

# **The Small Business Guide to: Market Planning**

**How to Create Winning Strategies to  
Conquer Your Market**

**by Nicholas L. Peoples**

*The Small Business Guide to: Market Planning*

*Self-Published 2018*

*All rights reserved.*

*Copyright© 2018 by Next Level Communications LLC.*

*No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.*

*For information address: Nicholas Peoples.*

**Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data**

**ISBN 978-1-64153-206-8**

Peoples, Nicholas L.

The Small Business Guide to: Market Planning

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO MY CHILDREN, Nick Jr., Julian, and Arielle who  
give me a reason to be great.

# Contents

## Introduction

## Section One: Back to Basics

### Chapter 1: What is Market Planning?

Path to Profitability

What is a Marketing Plan?

Marketing Wars

Market Planning for Small Business

Objectives and Goals

### Chapter 2: Marketing 101

Marketing Basics

Marketing Management Philosophies

The Marketing Mix

Marketing Mix Strategies

Segment the Market

Find Your Target

Positioned for Success

Consumer vs. Business-to-Business Marketing

Marketing Goods vs. Marketing Services

### Chapter 3: The Do-it-Yourself Marketing Plan

What Your Marketing Consultant Doesn't Want You to Know

Collecting the Right Information

Turning Data into Knowledge

Organize Your Findings

Strategic Management

Use Your Imagination

## Section Two: Creating your Marketing Plan

Overview:

Chapter 4: Marketing Plan Part One *Company Description*

History

How You Got Started

Corporate Values

The Purpose You Serve

Previous Marketing Strategies

Other Historical Facts

The Organization Today

How Your Company Has Changed

Company Types

Company Image

Business Model

Business Mission

The Product You Offer

The Problem You Solve/Need you Fulfill

Your System of Operation

Differentiation

Projected Future

Market Positioning

Revenues

Profits

Product Mix

Market Share

## Chapter 5: Marketing Plan Part Two *Market Analysis*

- Situational Analysis

- Finding Your Competitive Advantage

- Cost

- Product/Service Differentiation

- Niche Strategy

- Sustainable Competitive Advantages

- Market Research

- Market Status

- Market Size

- Market Value

- Your Share of the Market

- Trends

- Product Life-Cycle

- Competition

- Market Testing

- Market Tests

- Consumer Tests

- Company Capabilities Test

- Analyzing Market Information

## Chapter 6: Marketing Plan Part Three *Marketing Mix*

- Product Strategy

- Product Development

- Product Mix

- Packaging

- Branding

- Quality Assurances

- Positioning

- Place (Distribution) Strategy

- Service Area
- Supply Chain Management
- Logistics

### Price Strategy

- Costs
- Profit/Markup
- Market Value
- Competitive Pricing
- Other Factors

## Chapter 7: Marketing Plan Part Four: *Define Target Market*

### Divide up the Market

- Choose Segmentation Bases
- Segmentation in Action

### Select Your Target

### Profile Your Target

- Describe Them
- Rank Them

### Best Communication Methods

## Chapter 8: Marketing Plan Part Five: *Communication Plan*

### Designing Campaigns

- Themes
- Communication Objectives
- Message Clarity
- Supporting the Theme

### Using the AIDA Model

- Attention
- Interest
- Desire
- Action
- Applying AIDA

## Promotion Mix

- Public Relations

- Advertising

- Sales Promotion

## Integrating Promotional Elements

## Other Promotional Mix Considerations

- Overall Cost

- Cost Per Contact

- Reach

- Frequency

- Audience Selectivity

## Communication Strategy

## Writing the Communication Plan

# Chapter 9: Marketing Plan Part Six *Competition*

## Who are Your Competitors?

- Location

- Key Players

- Philosophy/Vision

- Additional Info.

## Research Their Operation

- Finding Competitive Intelligence

## Analyze the Competitors' Product

## Size Them Up

## How They Sell Their Offerings

## Evaluate Their Operation

## Competitive Strategy

## Product Differentiation

## Stealing Away Market Share

## Handling Threats

## Exploiting Weaknesses



## Chapter 10: Marketing Plan Part Seven *Sales Plan*

Selling Methods

Procedure

Generating Leads

Pre-Sale Techniques

Sales Pitch

Sale Closing Strategies

Post-Sale Techniques

Sales Team

Your Sales Goals

## Chapter 11 Marketing Plan Part Eight: *Cash Flow Statements and Budgets*

Cash Flow Basics

More Than Just Paper

How does Cash Flow Work?

Positive and Negative

They Work Together

Net-Positive Cash Flow

Cash Flow Statements

Budgeting

Staying on Budget

# **Introduction**

Starting a small business is not easy. There is usually a large amount of hard work, many early mornings, and countless late nights. There are more ups downs than a nauseating amusement park ride. You must invest time, money, blood, sweat, and tears to even have a chance at success, yet you still want to be “your own boss.” Understandably so, because the potential payoffs can exceed your wildest dreams!

For small business owners, business success leads directly to personal success. Not only do you get the satisfaction of knowing that you have built a thriving enterprise, but you also get the money! Being the owner of a profitable and prosperous business can bring you what you elude so many of us; financial freedom! True financial freedom means no more living paycheck-to-paycheck. Achieving this freedom is the whole point of becoming a small business owner. It is the reward for all of the risks you are taking.

Since your personal wealth is so closely tied to your business, you want to do whatever it takes to succeed. By purchasing this manual, you have taken a step in the right direction. Market planning is the catalyst between where your business is and where you need it to be.

Located within these pages is everything you need to know about market planning. You will learn how to

analyze your market, recognize the trends, and build strategies to capitalize. Using an easy-to-understand style, this manual will guide you through the fundamentals of marketing and show you how to apply them to your planning efforts.

The ***Small Business Guide to: Market Planning*** is based upon extensive research and expert knowledge. Thousands of pages of marketing information have been condensed into this single volume. It is designed to be easily read and cater specifically to the needs of the small business owner. After reading this manual, you will be confident in your market planning abilities and ready to take your business to the next level.

This manual isn't about gimmicks and empty promises of prosperity overnight. These are sound processes and procedures that will bring you long-term success. If you are willing to sacrifice the time and effort to do things right, the ***Small Business Guide to: Market Planning*** will show you how to turn your business into a profit-generating machine.

# **Section One: Back to Basics**

## **Chapter 1: What is Market Planning?**

**S**tarting a business without a plan is like driving a car at night without headlights...You can't see where you are going. You may generally be headed in the right direction, but you can't see the obstacles right in front of you. If you are lucky enough to survive without crashing, you may find that in the darkness you have veered off your path and lost your way.

In this chapter, we shine a light on the path to profitability, find out exactly what a marketing plan is, explore the importance of market planning to small business, and accurately define objectives and goals. Upon completion of this chapter, you should have an excellent understanding of the market planning aspect of business management.

### **Path to Profitability**

Why do we go into business? Is it to create jobs for others? Maybe it's the chance to do what we love every day. Could it be we desire to share our vision with the world? All of these are feasible--even noble--secondary reasons to be in business, but the primary reason we are all in business is to make profits. That is objective number one!

Most business owners measure success by the amount of profit that they made over a period. The further you get beyond the break-even-point, the better you have done in that period. Profits are what allow you the ability to either fatten your bank account or reinvest in your company. You need to make money to stay in business. You need to make money to grow your business.

So, where do profits come from? Well, we know they don't just fall out of the sky, and since the mythical profit tree continues to elude discovery, we must look elsewhere. Profits are born out of revenues, also known as positive cash flow. Before you can make profits, cash flows must exist. Cash flow is the movement of cash into and out of a business. Of course, more money coming in than going out constitutes a positive cash flow.

You can create continuous and consistent positive cash flow on your own. What this means is you can affect your company's cash flows directly. You don't have to be lucky (although it helps) because positive cash flow is ultimately created through marketing. Effective marketing can transform a stagnating small business into a revenue-generating giant. Effective marketing can transform a struggling adolescent company into a stable, mature enterprise. Marketing is your most powerful tool for creating positive cash flow.

Planning enhances the effectiveness of your marketing efforts. The more carefully you plan your marketing activities, the better chance they will prove fruitful. With proper planning, you will gain a vast amount of insight into your market. With this insight, you will be able to deeply penetrate the market and

command an outstanding share of it. Therefore, market planning is the key to profitability.

Now, let's retrace our steps and reveal the path to profitability. Profits are derived from positive cash flows. To create positive cash flow, you need effective marketing. Marketing is most effective when it is carefully thought out and planned. Therefore, market planning is our first, and most important, step in the path to profitability.

### **What is a Marketing Plan?**

Every organization has objectives for each component of their business. Meeting these objectives takes some planning. You must plan in anticipation for future events; you must plan to determine strategies. Market planning involves designing the activities related to the marketing objectives of your organization. You use a written document called a marketing plan to organize your market planning efforts. The marketing plan funnels all the information, insight, ideas, and knowledge that you have collected into a highly concentrated strategic weapon.

Every marketing plan is unique. There is no single formula for creating one. There are some common elements among all marketing plans though. Every marketing plan should contain a business mission, company objectives, a market analysis, establishment of the marketing mix components, and a definition of your target market. You can enhance your plan with a myriad of other elements such as budgets, evaluation measures, or timelines for implementation.

It is important to note that the marketing plan is not just a consecutive series of planning steps. Each element stands alone, but they must work in conjunction to meet your organizational marketing objectives. When making decisions about one component, you must consider all the other parts as well. A marketing plan that is cohesive and uniform ensures you get the best results

## **Marketing Wars**

Picture for a moment your company as an army in a marketing war. Your competitors are, well...Your competitors. They want to win just as bad as you; they have just as much at stake as you. Let's face it; your livelihood is on the line here. This is how you eat. You can't afford to lose!

The market is your battleground, and you must fight hard to maintain control of your share. To gain a more significant share, you must fight even harder and smarter. That larger share you seek will usually belong to someone else, and the owners are going to defend it fiercely. To conquer and control your desired percentage of the market, you must have a bigger army with more ammunition (resources) or develop a superior strategy by carefully planning your attacks.

Since you probably don't have the luxury of seemingly limitless resources like some of your larger competitors, you must focus your efforts on strategy if you want to win. That's where the marketing plan comes into play; it's your secret weapon. Advance knowledge of the battlefield (the market) gives you the ability to outmaneuver your opponent and gain an advantage. Your marketing plan provides you with a



map of the market and serves as the guidebook that lays out the marketing activities your organization will engage in. Base your strategy on a solid marketing plan, and you'll come out on top when the smoke clears.

## **Market Planning for Small Business**

Most small business owners can't afford to waste a dime on marketing activities that are ineffective. Your marketing budget is usually much smaller than the big players in the field which means that your margin of error is much lower as well. You must be more careful, concise, and calculating with each marketing dollar you spend. Writing a marketing plan will help you to Maximize your marketing budget by keeping all activities on track and in line with your company's predetermined objectives.

Market planning can level the playing field for your small business. Your larger counterparts may have an entire marketing department whose sole job is to analyze consumer behavior with complex formulas, or evaluate market trends using complicated computer algorithms, but they usually lack the intimate knowledge of the market that you have. You are on the ground level of the market dealing with your customers every day. Your unique, more personal understanding of the market can be very valuable. Focus it with effective market planning, and you may find a sustainable competitive advantage.

For those who are still trying to bring their business ideas to life, market planning can offer you a running start. The marketing plan is the most critical part of your business planning. Before entering a market, you

want to be well-informed and ready. A business plan that includes a complete marketing plan gives your business the best chance to succeed.

Also, as a new business, you may need to acquire some start-up capital to get your business off the ground. You should know that investors don't care about your dream, they want to know how you will make them money! Lenders aren't concerned with your contribution to society; they want to know how you will pay them back. When you present potential investors or lenders with a thorough marketing plan attached to your business plan, it shows them that you are well prepared and worthy of their funding.

Your marketing plan doesn't have to be a 100-page behemoth. It can be as simple as you want it to be as long as it's complete. Your objectives should be well-defined, your information should be accurate, and your marketing activities should be clearly stated. Remember, you must devise your strategy based on this plan, so it needs to be as detailed as possible.

## **Objectives and Goals**

The most important part of your market planning is determining what your objectives and goals are. These are vital decisions because they give direction to your marketing plan. You cannot develop the details of your plan until you know your marketing objectives. Base your marketing objectives on your company's overall business mission.

Marketing objectives are best defined as "The achievement benchmarks upon which success of marketing activities can be measured." In other words, what exactly are you trying to achieve? You

want to choose objectives that are realistic, measurable, and time specific. To say that you want to be the world market leader in beverage manufacturing is too vague, probably unrealistic for a small business, and has no time attachment. A more appropriate objective would be "To become the leader in local market share within 18 months"; or more specifically; "To increase market share by 25% in the local market in 12 months".

After determining your organization's marketing objectives, you can begin setting goals. Goals are the individual tasks that you must complete to accomplish your objectives. Your goals should be more specific than your objectives. Make your goals easily reachable and modest so that you can show yourself some progress. You will find that reaching goal after goal will give you great motivation. Before you know it, your business will be booming.

Marketing objectives and their corresponding goals are integral to your marketing plan. You will use the objectives as standards to measure your progress and keep you on track. Whenever you are wondering if you are headed in the right direction, ask yourself, "are we meeting our objectives?" and you'll know.



We have discovered what a marketing plan is and why it is vital to the success of your small business. Our next step is formulating a plan. Before you begin writing though, let's give you a quick crash course in marketing. You'll find it helpful later.

**Don't *stop*...Keep reading!**



**It's the right time to buy this book so you  
can learn about:**

- **Product Development**
- **Distribution**
- **Branding**
- **Advertising**
- **Business Structuring**
- **And so much more...**

**Purchase your copy today!**

**<https://www.thepath2profitability.com/shop>**