



How to Write a Marketing Plan & Use a Marketing Plan Template

A marketing plan is essential for outlining and tracking your marketing strategy. Use this guide and our free marketing plan template to get started.

Marketing is a way to promote a business and sell its products or services. This can include social media marketing, [email marketing](#), offline marketing, event marketing, and so forth. But before you can actually implement a marketing strategy for your business, you need to write a marketing plan.

A marketing plan essentially outlines the marketing strategy that your business is going to use to sell its products or services. Having a marketing strategy plan is necessary so that you can implement your marketing objectives effectively and track success.

A marketing plan will look different for every business and its unique marketing strategy. However, a marketing plan template can be a good starting point for helping you get an idea of what to include and how to write one.

In this guide, we'll cover why having a marketing plan is important, how to write one, an example of a marketing plan, and more. Continue reading to learn more about how to use a marketing plan template to facilitate your business's marketing strategy.

What is a marketing plan?

A marketing plan is a document that outlines how a business is going to execute a marketing strategy. You can use a marketing plan to organize and track the success of a marketing campaign during a certain period of time.

A marketing plan will typically include a description of your business's target audience, a summary of your business goals, a timeline of when you want these goals to be accomplished, and key performance indicators that you'll track to measure the success of your marketing efforts.

While there are general components that a marketing plan should typically include, this document will look different for every business. The specifics of your plan may differ depending on the products or services that you're promoting, your target audience, your budget, and other key factors.

Marketing plan vs. marketing strategy

Before we can get into the step-by-step process of writing a marketing plan, let's discuss the differences between a marketing plan and a marketing strategy.



Your marketing plan comes before the marketing strategy—outlining your business goals what that strategy will entail. Your marketing plan also helps you figure out how you're going to:

- Execute your marketing strategy
- Allocate your budget
- Keep track of the results

Your marketing strategy is how you're going to achieve your business's goals. It's the action aspect of your marketing plan. This includes how you'll get your products or services in front of prospective customers and how you'll convert those efforts into sales. The marketing strategy will detail the marketing channels you'll use and how you'll use them.

Why is a marketing plan important?

Having a marketing plan is important for several reasons, such as:

- Helps you create clear goals: When you make a plan of your marketing strategy, it can help you hone in on your business's focus. You can clearly define what you want to achieve and how to do that in the most effective way.
- Provides new insight: Having a marketing plan is a great way to look at things from a new angle. If you've been using the same marketing strategies for a while and your sales have reached a standstill, maybe that means it's time to try something new. A marketing plan can provide new insight into how you can improve your business.
- Helps you track your success: No matter what marketing channels you're using, you always need to track your success. A marketing plan can help you monitor performance so you can see what strategies are and aren't working, and pivot as needed.
- Helps you stick within your budget: When you're trying to accomplish a goal, it can be easy to overspend. But when you have a marketing plan with your spending clearly defined, it'll be a lot easier to stay within your budget.
- You can identify threats and opportunities: There are always opportunities to improve your business, but there are also always threats that your business can face due to market changes and emerging competitors. This information can be used as a tool to plan out how you'll take advantage of opportunities and counteract challenges.

How to write a marketing plan: Step by step

To write a marketing plan, there are a few key components you should include:

1. Executive summary

An executive summary should be the first part of your marketing plan. The executive summary should include basic information about your business, such as your marketing goals, company milestones, and other important facts about your brand. It should clearly state what you want to accomplish and how you plan to get there.



2. Mission statement

Your mission statement is one sentence that describes your business's purpose in a meaningful and impactful way. It's essentially the "why" behind your business. A mission statement should be short and to the point, while still clearly conveying the reason why your business does what it does.

3. Marketing objectives

Your marketing objectives should describe how you're going to achieve your business's goals. You should have S.M.A.R.T. objectives, which means they should be:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-bound

Here is an example of a S.M.A.R.T. objective: Generate X% of sales from X campaign by X date.

4. Situational & SWOT analysis

Having a situational and SWOT analysis is crucial in a marketing plan. A SWOT analysis will analyze your business's:

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

Strengths and weaknesses are typically internal factors that come from within your business. Opportunities and threats are external factors that your business will face.

For example: A strength of your business could be that you have an experienced team that is passionate about the company. But a weakness of your business could be that none of the team has experience with social media. An opportunity for your business could be that your industry is currently growing, but a threat could be that there are competitors who sell the same product as you at a lower price.

Being aware of these factors is important so that you can make fully informed decisions about what to do with your marketing strategy.

5. Market research



The market research section of a marketing plan should provide an overview of your target audience and the market that you're selling to. This is a necessary step because it will help you obtain important information about your business landscape.

You need to figure out your [buyer persona](#), which is who you want to buy your product or service. Understanding your buyer persona is key so you can make sure your products or services appeal to your target audience.

You'll also need to create a competitive analysis, which includes researching competitors to gain insight into their products, sales, and marketing strategies so you can see how yours compares.

6. Budget

One of the last steps in creating a marketing plan is to figure out your budget. Without a clearly defined budget, it can be all too easy to overspend, which can put your business at risk of financial instability. It's imperative that you're spending wisely when it comes to your marketing strategy so you get the best return on investment.

Your budget should include all aspects of your marketing campaign, such as [digital ads](#), [social media](#), events, content, and any other aspects that make up your marketing strategy.

7. Marketing strategy

Once you've finalized all the above material, you can then develop your marketing strategy. The above components help shape your marketing strategy and taking them all into account is essential for success. You know what your goals are and how you're going to achieve them. Now it's time to actually execute your marketing strategy. Using a marketing strategy template can be helpful as it allows you to put all of these elements together.

Marketing plan template

A marketing plan template can be a useful tool when creating your first marketing plan. This template is a great starting point that you can then add on to and adjust as needed. In Mailchimp's marketing plan sample, you're provided with an outline of the elements of a marketing plan, so you can follow it as you fill in your business's specifics.

Create your own marketing plan

As you can see, a marketing plan can be highly valuable to your business. You might be apprehensive to devote the time and resources to put one together, however, investing the time now can pay off significantly in the long run. After all, it's much easier to achieve your goals when you have some direction. Using Mailchimp's marketing



Digital Solutions

plan template is one way to save time and ensure you're on the right track as you get started. Mailchimp can also be an asset as you move forward with your marketing plan.

Mailchimp is a marketing platform that gives you access to a variety of marketing resources—like [marketing CRM](#) software and [marketing automation](#) tools—that can help you grow and build your business. You can then use these tools to create successful marketing campaigns, connect with your customers, and ultimately increase revenue for your brand. So whether you need help with email campaigns, social media marketing, or all of it, Mailchimp has you covered