

Marketing Communications Strategy Blueprint

With the right strategy plan, you can create marketing messages that command attention and gain more interest in your products and services. The following outlines the series of questions that you can use to develop your Marketing Communications Strategy Plan:

MARKETING ENVIRONMENT

- What are the current industry market trends?
- What is your estimated share of market?
- Who is your competition and what is their percentage market share?
- What factors affect your client's business?

MARKETING OBJECTIVE

- What needs to be accomplished by you to reach your goals?
 - Short term?
 - Long-term?
- What behavior or attitude change is desired with your customers?

KEY FACT

- What is the major rational and/or emotional problem/obstacle the communication must overcome?

PROMISE

- What is the most important rational and emotional benefit the communication can promise the target audience?

TARGET AUDIENCE

- Who is the communication directed to
- What are their attitudes/perceptions,
- What are their demographic and persona profiles

Develop questions that will help you visualize your different audience personas. Try to understand your target audiences goals and aspirations. For example, you want to know if they turn to white papers or articles in trade publications for information. Or, does the decision-maker first go on search engines and web sites when learning more about a product or service. Would they seek input from a networking group of their peers or do they like to get answers on their own.

PERSON-BASED AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

Person-based marketing can be a powerful way to focus your marketing messages and help develop and nurture more qualified leads. Questions you should consider using to develop personas include:

- Who should the communication be directed to for best results?
- What are their attitudes/perceptions of the decision makers?
- How would best describe your target audience(s)?
 - Where are they located?
 - What keeps this person awake at night?
 - How do they spend time at work?
 - How do they like to be communicated with and sold to?
- Describe their role in the company:
 - CEO, CIO, CFO, COO, sales manager, purchasing agent, user, and any other important influencers.
- Describe the kind of company they work for:
 - What industry is it in?
 - How big is it?
 - How up-to-date is it?
 - Does it have a lot of competition?
- Describe each person and their particular behavior:
 - What's their title?
 - What's their approximate age?
 - What kind of educational background does she have?
 - What are their particular problems and goals?
 - What product or service would be most helpful in solving this person's problems?

NET IMPRESSION

- What is the one lasting impression the communication should leave with the target audience?

Once the Communications Strategy Plan is complete and agreed upon, all marketing and creative strategies can be developed from this document. In essence, it becomes your blueprint for all marketing communications activity, and most importantly, the brand.

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