

Communication Planning Tool for Marketing Plans (Generic)

Section 1--Action & Objective Analysis:

Analyze the objectives driving this communication and the desired response you want

1. What is my position & role as the communicator?

My Response: Member of company's top marketing team.

2. What is my overall measurable objective? (Why do I want the action below from my audience?)

My Response: To increase our value as executive managers by making a significant contribution to the corporation--specifically, our objective is to raise market share and/or revenue by XX% in XX quarters.

3. What immediate action (or response) do I desire from my audience? (What do I want to happen after the audience reads my document or listens to my presentation?)

My Response: To obtain board of director's approval for the plan

Section 2--Audience Analysis:

Analyze the typical questions the audience will ask and want to have addressed via this communication; then develop responses to the questions

1. Who is my primary audience? (Secondary audience, etc.?)

My Response: Senior management

2. What is my audience's overall objective? (What do they want to achieve/accomplish?)

My Response: To enhance the company's position (and stability) in the industry and increase shareholder's ROI

3. What is my audiences interest level in this situation? Low / medium/ high?

My Response: Low / medium/ high, depending upon the specific company situation

4. How will my audience react to my request for this action? Positive / negative / neutral response?

My Response: Positive / negative / neutral response, depending upon the specific company situation

5. What is the audience's pain (or difficulty) level? (How much pain will the desired action or response create for my audience?)

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

What are the typical questions the audience will ask and want to have addressed in this communication? What can I say to respond?

Audience Question #1: What are the objectives driving this marketing plan?

My Response: We need to make our objectives measurable and clear at the beginning so that senior management can see the reasoning behind the marketing plan we're proposing. Our objective(s) is to increase xx by yy, allowing us to (e.g., Our objective is to increase our market share to 11% up from 7% and increase revenue to 22% over last year's 14%.)

Audience Question #2: What is the marketing plan you are proposing for this product?

My Response: My job is to convince the board that this marketing plan will position the company to...

Audience Question #3: Why will this proposed marketing plan benefit the company and succeed compared to others?

My Response: We need to "sell" this marketing by showing management that we have considered all the relevant variables that can affect this plan. We need to show how the campaign strategy accommodates internal factors (e.g., company strengths, weaknesses) as well as external factors (e.g., economy, rates of interest, inflation, competition, industry, etc.)

Audience Questions #4: How will the competition respond to this marketing plan?

My Response: We need to analyze our competition, calculate their most likely response, to our plan, factor in all of our competitors' responses, and modify the marketing plan as necessary.

Audience Questions #5: What action plan (implementation plan) do you recommend and why are these specific actions necessary?

My Response: Present the specific actions in the order they need to be executed and provide strong reasoning to support each action. We should include human and material resources, cost estimates, projected time-lines, etc. and show how the orchestration of these actions link to executing a successful campaign.

Audience Question #6: How will we finance this marketing plan?

My Response: We need to have a plan to pay for this campaign. We need to show that we have carefully considered several funding approaches and developed one approach that accommodates our current and future financial situation. We need to make sure we provide management with ways to benchmark and interpret the financial data we give them. We also need to sell this financing program to management as one that provides the optimum benefits and results.

Audience Question #7: How can we minimize the risks associated with this new marketing plan?

My Response: Demonstrate that we've done our homework here and explain why our plan creates fewer (or more manageable) risks and what contingency plans we've drafted and could initiate if something unplanned should occur.

Section 3--Argument & Message Analysis:

Analyze the potential arguments, messages and themes this communication must include to get the desired action or response from your audience

1. What is the primary problem or issue?

My Response: Our biggest problem is that [fill in the issues currently affecting the organization].

2. What will fix the problem or resolve the issue?

My Response: Implementing a marketing plan of [fill in the appropriate marketing strategy for the organization] to allow us to do X.

3. How do I establish my credibility with this audience?

My Response: We need to push our [insert all the credibility factors that apply (i.e., status, relationship, expertise, and/or identification) and make sure the team makes that basis of power is clearly communicated to our audience by...

4. Should I use a direct or indirect argument approach for this communication?

My Response: Given management's [Blank interest, the probable Blank response, and the Blank level of difficulty], we need to take a [Blank] approach because...

5. How much information will this audience need from me? Where do I need to go into detail and where do I need to avoid giving them detail?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

6. List each claim you are making in this communication. What evidence or support can I offer to this audience?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

7. What word pictures can I incorporate in this communication that will help my audience see my point, idea, benefit, etc.

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

8. What is the one theme (that golden nugget, phrase, mantra, or sound bite) that I want my audience to takeaway, to remember, and to be able to repeat as a result of this communication?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

Section 4—Structure & Delivery Analysis:

Analyze the optimal way to structure, arrange, and deliver your arguments and messages to get the desired action

1. How much time will my audience devote to this communication? How long should I make this communication?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation. A reader might realistically devote approximately 30–60 minutes to the written marketing plan and, later, perhaps another 30-60 minutes to a presentation meeting.

2. What is the most important point that I need to make with this audience?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation. A written document (excluding appendix) should be short enough to be reviewed in 15 minutes,

allowing another 15 minutes for reflection time. A presentation at this level usually takes about 15-30 minutes with 15 minutes Q&A.

3. How can I best capture the audience's attention at the opening to focus on the primary issue, or problem, or solution, or benefit, etc.?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation.

4. What tone should I adopt for this communication? What tone/attitude would make the audience respond?

My Response: We need to convey our confidence in this marketing strategy as well as our thoroughness in analyzing the factors influencing this strategy.

5. Knowing the importance of the closing moment, what is the thing to say to persuade my audience to take the action and give the response I want?

My Response: Will vary, depending upon the specific company situation

Section 5--Visual Analysis:

Analyze and describe the ways you can help the audience visualize major or significant points, ideas, and benefits

1. Where will one of the five basic charts best impact this audience?

My Response: After determining our major points, we need to determine how we can illustrate those points visually in a written document and in an oral presentation.

2. Where can I include a photos can to showcase a point or message?

My Response: After determining our major points, we need to determine how we can illustrate those points visually in a written document and in an oral presentation.

3. Where can I use a concept visuals (shape visuals) to illustrate a message?

My Response: After determining our major points, we need to determine how we can illustrate those points visually in a written document and in an oral presentation.