

HOW TO CREATE A TOP-NOTCH MARKETING PLAN



IN LESS THAN
10 STEPS!



LUCÉ MEDIA

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WHAT'S A MARKETING PLAN?

A marketing plan is exactly what it sounds like. It is a plan for your marketing, but what does that mean?

Think of your marketing plan as your roadmap, a detailed roadmap that you need to get to your destination. There may be countless different roads and backroads you can take to reach your destination and it's important to figure out in advance which to take.

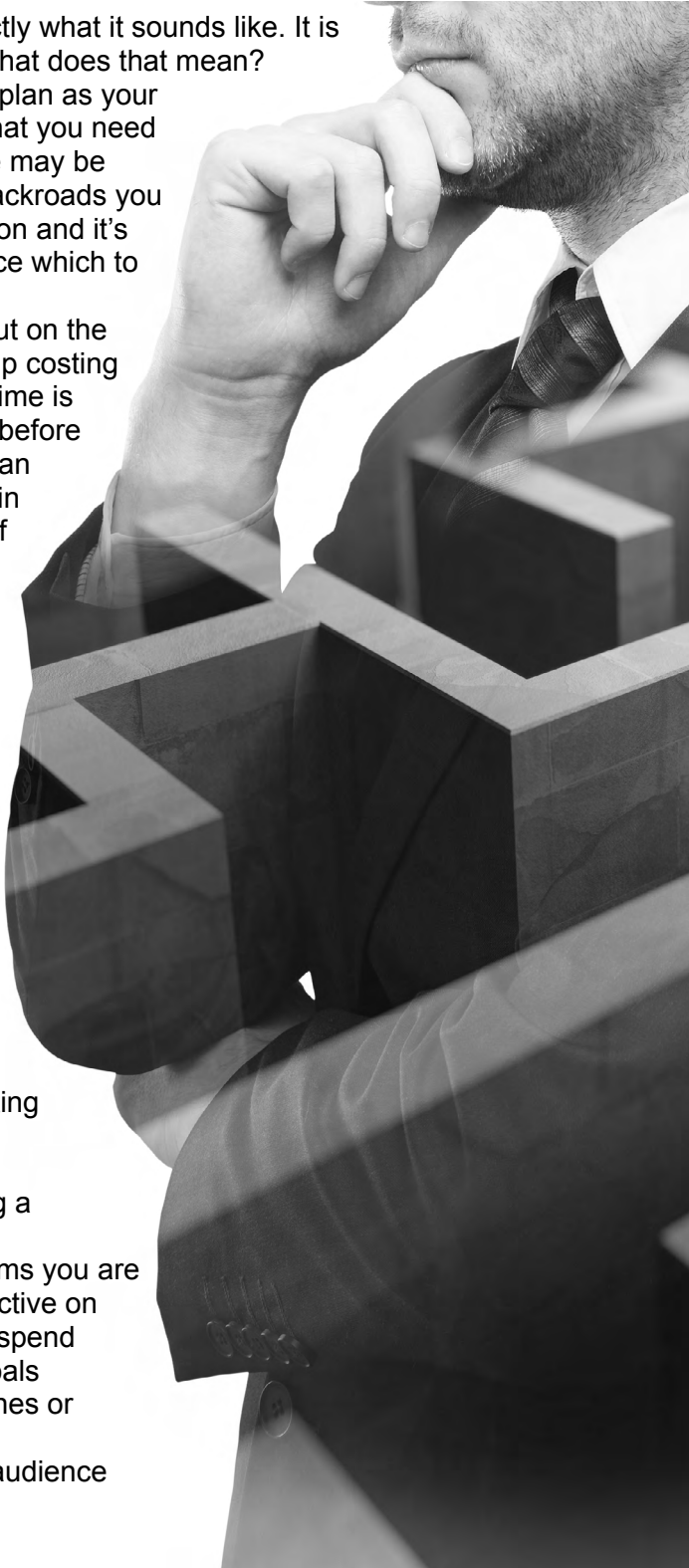
Why? Simple, figuring out on the way, is inefficient and can end up costing you valuable time. In business time is money. Not having a clear plan before starting your marketing efforts can and will cost you money; either in unnecessary costs or the loss of opportunity cost.

Did you notice how we didn't even mention your destination? The destination or the goal in this metaphor is not nearly as significant. You should already have a goal or destination in mind before creating your plan. If you don't, stop, and do that first. There is no point in creating a marketing plan just for a marketing plan's sake.

Have a destination in mind and then figure out how to get there. The destination is the goal, the roadmap is the marketing plan.

Areas to consider when creating a marketing plan include:

- The social media platforms you are active on or plan to be active on
- Your budget for paid ad spend
- Your overall business goals
- Important product launches or business events
- Where/how your target audience consumes media



STEP 1:

DEFINE YOUR STRATEGY

It is a common misunderstanding that a marketing plan and a marketing strategy are the same. This is not the case. A marketing plan details the steps you are going to take to achieve your goal.

For example: Let's say your marketing goal is to grow your Instagram following.

Your marketing strategy is what approach you're taking to reach that goal. Such as utilizing Instagram's new features to reach your younger customer base.

Your marketing plan is then what you have to do to meet that strategy. So in this example HOW you are going to make your brand stand out on new features.

This marketing plan might include things like creating more Reels or hosting a weekly Instagram lives. These are action steps that you are taking to achieve your overall strategy, which in turn will help you achieve your overall goal.

You can see how having a clear and understandable strategy can help simplify this in our example. The strategy was to utilize new Instagram features to stand out. We now know that a lot of the tactics we include in our marketing plan are going to be based on new features. If we had just stopped at the goal "to grow your Instagram following" we wouldn't yet have a clear idea of how and that would make a marketing plan much harder to create.



STEP 2:

MAKE SURE YOUR PLAN IS MEASURABLE

If you noticed that our goal wasn't specific enough in the previous step, you get a gold star. The goal to grow an Instagram following is NOT a specific enough goal to build a marketing plan around. Your goal(s) needs to be measurable.

If we had stuck with our vague proclamation to increase our Instagram followers we would have two problems. First, we would never know if we had done enough and in that sense would never succeed and would keep spending money on chasing the ever-moving goal post that is growing a bigger following.

Second, we would never know if we had done enough and in that sense, we would never fail, gaining even one follower would mean we had succeeded. And spending a couple of hundred dollars for one follower is no one's idea of success.

Be sure your goal, as well as every step along the way, is measurable and if possible compared to your baseline and/or competitors. Marketing data is complex and expansive. If you don't set the metrics of success before starting you could be in for a world of confusion later.





STEP 3:

LOOK AT YOUR COMPETITORS

Speaking of competitors you should be aware of what they're doing. Why? Your competitors are your competitors because you are competing with them for potential customers. It is possible that they have found the secret recipe for reaching your client base and you can take advantage of this.

Before starting on your marketing plan take a few hours to:

1. Define your competition
2. Research what marketing tactics they are using to reach their target market
3. Evaluate, to the best of your ability, if these tactics are working for them
4. Create your plan with this in mind

If your competition is HUGE on Youtube and you can see their videos are getting high engagement rates it may be worth including Youtube in your marketing plan. If you see that they're on Pinterest but no one is pinning their content (which is worth pinning) then maybe that platform isn't the best for your industry.

This is not to suggest that you should be doing only what your competition is doing, but it would be foolish to, not at the least, be aware of what they are doing. The information can be valuable in several ways.

STEP 4:

STAND OUT WITH UNIQUE CREATIVE

Being aware of your competitors' plans can continue to benefit you as you work on the creative aspect of your marketing plan. Most industries and markets are highly saturated and standing out long enough to capture your customers' attention is the barrier to entry.

Before drafting your content or designing your visual elements look at what is already on the market. You want to see what everyone else is doing - even those outside of your industry - so that you can know how you can stand out.

Notice every ad for your services featuring the same types of images? Or maybe the same turn of phrase is being used over and over? Now you know how to stand out.

90% of marketing is finding new ways to say the same things. You have a product or service that you want to offer. They already know you - or others like you exist - you just need to be the ones at the top of their mind when they need you and you've done your job.

Standing out is how you get remembered. Standing out is how you do your job.





STEP 5:

INTEGRATE YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS

Marketing is multi-faceted. Even small businesses are marketing on multiple social media platforms, via email, paid ads, and countless other ways. Many agencies and businesses will create smaller niche marketing plans such as

Instagram-specific marketing or Inbound marketing plans. It is important to keep in mind a master overview of your business goals so that you can integrate your efforts.

If you are planning for a big product launch on your website you should be planning for that launch in all other aspects of your marketing plan. You do not need to be uniform across all platforms and departments but all marketing efforts business-wide should be working in tandem with your overall marketing goal.

STEP 6:

PLAN YOUR MARKETING PLAN

You may think once your marketing plan is written and agreed on that you're done. That would be incorrect. Once your marketing plan is finalized you need to get to work operationalizing your marketing plan.

What does that mean? Operationalizing your marketing plan means having the right team of experts in the plan, the workflows and systems created and all the resources allocated and ready to go. This usually means creating plans in your project management software with due dates, assignees, key meeting dates, review processes, etc.

A marketing plan is not a one and done task. Once you create the plan you will need to implement it, monitor it, elevate it on regular intervals and make adjustments when necessary.



TURN YOUR MARKETING PLANS INTO MARKETING SUCCESSES

Marketing plans can be overwhelming, especially if you've never created a formal one, but they don't have to be. Start with a goal and follow these 6 simple steps and before you know it you will be watching those goals be exceeded and replaced with loftier and loftier goals.

If you're looking for advice, directions or any other help with marketing strategies feel free to contact the experts at Luce Media. We have helped countless small and medium size businesses achieve their marketing goals and we can help you too!