will start to pay attention. A coordinated strategy will achieve this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor results</td>
<td>Be sure to monitor and analyse your marketing campaigns; there is no point repeating something if it is not working.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marketing avenues available

With so many options the key is to focus on your target markets and what will appeal to them. Below are some of the more common marketing avenues available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website and SEO</td>
<td>Every business must have a website; it should be your top priority when planning your marketing. You also need to consider search engine optimisation (SEO), which is how you elevate your website's ranking with search engines like Google.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>There are many options, including Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and LinkedIn. Only some will suit your type of business. Take the time to learn about all the major platforms before launching into anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogging</td>
<td>Blogs are ‘web logs’ or online diaries. Blogs are an excellent way to share your business’s expertise, drive traffic to your website and connect with potential customers. Anyone can start a blog; it’s a very quick process that requires no programming skills. With popular blogging platforms, such as wordpress.org, you just sign up and follow the steps to set up your own blog. There are thousands of themes to choose from, and you can personalise the design by uploading your own logo and branding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
<td>Consumers love watching videos and as a business you can capitalise by creating interesting and engaging video content of your business or topics of interest to your target market. YouTube is a popular video sharing site and is a subsidiary of Google, which makes it great for SEO. Most businesses can benefit from actively using YouTube, particularly those with great video content, such as tourism related companies or those wanting to share expertise.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| E-newsletters        | What makes email marketing unique is that your loyal customers have asked you to market to them. A proportion of your subscribers probably only signed up to receive a coupon or discount, but there will still be customers who are genuinely interested in what you have to say.  
The downside is that, on average, it takes someone a third of a second to decide whether they are going to open an email, three seconds to see if there is something of interest, and 30 seconds to respond to the ‘call to action.’  
To encourage your customers to take action it is important to structure your email correctly and monitor the results. Search for online resources to learn how to compose successful e-marketing campaigns and use sites like campaignmonitor.com or mailchimp.com to execute your email campaigns. |
| Networking           | One way to build your business profile and network of referral organisations (that is, people who will refer business to you) is to join a networking organisation or business association. By attending networking events and workshops you hear about industry news and trends and you can use each event as an opportunity to build your own network. These are events are generally offered through:  
• your local council  
• industry associations  
• business associations  
• networking groups (such as MeetUp) |
<p>| Brochures and flyers | For many industries and business types, brochures and flyers are an established and important marketing tool. Research how to write, structure and design a successful brochure before starting. It is also a good idea to review competitors’ brochures to get ideas. Seek help from a qualified graphic designer, making sure to get at least three quotes before committing. If writing isn't one of your skills, ask someone to check your work for typos and grammatical errors. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Why</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Print advertising</strong></td>
<td>There are many publications offering paid advertising for small businesses, including local newspapers, industry specific publications, and business and consumer magazines. Some publications will offer you editorial space if you commit to a paid advertisement, but this can be costly. Research before you commit – what is the distribution? Is the publication popular with your target market? What are the costs and are there ongoing fees? If you do decide to pursue print advertising, seek some advice about the suitability of your advertisement – design is critically important for results. Also, be sure to have a ‘call to action’ on your advert so you can track its success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word of mouth</strong></td>
<td>Encouraging positive word of mouth should be one of your priorities when running a business. Your loyal and happy customers should become ambassadors for your business. Sites like Yelp, TripAdvisor, Urbanspoon and Google+ encourage consumers to review businesses and help to spread the word about your business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Loyalty programs</strong></td>
<td>Another way to keep your customers coming back is to offer them loyalty rewards. A great example are the ubiquitous ‘buy X coffees, get one free’ cards offered by many cafes. Depending on your target market, you can be creative with the way your customers redeem their rewards by using into resources like existing mobile apps and websites like Foursquare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prizes</strong></td>
<td>For many businesses a good way to promote their name is by offering prizes for community run events like quiz nights or charity. Your business receives publicity before and during the event, and when the prize is redeemed satisfied customers often spread the word about their experience to friends and family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mail-outs or letter drops</strong></td>
<td>If your business services a limited area, letter drops can sometimes be an effective tool. For example, a local takeaway restaurant might distribute menus to the surrounding suburb. Just remember that people receive a lot of junk mail. How will you ensure your letter or card stands out?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cold calling</strong></td>
<td>This is a difficult avenue to pursue as it is based on numbers – the more people you call, the better your chance of success. The idea is to compile a list of possible clients and call them directly. This strategy might work best for business-to-business transactions, but you should be aware that people are not usually receptive to cold calls and you may get negative feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TV and radio</strong></td>
<td>Radio and TV advertising can be costly. One way to reduce the cost is to secure a contra deal, for example displaying a radio station’s logo on your premises in exchange for free advertising. Once again, you need to weigh up costs (of creating your ad as well as airtime) against the likely returns – is this the best way to reach your target markets?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public relations (PR)</strong></td>
<td>If you have an interesting story relating to your business you may be able to get an article in a publication or exposure on TV, radio or through blogs. This is called public relations or PR. The best way to announce your innovation, story or exciting news item is through a media release. There is an art to writing a media release, search online for templates and strategies and using sites like handleyourownpr.com.au to buy relevant media lists, or sourcebottle.com which is free.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Community support</strong></td>
<td>You could support a community event through sponsorship, for example paying for the local football team’s jerseys in return for having your logo on their backs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government tenders and contracts</strong></td>
<td>All government agencies need to buy goods and services, requiring everything from catering and printing to graphic design and office furniture. If you would like to find out how to be included on the WA Government’s list of preferred suppliers, visit tenders.wa.gov.au</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity 5 – Promotion and your business

Working individually, answer the following questions.

1. Where is your potential customer base located?
   - Within 5km of my business premises
   - Metropolitan Perth
   - Western Australia
   - Australia
   - Worldwide

2. How does your primary target market commonly obtain information? (tick as many as relevant)
   - Internet searching – Google and forums
   - Social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Foursquare etc.)
   - Referrals from family and friends
   - Referrals from industry contacts
   - Media – local newspaper, radio, magazines etc.
   - Visually – responds to packaging, signage, shopfront etc.
   - Other _______________________________________________________________

3. Who could provide useful ‘word of mouth’ recommendations for your business? (tick as many as relevant)
   - Customers (e.g. referrals to friends and family)
   - Industry professionals (e.g. doctors, child health nurses, accountants)
   - Industry partners (e.g. sporting clubs, similar businesses, associations)
   - Networking (e.g. small business networking groups)
   - Ambassadors (e.g. media personalities, local heroes)
   - Other _______________________________________________________________

4. Is your target market internet savvy?  ○ Yes  ○ No
   If your customers are internet savvy a strong online strategy will be essential to your business success.

5. What memorable promotional ideas have you seen other businesses use that might work for yours?


6. Do you have a marketing budget?  ○ Yes  ○ No
   While many marketing avenues are free, there are some that you must pay to access. Try not to limit your promotional avenues because of a lack of budget; marketing is a crucial element of building your business success.
**Step 6 – Set your marketing goals and budget**

Marketing goals will help you define what you want to accomplish through your marketing activities. You should be able to clearly articulate two or three SMART goals you wish to achieve in the short term (within the next six months) and long term (12 months or longer).

**What are SMART goals?**

SMART is an acronym for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-based goals. It's a simple tool used by businesses to move fuzzy goal-setting into an actionable plan that achieves results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>Goals need to be well-defined and focussed, not broad. They need to be specific so you will know if they have been achieved.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Goals need to be measurable. You wouldn't run a sports competition without a scoring system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainable</td>
<td>Set realistic goals. A billion dollar business doesn't happen overnight – think about what is achievable in the first 3-5 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>Think about the current economic conditions and realities of the business climate when drafting your goals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-based</td>
<td>If you don’t set a time frame by which time your goals need to be completed, they will probably be continually pushed aside and overlooked.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Setting your own marketing goals**

Once you have determined your broad SMART business goals, it is important to break them down into a specific set of activities and time frames to help you to achieve results. It’s important to periodically review your goals, monitor results and make adjustments if necessary.

**Example business: Children’s clothing store (online and offline presence)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Target market</th>
<th>Monitor</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Increase volume of sales made online by 10 per cent | • Analyse website statistics and improve website optimisation, including checkout process  
• Commence Google Adwords campaign  
• Offer online specials to existing clients through social media channels | Australian mums (aged 30 to 45) | Monitor your online shopping cart analytics | Sales target to be achieved within six months |
| Increase sales to existing customers by 20 per cent | • Encourage all staff to ‘up-sell’ to clients in-store  
• Offer online specials to existing clients through social media channels  
• Redesign stock on shop floor and put all ‘special’ items in prominent positions near the cash register. | Australian mums and grandparents | Use point of sale and customer relationship management (CRM) systems to track sales | Sales target to be achieved within six months |
Setting a marketing budget

An important question many people ask is how much money should you spend on marketing your business? Marketing is the way that potential customers learn about your business. If you don’t actively promote it, how are your customers going to know about you? This means you have to spend money to build a profile and generate sales - and you have to keep doing it.

A rule of thumb is to spend between three and five per cent of your actual or expected annual turnover. However, if the business is new you will need to inject more funds to build your business profile. Your marketing budget will include elements such as:

• website development and maintenance
• SEO strategy
• design of branding
• printing promotional material (business cards, brochures, vehicle branding, signage etc.)
• employees dedicated to marketing
• e-newsletters
• advertising
• public relations
• donations and sponsorships
Step 7 – Nurture your loyal customers

Your greatest advantage in relation to other businesses is to consistently exceed your customers’ expectations. It is much easier, and more cost effective, to sell to existing customers rather than to try and source new ones.

Happy customers spread the word, encouraging their friends and family to use your business. Good customer service can minimise stress in your work environment as customers are less likely to complain if there is nothing to complain about. Plus, exceptional customer service can elevate you above your competition; it can be your point of difference.

Good customer service is as important online as it is offline. Response times, ease of interaction (payment process, forms etc.), and resolution of queries or problems are all measures of customer service online.

The mantra of good customer service is to under-promise and over-deliver.

How to provide good customer service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestion</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicate regularly with customers</td>
<td>You don’t want to pester your customers; however you need to remind them you are still in business. A good database and social media profiles will help you communicate specials and disseminate valuable information to your loyal customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep promises</td>
<td>If you say you are going to do something within a certain time frame, make sure you do it. If for some reason you fall behind schedule, contact the customer to explain the situation and give a new estimated time. The earlier you advise the customer, the better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go the extra mile</td>
<td>Surprise your customers with something they don’t expect. For example, beautiful wrapping for a gift, a bag of lollies thrown in with an online purchase or an upsized coffee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Treat feedback and complaints as an opportunity to improve service | Initiate a mechanism for customers to give feedback, and respond to it promptly. If your customers tell you something isn’t working well in your business, you have the chance to do something about it. Listen for any specific ideas about their needs, or the best ways of communicating with them, and then work these suggestions into your marketing strategy. The following are just a few ways you could ask your customers for feedback:  
  • Have feedback forms or quick questions at the point of sale.  
  • Email requests to complete online surveys and offer incentives in return.  
  • Let customers know what you’ve done with their feedback and how your service has changed as a result. |
| Listen to your customers                       | The best way to determine what your customers want is to ask them and act on their suggestions. You could conduct a survey, or ask questions through your Facebook page. |
| Train your staff                               | Your entire staff needs to understand the importance of exceptional customer service. This needs to become a part of how you do business. Provide customer service training and reward employees who excel in this area. Document and educate your staff on the process you want followed for every aspect of contact with your customers so that consistency is maintained. For example:  
  • How quickly should phone calls be answered (within a set number of rings)?  
  • How quickly should email queries be answered and what is the format?  
  • When you meet a customer face-to-face what is your first action?  
  • Does your website reflect your customer service policy?  
  • Are your social media strategies aligned with your customer service policy? |
Your customers as ambassadors

Aim to create brand ambassadors; people who love your business so much they are willing to go out of their way to recommend it to others. Use the steps below to help you identify and encourage your brand ambassadors.

Step 1 – Identify
Don't confuse people who regularly buy from you with brand ambassadors. Just because they are loyal doesn't mean they will go out of their way to recommend your business to others. The key is to narrow it down, find the people who write reviews about your business, respond to your social media posts and mention you in blogs, forums and tweets.

Step 2 – Bring them into the fold
It's no surprise that people like to feel special. One way to create brand ambassadors is to bring them 'into the fold' and make them feel part of your business. Provide them with sneak previews of new products, ask for their input, seek help testing new products, invite them to visit and give them special rewards. If you treat your brand ambassadors like valued members of your team they will be more eager to recommend you to others.

Step 3 – Thrill them
What will get your satisfied customers talking about you? Why not give a brand ambassador free coffee, a sample of a new product, an unexpected discount or a thank you card? Give them something to talk about, and they probably will.

Step 4 – Make it easy to share
Brand ambassadors like to share with others, so make it easy for them to talk about your brand or product. Consider openly asking for testimonials, emailing links to your Trip Advisor or Urbanspoon listing, asking them to post pictures of themselves using your product or service on your Facebook page, or send product samples for them to share with family and friends.

The importance of a customer database

With their agreement, start the process of recording your customers' details in a database. Information from the database can be collected at point of sale, or through competitions where customers fill out a coupon. Make sure you keep this information safe and that it is only used in accordance with privacy legislation (more information at privacy.gov.au). A good database will give you an opportunity to analyse where your customers are located, which may support the development of specific marketing strategies. A good database will also enable you to communicate directly to your customers about sales promotions, new product releases and special offers.

Activity 6 – Your customer service experiences

As a group discuss the following questions:

1. Can you describe a memorable recent customer service experience?
2. Did that experience make you a repeat customer?
3. Did you recommend that business to anyone? If yes, how?
Step 8 – Monitor and review your marketing

Why keep repeating the same techniques if they are not achieving results? The final step in your marketing strategy involves monitoring and reviewing your efforts to ensure what you are doing is relevant and successful.

Ways to monitor your marketing

Depending on your marketing goals, there are some very easy ways to check if your marketing campaigns are actually working. For example:

- Ask all your customers how they found out about you.
- Make a special effort to monitor customer activity directly after an advertising campaign. For example, you might advertise a new product on the radio on Friday and find you have an increase in customers over the weekend.
- Review your sales figures weekly and take note of any spikes – these could relate to a marketing campaign.

Below are some specific tools to help you monitor your marketing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Monitoring tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Website                         | Set aside a regular time each week to analyse and generate reports assessing how your website is performing. There are many options to help you monitor traffic to your website, such as Google Analytics (google.com/analytics) - this is free and very easy to set up. Below are some of the statistics you should analyse on a regular basis:  
  - volume of traffic to your website and if users are new or returning  
  - how long users stay on your site (bounce rate)  
  - which pages are the most popular  
  - if users visit at specific times or days  
  - source of traffic, including search engines and social media  
  - the routes users take to reach your site and the devices they use  
  - your customer conversion rates (sales, downloads, blog reads etc.)  
  - entry pages (the pages people are entering your site on)  
  - exit pages (the pages people are leaving your site from)  
  - which browsers are being used to access your website |
| Social media and online marketing | There are many options to monitor on social media results. Tools are available to help determine your most popular posts, how often people interact with you, the demographics of your audience, the number of people who subscribe and the number of links clicked in e-newsletters. The key is to set up regular monitoring systems and act on the results. There is no point continuing to do something if it is not effective. Some common online marketing monitoring tools include:  
  - Facebook Insights  
  - YouTube Analytics  
  - Pinterest Analytics  
  - Google Adwords |
| Print advertising               | There is a proven formula for success when designing a print advert, one of the keys is to ensure you have a way to monitor the results of the ‘call to action’ in your advert, for example:  
  - Order today and get 50% off the cost of shipping.  
  - Call now and ask about our buy one, get one free offer.  
  - Sign up for our mailing list to receive special member coupons.  
  - Ask for your free quote at our Bayswater location.  
  - Bring in this voucher to receive a free sample. |
Marketing calendar

To help you keep on track with your marketing it is a good idea to create a calendar. Include significant events that could affect sales (Christmas, Australia Day, school holidays, Mother’s Day etc.), the target markets your campaign is aimed at, a description of the marketing activities, who is responsible for the campaign and an evaluation of the success of the marketing. Use the example below to help you create your own marketing calendar.

Example business: Italian cafe in Fremantle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Target market</th>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Description of campaign</th>
<th>Estimated budget</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>SEO – constantly monitor and review page ranking and Google Adwords campaigns.</td>
<td>$200 per month</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Schedule posts and interaction across all major platforms, respond to comments as appropriate.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Local residents</td>
<td>Foursquare</td>
<td>New Year’s resolution ‘Eat more!’ campaign – encourage all Foursquare followers to ‘check in’ at cafe, the person who visits the most on any given day receives a free slice of cake.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Cyclists</td>
<td>Twitter and Facebook</td>
<td>‘Beat the heat’ campaign – a free drink of your choice with every breakfast ordered.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Weddings</td>
<td>Bride magazine</td>
<td>Function venue promotion – advert in magazine with call to action – “Book 12 months in advance and receive 10% discount, call now!”</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Perth Mums</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Easter campaign - a free ‘baby-chino’ and Easter egg for every child when adult coffee/tea purchased.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>Mother’s Day competition – ask followers to post an ‘olden day’ photo of their mothers and describe the memory it evokes. Winner receives a free lunch.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>Local residents</td>
<td>Flyer in mail</td>
<td>Menu blast – drop a menu into the letter box of all residents, and advertise new loyal customer ID number for easier take away ordering.</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Partnership with NOVA FM – broadcast morning show from cafe, includes free giveaways.</td>
<td>Contra deal ($2,000)</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>September birthday campaign – anyone born in this month receives a coffee upgrade.</td>
<td>Cost of goods</td>
<td>Pauline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>Corporate</td>
<td>E-mail</td>
<td>Direct Christmas e-mail blast campaign – “Book early to secure your Christmas function.”</td>
<td>No cost</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Tourists</td>
<td>Flyer</td>
<td>‘Christmas Australia-style’ campaign – use a dedicated flyer to promote an ‘Aussie’ Christmas lunch for tourists.</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>Mario</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reviewing marketing campaigns**

Once you have established methods to monitor your marketing efforts and planned a marketing calendar, the next step is to review the results and act on any observations. Below are some examples.

**Example business: Fremantle based Italian cafe**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing campaign</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Continue/repeat</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEO</strong></td>
<td>High volume of traffic, but very low conversion rate.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Hire a website professional to review the website and draft recommendations for improvements, including a quote for upgrades.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social media</strong></td>
<td>Good engagement across all platforms.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Continue seeking feedback from customers about what they would like to see and hear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Year’s resolution ‘Eat more!’</strong></td>
<td>Poor results. Very low check-in rate.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Social media coordinator to review how other metropolitan based cafes are using Foursquare and draft recommendations for new campaigns. Report to be completed by May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>‘Beat the heat’ campaign</strong></td>
<td>Highly successful campaign – 20 per cent increase in breakfast sales during campaign.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Pauline to investigate costs of promoting campaign through other avenues, for example cycling clubs and retail outlets. Report to be completed by May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function venue promotion</strong></td>
<td>Very poor results, lots of enquiries, but no confirmed bookings</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Schedule brainstorming session with the marketing team for May to try and generate ideas for new ways to target the wedding market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Easter</strong></td>
<td>Highly successful – 30 per cent increase in sales of coffee and cake.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Offer a similar promotion through other social media channels for other significant events that appeal to the same target market (Father’s Day, school holidays etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother’s Day competition</strong></td>
<td>Highly successful – more engagement than any other social media campaign to date.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Schedule brainstorming session with the marketing team for August to try and generate ideas for quirky and fun ways to encourage Instagram followers to post pictures and interact with our brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Menu blast</strong></td>
<td>Moderately successful – assigned 30 new customer loyalty numbers.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Use the customer database to regularly market to loyal customers, offer incentives for takeaway bookings such as free garlic bread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Partnership with NOVA FM</strong></td>
<td>Poor results. Lots of activity on the day, but very minimal follow up.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>Mario to consult with NOVA about more innovative ways to use radio for promotion. Schedule meeting for September.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September birthday special</strong></td>
<td>Highly successful – 20 per cent increase in coffee and cake sales.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Expand the campaign and use database to send all loyal customers a birthday offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct Christmas e-mail blast</strong></td>
<td>Highly successful – 30 per cent increase in corporate bookings.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Repeat this campaign every October.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Christmas in Australia-style campaign</strong></td>
<td>Average results – restaurant 70 per cent capacity on Christmas Day.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>Broaden distribution of flyer by approaching tourism outlets such as the Fremantle Visitor Centre and tour operators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What to do next

All of the information in this booklet can be used to help you create a practical marketing plan.

Just remember a few key points:

• Your promotions need to match your target market. If you don’t narrow down your marketing and tailor your messages they will get diluted and won’t have the same impact.
• Keep re-inventing your marketing and coming up with unique and creative ways to spread the word about your products or services.
• Monitor your marketing and track results. If something isn’t working, stop doing it and try something else.
• If you need further assistance with your marketing, or any other part of your business, you can call the SBDC on 13 12 49 and book a no-cost appointment with one of our expert business advisers.

SBDC workshops

The SBDC delivers two workshops that will help you with website development, SEO, social media and other forms of online marketing. Call 13 12 49 or visit smallbusiness.wa.gov.au to book into Website Basics and Online Marketing – doing it yourself.

Other workshops options

The organisations below often deliver specialised workshops on a range of topics, particularly social media.

• Industry and business associations
• Chambers of commerce
• Business associations

Final activity – Getting started checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct marketing research to gauge industry and customer trends.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearly define target markets.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine my unique selling proposition (USP).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a business brand.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify which marketing avenues will work for my business.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set marketing goals and budget.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft a customer service strategy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish monitoring and reviewing methods for marketing strategies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use data compiled in this booklet to draft a marketing plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attend relevant workshops to increase knowledge.</td>
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Notes