

Your Company/Organisation's Name

The Marketing Communications Strategy Plan

Prepared By: You and/or your colleges.

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1. Problem Overview

- Describe the type of market you are engaged with.
- Identify the main service or product that you are marketing to them.
- Describe the type of final end user customers your in contact with.

1.1.1. Objectives

- To begin keep in mind that these are initially strategic marketing objectives, to be followed by effective communications objectives.
- Describe what your objectives are for helping you to market your product/brand/ service to the final end user/ buyers/ customers
- Remember to make your objectives specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and tangible.

2. Market Research.

2.1. Product/Service Information

- What are the brand strengths that you have, that you can use for your communication campaign?
Eg. Describe your current product or service and the major selling points and/or issues?
- What is the single most important thing about your product/service?
- How do your customers feel about the product / service now? (feel free to make some assumptions here)
- Describe what you believe your current promotional mix is and whether this is an appropriate IMC strategy. How is your brand currently being promoted?
- Evaluate factors that might impact on the your brand
- How do you want the end user consumers of your product / service to think/act/feel? (this is where the communication objectives come into play)

2.2. Segmenting, targeting and consumer profiles

- Segment the market and then describe who the target market/audience for your marketing really is?
- What are the key characteristics of this target market/audience?
- You can profile your target market/segments using four categories:
 - *Geographic*: eg: location, population size or climate.
 - *Demographic*: eg: age, gender, family size, family life cycle or income.
 - *Psychographic*: eg: social class, lifestyle, motivation or personality.
 - *Behavioural*: eg: product benefits, frequency of use or brand loyalty.

2.3. Customer Information

- Describe end user consumer profiles and their needs
- Describe if there are any psychological purchasing factors
- Describe what stimulates their decision? (Cost, quality, environment, business relationship)
- Think of the communication process, **how do these consumers absorb messages from you?**

2.3.1. Buyer Decision Making Process

Complete the following table

Problem Recognition	What is the Need, Want, or Problem that your customer has?
Information Search	What are the sources of information these potential customers will use to find out how to obtain the product/service from you? How does the marketing communication process influence this?
Evaluation of Alternatives	What are the alternative solutions to their problem / need / want that a potential customer will consider? What will they take into consideration? How does the marketing communication process influence this?
Purchase Decision	What will a customer buy from you? What do you have that your competitors do not? <i>Is this being effectively communicated?</i>
Post Purchase Behaviour	How do you want customers to feel after the purchase is made? What do you want them to do? How will you achieve this?

How can your communication towards the final end user / customer influence their buyer decision process?

2.4. Industry Analysis

Describe any factors relating to the area/industry? Is the industry you compete in growing? Are there rules, regulations or restrictions that affect the industry? Are there any conflicts or wants, between significant industry and other stakeholder groups?

- Describe the industry that your business/product is in.
- Include a PEST analysis
- Include a SWOT analysis
- Identify if there are any ethical or compliance issues that might impact on this product/service. Are there any regulations that might apply with regard to your advertising?

2.5. Competitor Information

Competitor analysis:

- These are the firms **you are in competition with.**
- List these competitors in the area you operate in.
- What is their share of mind? IE. How much brand awareness do you think you have with that target audience? Feel free to make some assumptions.
- How do they operate (include an analysis of the way they advertise and promote their businesses)?

2.5.1. Competitor Details Matrix

[List your main competitors in the table below.]

Competitor	Size	Market share (%)	Value to customers	Strengths	Weaknesses
[Competitor name]	[Number of staff and/or turnover]	[Estimated percentage of market share] Large Medium Small One operator	[Unique value to customers. E.g. convenience, quality , price or service?]	[What are your competitor's main strengths?]	[What are your competitor's main weaknesses?]

3. Your Marketing/Promotional Strategy

Decide upon a series of strategic aims to meet your main marketing communications objectives and goals in the areas of: Product, Pricing, Distribution and Promotion. These all should all be measurable.

The following information should demonstrate that your IMC strategy will support the current marketing strategy, existing brand, and market expectations.

Demonstrate how your strategy addresses problems identified. That will help you to “sell your strategy internally to your colleges”.

3.1. Positioning strategy

Develop a perceptual map and describe where you would like to position the product/brand/service etc.

Describe your positioning strategy;

- Positioning by product attributes and benefits
- Positioning by price/quality
- Positioning by use or application
- Positioning by product class
- Positioning by product user
- Positioning by competitor

3.2. Promotional Marketing Communication Mix

The following information should describe your recommendations regarding the Promotional marketing communication mix elements. Please note; you do not have to use all of these tools for your campaign. **Only select the ones that you think apply to your target audience.** For example, some campaigns will work best with advertising. But others may be better suited to sales promotion, direct marketing, or social media etc..

3.2.1. Sales promotion

Sales promotion is a tactical move where you persuade people to do something they normally wouldn't.

Detail any activities, like the ones below, that can be supported by a sales promotion strategy:

- Introducing new products through a trial
- Staying competitive through discounts or added on benefits
- Encouraging year round use of products to reduce seasonal slumps
- Attracting new customers
- Increasing the perceived need for your product

3.2.2. Advertising

Describe the message you want to send, who your target audience is, and the best way to deliver the message. For instance, to reach a young audience with an 'our product is fun' message you're better off using cinema advertising instead of advertisements in a business magazine. Also outline how often you will repeat the advertising in the same and/or different media.

3.2.3. Public relations

Good public relations (PR) generates interest in your business in terms of enquiries and reminding existing clients of why they have used your business in the past.

Describe how you would capitalise on 'newsworthy' events and opportunities. This includes using the press and radio to promote your message to your marketplace.

3.2.4. Direct Marketing

Describe any potential forms of direct marketing you may consider to launch or promote your business?

3.2.5. Online Marketing

One the easiest ways of publicising your business, its products and/or its services is via online. Before you decide to set up a website, at the very least you need to decide what functions your website will have. Decide if you will do internet (online) sales, how much your budget is for setting it up, what message you want it to send, whether you will use the website to create business, or merely act as a reference point for your business, and how you'll make sure search engines (and customers) find it and your business.

[Don't forget social media!](#)

4. In Conclusion

4.1. Strategy justification

When deciding which marketing communication tools to use, and how to justify them, I would consider the following as my checklist:

- How can I cut through all the noise and clutter to reach the final consumers?
- How can I ensure the consumers will interpret my message correctly?
- What creative approach should I be using?
- How can I sell this creative approach to my client?
- How can I back this all up if my client objects or has doubts? (This often happens!)
- How can I convince the client to trust me and approve my advertising campaign?
- [How can I sell this marketing plan internally to my fellow colleges and stakeholders?](#)