



*How to Plan a Marketing
Calendar that Actually Works
for **YOUR** Business*

WHAT IS A MARKETING CALENDAR?

A tool showing what marketing events, media campaigns, and merchandising efforts are happening when and where, as well as the results.

PRACTICAL USE:

A marketing calendar helps you launch your products, execute your campaigns, and keep focused on all of your marketing activities. It helps you to look strategically at your activities and make sure that you have a good mix and that you have the bandwidth to support them.

This tool is central to ensuring your planning, budgeting, and staffing are managed appropriately. Using your marketing plan and business plan together, you should be able to track your successes, monitor your budget, and track vital metrics.

CREATING YOUR CALENDAR

Marketing calendars can be customized to address your specific needs. Your marketing calendar should break down the days, weeks, months, and quarters of a year and address the marketing activities that will take place in each period. Your calendar will be most useful if it is specific, spelling out individual promotions or events.

Remember to be flexible when creating your calendar. There is no right or wrong way; it needs to work for your business. The purpose of your marketing calendar is to create actionable results.

TRACKING YOUR ACTIVITIES, RESOURCES, AND RESULTS

Include the marketing cost for each event, the reason or goal for attendance, and the results that came from the event. By doing this it is easy to see at a glance which events and strategies were productive and on target. This will help you in planning your marketing for the next year.

A marketing calendar narrows your focus and allows you to see your investment and value in your marketing program. By keeping a record you are able to build consistency in your planning. The goal is to plan for each event and make sure you have the time and resources to maximize your efforts. Having huge gaps or multiple overlapping commitments is not ideal.

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Finding the Right Marketing Mix

USING ONLINE AND OFFLINE STRATEGIES TOGETHER

Selling products and services is a core goal of any small business. Generating quality leads is a common struggle and one that must be overcome to succeed. How do you get your business in front of your target audience and ideal clients? Through planned, purposeful marketing, both online and off you can increase the number of quality leads in your database.

Choosing marketing activities that make sense for your business and including them in your marketing plan is a great way to set your business up for success. Your marketing plan should clearly outline how you will implement your marketing strategy and which activities will make it onto your calendar. You may find that you are doing too much and need to scale back to give maximum time and effort to activities that produce results for your business.

There are nearly limitless ways you can promote your small business. With the correct mix of activities, you can identify and focus on the most effective marketing tactics for your small business.

Marketing Activities Brainstorming Exercise

PLAN YOUR MARKETING

1. Do some market research.
2. Create (or update) your marketing plan.
3. Create a Content Editorial Marketing Calendar.
4. Make a Calendar of Your Marketing Activities.
5. Conduct a focus group.
6. Write a tagline for your business.

MARKETING MATERIALS

7. Update your business cards.
8. Make your business card stand out from the rest.
9. Create or update your brochure.
10. Create a downloadable report for your website.
11. Explore a website redesign.
12. Get creative with promotional products and give them away at the next networking event you attend.

IN-PERSON NETWORKING

13. Write an elevator pitch. (30-60 second intro)
14. Register for a conference.
15. Introduce yourself to other local business owners.
16. Plan a local business workshop.
17. Join your local chamber of commerce.
18. Rent a booth at a trade show.

DIRECT MAIL

19. Launch a multi-piece direct mail campaign.
20. Create multiple campaigns (split test your mailings to measure impact.)
21. Include a clear and enticing call to action (CTA) on every direct mail piece.
22. Use tear cards, inserts, props, and attention-getting envelopes to make an impact with your mailings.
23. Send past customers free samples and other incentives to regain their business.

ADVERTISING

24. Advertise on the radio.
25. Advertise in the Yellow Pages.
26. Advertise on a billboard.
27. Use stickers or magnets to advertise on your car.
28. Take out an ad in your local newspaper.
29. Advertise on a local cable TV station.
30. Advertise on Facebook.
31. Advertise on LinkedIn.
32. Buy ad space on a relevant website.
33. Use a sidewalk sign to promote your specials.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

34. Get started with social media for business.
35. Create a Facebook page.
36. Get a vanity URL for your Facebook page.
37. Create a Twitter account.
38. Reply to or retweet someone else on Twitter.
39. Claim your Google Business page for your business.

- 40. Create your editorial calendar.
- 41. Start a business blog.
- 42. Write weekly blog posts.
- 43. Submit guest blog posts.
- 44. Create a Facebook Group.

INTERNET MARKETING

- 45. Start a Google Adwords pay-per-click (PPC) campaign.
- 46. Claim your business on Yelp!.
- 47. Comment on a blog post.
- 48. Record a video blog post.
- 49. Upload a video to YouTube.
- 50. Verify online directory listings and get listed.
- 51. Set up Google Analytics on your website/blog.
- 52. Review and track your Google Analytics statistics.
- 53. Register a new domain name for a marketing campaign or a new product, program, or service.
- 54. Learn more about local search marketing.
- 55. Track your online reputation.
- 56. Sign up for the Help a Reporter Out (HARO).

EMAIL MARKETING

- 57. Create an email opt-in on your website/blog.
- 58. Offer a free download or free gift to get people to add their email address to your list.
- 59. Send regular emails to your list.
- 60. Start a free monthly email newsletter.
- 61. Use A/B testing to measure the effectiveness of your email campaigns.

62. Perfect your email signature.

63. Add audio, video, and social sharing functionality to your emails.

CONTESTS, COUPONS, AND INCENTIVES

64. Start a contest.

65. Create a coupon.

66. Create a "frequent buyer" rewards program.

67. Start a client appreciation program.

68. Create a customer of the month program.

69. Give away a free sample.

70. Start an affiliate program.

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

71. Send out a customer satisfaction survey.

72. Ask for referrals.

73. Make a referral.

74. Help promote or volunteer for a charity event.

75. Sponsor a local sports team.

76. Cross-promote your products and services with other local businesses.

77. Join a professional organization.

78. Plan your next holiday promotion.

79. Plan holiday gifts for your best customers.

80. Send birthday cards to your clients.

81. Approach a colleague about a collaboration.

82. Donate branded prizes for local fundraisers.

83. Become a mentor.

CONTENT MARKETING

- 84. Plan a free teleconference or webinar.
- 85. Record a podcast.
- 86. Write a press release.
- 87. Submit your press release to distribution channels.
- 88. Rewrite your sales copy with a storytelling spin.
- 89. Start writing a book.

MARKETING HELP

- 90. Hire a marketing consultant.
- 91. Hire a public relations professional. (PR)
- 92. Hire a professional copywriter or graphic designer.
- 93. Hire an online marketing agency.
- 94. Hire a virtual assistant (VA) to help with daily marketing tasks.
- 95. Hire a sales coach or salesperson.

OTHER MARKETING TACTICS

- 96. Create a business mascot to help promote your brand.
- 97. Take a controversial stance on a hot industry topic.
- 98. Pay for wearable advertising.
- 99. Get a vehicle wrap.
- 100. Participate in Continuing Education (CE).

Your Marketing Task List

DAILY

WEEKLY

BI-MONTHLY (2X MONTHLY)

MONTHLY

QUARTERLY

ANNUALLY

BI-ANNUALLY

Example: Social Savvy Geek Marketing Task List

DAILY

Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google +, Pinterest
Triberr

WEEKLY

Instagram
Experience Pros Leads Group
One to One
Strategic Partner Meeting (alternate Lila & Nancy)
Blog Article
Sage Talks Mastermind
Send Out Cards
(Podcast)

BI-MONTHLY (2X MONTHLY)

Boost Denver
Colorado Free University Classes (Pinterest & Marketing Calendar Planning)

MONTHLY

CWSM Colorado Women in Social Media
Speaking Engagement (Local or Regional) or Seminar/Workshop
Guest Blog - She Owns It!
Polka Dot Powerhouse
(Newsletter)
(Webinar Pre-recorded)

QUARTERLY

Strategic Adjustment of Marketing Plan
Speaker Outreach Email
Check In Email (Automated)
Conference Level Speaking Engagement (Travel)
Launch new (or update and relaunch existing) Webinar & Program
Experience Pros Radio Interview

ANNUALLY

Social Media Day Denver - June 30th
Update Business Plan and Marketing Plan with Calendar
(Social Media World) March San Diego
Anniversary Party/Client Appreciation Event
(Host Online Marketing Conference)

BI-ANNUALLY (EVERY OTHER YEAR)

(Publish a book)