

Keep Your Marketing on Target With This Very Simple Plan

Here's a simple question for marketers: Do you have a marketing plan?

According to the SBA, 44% of small businesses don't have one. And if you're part of the 56% that do, the next logical question is: Do you reference your plan throughout the year to make sure you are staying on track? (If not, the point of having a plan is...?)

Many marketers who long for a world-class marketing strategy don't have the time, patience or resources to create a full-blown marketing plan. So they do nothing. But there's a simpler path to success. Crystalize your marketing goals with a quick, easy, effective tool: A one-page marketing plan.

Can a plan that fits on a single page really be thorough enough to be useful?

Let's review seven key components to a solid one-page plan—so you can decide for yourself.

- **Target market:** Who are you selling to? What is their age range? Interests? Income? Where do they live?
- **Positioning:** How does your company fit into the competitive landscape? Why should customers choose your brand?
- **Offering to customers:** Describe your product(s) or service(s). What problem(s) do you solve for the customer?

- **Pricing strategy:** Is your pricing based on value? Low cost? Or does your product appeal to discriminating customers able and willing to pay a premium price?
- **Service area:** Are you a local business that will benefit from a grassroots approach? Or is your product unbound to geography?
- **Revenue goals:** What are your current revenues? How much would you like to grow your business? What is your time frame for achieving this growth? Describe the critical resources and mindset that will help you get there.
- **Marketing and promotional strategies:** How will you get the word out? How much will it cost? How much are you willing to spend to acquire a new customer? What is your plan for retaining and growing your business with current customers? Identify the team that will be responsible for the marketing effort, and a timeline to get your campaign up and running.

As you can see, there's a lot you can glean when you build a one-page marketing plan. And it typically won't take much time to create it. Once you have a plan, keep it in front of your marketing team. Refer to it often. Update it as necessary. After all: If you don't have marketing goals, what are you measuring against?