



Marketing *Tune Up*

A Turnkey Guide
For Creating &
Implementing Your
Marketing Plan.

By Neil Tortorella



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Section One

Creating Your Marketing Plan

Introduction

A well thought-out and implemented marketing plan is the foundation for a business' success. You might be the best at what you do, but if nobody knows about you and your offerings ... and why they're of value ... that shingle you hung up is going to come tumbling down.

The truth be told, it's simply not enough to be good at what you do. That should be a given. I'm sure you've run across plenty of cases where the guy who's not so swift in the professional abilities department is getting loads of gigs. Why? Well frankly, odds are, he or she's a better marketer. These kinds of folks may not keep clients over the long haul, but they're darn good at reeling them in. Together, we're going to nip that guy in the bud by creating a solid plan that aligns with your great abilities in doing that thing you do.

It's important to understand that your marketing efforts are less about you and your business than they are about your clients or customers. A good plan will enable you to effectively demonstrate why choosing you over the other guy (or gal) is going to make your client shine.

You're going to learn who your clients are, what yanks their chains, how to reach them and show why you're the pick of the litter. Your marketing plan will include information about your goals, objectives, your market research, your target audience(s), your competition, your branding and positioning, the products or services you are selling, pricing structures, advertising and promotion tactics and your budget.

To follow is what we'll be doing after we sharpen up a few pencils and roll up our sleeves.

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Components of the Marketing Plan

- Executive Summary
- Addressing the four "Ps" of marketing – Product, Price, Promotion and "Place" (sales and distribution)
- Current Situation
- Target Audience Analysis
- Competitive Analysis
- SWOT Analysis
- Branding and Positioning
- Marketing Objectives / Strategy / Action Plans
- Annual Budget
- Marketing Calendar

Next, we're going to dissect the parts of a Marketing Plan. Each section contains notes about what should be included, where to find information and how to do each task. Also included are a variety of spreadsheets and forms to help you gather and manage the information you'll need to put your plan together.

Next, we're going to dissect the parts of a Marketing Plan. Each section contains notes about what should be included, where to find information and how to do each task.

I know, you want to jump right in and get going. Slow down. Take time to read through everything first. It might be a good idea to print this out and pop it into a three-ring binder. Trust me, you'll save yourself some time in the long run by not doing things twice or doing them wrong to begin with.

Here's the play-by-play:

1. Read through all the materials to acquaint yourself with the key concepts.
2. Do the competitive and audience research
3. Prepare your SWOT Analysis
4. Complete the Current Situation Questionnaire
5. Draft your mission statement, value proposition, positioning and branding statements
6. Determine your goals
7. Draft your plan

After going through this exercise, you'll have a solid, well-researched plan. That will bring with it the confidence to aggressively market and promote your business by taking *actions based on facts*, not simply whims or guesses.

You'll notice that this document has some pretty generous margins. That's the place for you to jot down notes, thoughts and ideas. It's just a bit handy to keep all this stuff in one place.

I've also included unlimited e-mail support with the price of admission. If something's not clear or if you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me at neil@tortorelladesign.com. Also, email me if you have any trouble with any of the files and I'll get it fixed.

I'd appreciate your comments about this kit and your results after implementing your plan. I look forward to hearing from you.

Have a ball!

Marketing Tune Up is a work in progress. Email me your suggestions and ideas about other materials you'd like to see included or revised. I'll send you a copy of the next version completely free of charge.

The Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is ... well, a summary of your overall plan. This may be just for you, or you may share it with others including an advisory board or mentor. The Summary highlights the major points within the plan and is handy when you need some quick reference or have a time-challenged board or mentor.

Although this is the first part of the plan, it's the last part you'll be writing. Some of the key points to cover are:

Introduce your company by briefly describing the nature of your business and the products or services you offer.

Overview

If your business is already in operation, state how long you've been in business and how long you've been at your current location. Describe your key business activities including services, sales and target audience. Highlight your accomplishments and successes.

If your business is not yet in operation, describe the experience and training you have that qualifies you to operate this type of business.

Mission Statement and General Objectives.

In other words, why you went into business and what you're hoping to accomplish.

Mission statements are relatively abstract, such as "to provide quality graphic design services." Many are also often far from what the company really does on a day-to-day basis. You'll want to be pretty up front with your statement. Your mission statement will help to differentiate you from the other folks.

Company objectives are more specific, such as "to be the graphic design provider of choice in the Anywhere, USA area and to increase the business' client base by 5 new clients per month."

The Summary highlights the major points within the plan and is handy when you need some quick reference.

Value Proposition

Your value proposition is what you bring to the table that provides real value and benefits for your clients.

When you think about benefits, don't confuse them with features. Think about what you're really providing. For instance, a *feature* might be a speedy new computer and state-of-the-art software that runs like a jack rabbit after downing a half dozen espressos. The *benefit* is fast turnaround time. At the core of that benefit is saving your client time, less stress meeting a deadline and fewer woes from their boss.

Your benefits should focus on the core issues that hit home with people – creating comfort, safety, reduce worry or anxiety, making them look good to their bosses, etc.

Management team

(This is probably just you wearing many hats.)

Describe the organizational structure of your business. Is it a sole proprietorship, partnership or corporation?

List your background and qualifications - school, previous jobs, etc.

List the board of directors/advisors, mentor, business coach, etc. if you have them in place.

Close the executive summary with a brief statement of the main marketing objectives and strategies contained in the plan.