



PIMMS PLANNING MODEL

INTRODUCTION

In most SME businesses, marketing is either focused on **planning** or **doing**

Rarely is it focused on both. **Why?**

We think it is because marketing services are either focused on **planning** (i.e. consultants) or **doing** (i.e. design, web, search, pr, social, direct, e-mail etc.)

Rarely are they focused on both.

They should be!

Good marketing is joined-up!

PIMMS™ is the BSA planning model which not only helps you plan your marketing but also creates a coherent, joined-up process for making things happen – sustainably

How to Use This Document

Complete the Planning and Implementation sections then apply this information to the ideas in the following sections to build a joined-up process.

Use the ideas we give to make your own notes building the heart of your marketing process for your business.

Use this as a live document for ongoing review and refinement

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P lan
I mplement
M onitor
M anage
S ustain

JOINED-UP MARKETING

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Marketing by experts – Marketing for experts



P - PLANNING

“Plans are worthless, but planning is invaluable.”

Planning 1 - Goals – Be SMART*

Your Goals

Planning is not about having a plan! It is about thinking through your goals and defining the processes you want to operate in your business to help you achieve your goals.

These processes must be practical and logical. Things you can and will do.

It is particularly important that you write down your decisions. If you don't, it is easy to use the benefit of hindsight to massage your memory!

If you quietly forget the actual decisions you took and choices you made, it is impossible to reflect on them and consistently adapt to reflect the reality you find.

Never forget, **it is impossible to foretell the future**. Planning is about defining your best guess based on the information you have and using this to decide what actions you will take to help you achieve your goals. As you move forward, you are always learning. Used properly, your new knowledge can help you make better decisions.

Goals

Why are you in business? How do you want your business to operate? What do you want to achieve, for yourself, your family, your employees, the wider world?

Your goals are the endgame of the **PIMMS** process. Once you have defined them, you can then set out the path you choose to take to achieve them.

Remember to make sure your goals are **SMART***

PERSONAL GOALS

What do you want out of your business?

BUSINESS GOALS

How would you like your business to look and operate?

BUSINESS MARKETING GOALS

How do you want your business to be perceived by your customers and markets?

MARKETING COMMUNICATION GOALS

What message(s) do you wish to communicate? Who are your target customers/markets? What communication tools do you want to use?

***SMART** goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, **T**imed



Your Proposition

A famous quote from Peter Drucker:

"The purpose of a business is to create a customer"

To achieve this, you need to give your customer a reason to do business with you. This is your proposition.

Remember, customers don't trade with you out of the goodness of their hearts, they do so because they get value from you. You might solve a problem for them, or make them feel better? Maybe both?

By defining (and writing down!) your proposition, you crystallise it. This allows you to objectively test it in the real world.

Never mind what you think, do you really solve problems and/or make people feel better?

Unless you are lucky, you will also have competitors. Other businesses who are trying to solve the same problems, deliver the same benefits as you. How can you differentiate your business to show how you deliver benefit more effectively?

Try not to think in terms of what you do. Instead, put yourself in the position of your customer. What do they receive from you? Your perception of what you do and your customer's perception may be quite different.

Remember what Peter Drucker says; **the business goal is to create a customer.**

It is the customer's perception of your proposition that is most important.

Next we look at your target market(s). You may need to adjust your propositions for different markets

Planning 2 – Your Proposition

What is your core business proposition? (what does your business do?)

Who are your competitors?

How do you differentiate your business from your competitors?

Key FEATURES of your proposition – specifics about your Product/Service

Key BENEFITS of your proposition – how does a particular feature improve things for you customer? -use the *So What* test**

How can you show people you can do what you say you can?

For example:

Relevant Newsworthy stories
Advice/Expertise
Testimonials
Case Studies

** If you tell someone a benefit of working with you and they can reply "So what?" maybe you need to think again whether that is a real benefit, or is it a feature?



Your Target Market

Creating a customer is central to your business. Where are you going to find your customer?

Having a clear idea as to who is likely to be your customer makes it easier to find them and to make sure you are targeting your marketing in the right direction.

In practice, defining a target market can prove challenging as there is a flip side. By specifying who is your target market, you are, by default, also defining who isn't!

In practice you are saying here is a group of people who could (at least in theory) do business with me. However, I am consciously not planning to market to them as I believe they do not represent a significant opportunity to create the sort of customer I am looking for!

What if you are wrong?! Actually it doesn't matter. You know enough about your business that you won't completely miss your target audience, and anyway, if you do miss some opportunities, you can target them later.

Marketing is a Process, NOT an Event

Also, remember that your target market will always split between 'People who know you' and 'People who don't know you'. Good customer will trust you and that means they will know you. Building trust can take time.

It can be a good idea to accept that creating a customer is a process. To this end, building a database of 'People who know you' and using this as a CRM* tool to build relationships can be a great way to create customers.

Planning 3 – Your Target Market(s)

It is normally fairly easy to define a B2B target market in terms of 3 criteria:

1. Business Sector(s)
2. Business Size
3. Location

WHO IS YOUR TARGET MARKET?

BUILDING MY CRM* - SOURCES OF POTENTIAL CONTACTS

1. The people I know
2. Networking
3. Referrals
4. Website Sign-ups
5. Social Media/LinkedIn
6. Pro-active development – Desk Research/Internet Research/Telemarketing

Having a clearly defined market makes it easier to have strong, relevant marketing messages. Avoid thinking you can market to anyone and everyone. Create a 'Fit/Reason to do business' between your business and your target market

If your business is B2C you can adapt these criteria quite easily. Look for ways to definer/niche your B2C market rather than trying to appeal to everyone.

Remember, you may have more than one market niche. It can be helpful to group similar customers together where you offer similar [potential benefits..

HOW CAN I REACH MY TARGET MARKET?

*CRM (Customer Relationship Management) is a valuable tool in modern marketing



Knocking on doors

Sooner or later, if you are going to create a customer, you have to communicate with your market. OK, maybe not actually knocking on doors (though why not?) but you have to get out there and take your proposition to your market.

Deciding what to say and how to say it can be overwhelming. There are so many different options – and so many people trying to tell you how their way is the best!

The key is to make a clear, written action plan that you are comfortable with – and then make sure the actions happen.

Remember that

Marketing is a Process, NOT an Event

It doesn't matter if your action plan isn't perfect. What does matter is that you get out and do something. By having a written action plan it is much easier to manage your marketing process and when it comes to reviewing how things are going, a written plan is extremely valuable.

Here are some ideas you may find helpful.

- Different approaches will be more suited to different types of customer. If you are offering personal/professional services, a more individual/one-to-one approach makes sense
- Have different approaches depending on whether it is someone who knows you, or not.
- Don't do too much
- It is better to use one or two communication tools well than trying to use everything

I - Implementation – Your Message(s)

“Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work”

WHICH COMMUNICATION CHANNELS TO USE?

Website – Your website should be at the heart of your marketing

Targeting people you know

- Email
- Telephone
- Face to Face

Targeting RELEVANT people you don't know

- Search (SEO & Paid)
- Advertising & PR (online and Offline)

Targeting across your market

- Social Media
- Networking/LinkedIn
- Direct Marketing Mail & Telephone
- Exhibitions & Events

An action plan to get your messages out there.

1. Which Channels?
2. What Content?
3. When?
4. Who is responsible for making it happen?



Measuring the Process

By measuring response to your marketing communication, you can see what is working and what isn't.

Remember though that it isn't just about signing up customers straight away. Good customers may take their time to decide to work with you. In fact, a customer who takes their time in the first place can often be a more loyal and long-term source of business. It is worth the wait.

Most digital marketing communication tools such as e-mail, search, social etc. have extensive analytics tools allowing you to measure how people are engaging with your marketing.

Using these tools can help you find opportunities to build conversations on a one to one basis.

M - MONITOR YOUR MARKETING

"If you can measure it, you can improve it."

How do we plan to monitor and control our implementation?

What KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) do we plan to monitor?

Do we have access to the necessary Analytics tools to give us the numbers we need?

Can we integrate other online activity into our analytics? (E-mail, Advertising, Paid Clicks, SEO, Web PR etc.)

1 Monitor your Communications

For every planned communication in **Implementation** above, what outcomes are you planning to record?

- **Use Analytics & Dashboards for consistent data access**
- **Is our website, up to date and consistently evolving?**

2. Growing the 'People you know'

There are more opportunities to engage and build relationships with people you know. It is more than just trying to sell to them. Good business comes from people who know and trust you.

Trust is not instant. Allow time for relationships to develop. If you are putting effort in to growing relationships, make sure you focus in contacts who are **RELEVANT** to growing your business.

4 steps to building trust:

1. Meet
2. Like
3. Know
4. Trust

You should build a database of known contacts. It may well be that a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system is a good way to go. By monitoring the number of live contacts on your database you can ensure that your community is growing. A CRM system can help you ensure you are actively progressing live opportunities and avoid letting people 'slip through the net'

3. Nurturing the 'People you don't know'

You don't just need to wait for people to contact you.

Monitor Social Media, PR, Advertising etc. to ensure engagement traction and to identify opportunities for building **RELEVANT** relationships proactively



M - MANAGE YOUR MARKETING

“The entrepreneur searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity”

How often are we going to review progress?

Processes for programme review

Refinement

Tuning the programme to keep it current, live and effective

Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated and committed

Review your marketing regularly

Don't over-manage

Refine your marketing to keep it current, live and effective

Ensure appropriate resources are allocated and committed

Keep it real

It won't be perfect

Managing the Process

The marketing process does not just happen. It needs to be driven. This can be challenging because marketing is also the easy thing not to do.

Doing no marketing has no impact today or tomorrow. Not responding to customers or dealing with enquiries does!

It can be difficult to allocate regular time to managing your marketing, particularly if you don't have a marketing process. You find yourself *working from scratch* – and this takes up more time. Another reason why it can be easy not to even start!

Having a planned process that delivers meaningful measurement of how things are going makes it much more likely that you will put time to marketing. Even a 10-20 minute weekly review of an established process can point to opportunities that drive real progress.



Stick at it

I have said it several times:

Marketing is a Process, NOT an Event

Don't expect instant success. You might get it, and if you do, count yourself lucky. However, normally you need to work at it.

As someone once said, '*...the harder I work the luckier I get...*'

Actually, when it comes to marketing, I think it is important not to have to work too hard. If you do, you are more likely to stop.

It is worth making the time in the short-term to build your plan and getting your marketing process up and running. This will pay dividends later. A good process is much easier to manage!

S - Sustain

"Do stuff & Iterate"

A real weakness of a lot of marketing is that it is not sustained. Effective marketing communication should be an ongoing, integrated function of your business

The key to sustained marketing communication is effective Monitoring and Management to ensure that you get real benefit from your efforts.

Joined-up is sustainable

Does all your activity point to driving your goals/objectives.

You need to put time and resource into keeping your marketing at the heart of your overall business management.

An effective marketing plan will evolve with real-world experience

Your results will not be perfect.

Things normally take longer than you expect.

Every time you do some marketing, you learn.

The more you learn, the better you get.

P + I + M + M + S

SME Marketing....

A Process, NOT an Event