

10 Essentials of A Marketing Plan in 2016



By Tim Berry

Clearly, technology has changed marketing a lot. We fast forward through ads on television and block them on our devices. We have amplified word of mouth in social media. We pour over analytics and metrics. But what about the marketing plan? Has technology changed marketing planning?

One thing for sure: The fundamentals still apply. As much as ever, marketing is still getting people to know, like, and trust your business. As much as ever, marketing still needs defining target markets, knowing those market segments, reaching the right people with the right message. Pricing is still the most important message, and the lowest price is – as always – not necessarily the best price.

Another thing for sure: the marketing mix, the tactics, are changing rapidly. Goodbye to the yellow pages, hello Facebook. Goodbye public relations, hello social media. Goodbye advertising, hello content marketing.

And where is the marketing plan, in all this? Let me suggest 10 essentials of a marketing plan for 2016.

A classic marketing plan might include the following pieces:

1. **Target Market.** The better you define it, the better for the marketing. Experts recommend describing an ideal target customer in detail. Don't try to please everybody. Instead, please some specific kinds of buyers who have the right set of needs, habits, locations, etc.
2. **Messaging.** A summary of the main tag lines, key selling points, value proposition and so forth (we could call this messaging). There are a lot of different jargon words for this, so be flexible.
3. **Media.** Discussion of media, which almost has to be social media and content marketing these days, but used to be advertising budgets, placement, and so on. I'm growing more interested in taking steps beyond just content marketing, to distributed marketing, and real engagement. That means something more than 'post and pray.' As you think about this topic, think about where your potential customers will see your message. What else do you do to help the right people find your message? To track what they say about it?
4. **Pricing.** You have to make pricing match product or service, market, or messaging. Don't assume that the lowest price wins. Pricing is your most important marketing message. Would you buy day-old sushi because it's cheap? Your price needs to synchronize with your product offering and your target market. If you discount excellence, it becomes less credible in the eyes of your potential customers. And if your strategy

is selling an undifferentiated lowest price product or service, make sure that matches the rest of your marketing

5. **Channels.** For product businesses you have the classic question of channels of distribution, either direct (usually web and mobile these days) or via distributors and retail, or direct to retail. Information and service businesses need to consider channels too, even though the channels are marketing channels, such as web and mobile. We all need traffic of one sort or another
6. **Promotion.** These days promotion might be as simple as consistent presence in the main social media platforms. It might be email marketing, advertising, affiliate sites, public relations, price promotion, and events.
7. **Tasks and major milestones.** Every good plan requires some specific tasks and major milestones to

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The project generally consists of the following:

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Pulice Construction, Inc. will analyze and consider each SBE quote received, including those that are broken down into economically feasible units to facilitate bidding. Quotes must be valid for the same period of time as specified by Owner for contract award. Any conditions or exceptions in Subcontractor's quote are expressly rejected unless accepted in writing. **Plans and Specifications** are available online at www.pulice.sharefile.com. Send SBE certification (DGS) with quote. Non SBE- Subs/Suppliers: Indicate 2nd tier SBE participation offered on your quotation as it will be evaluated with your price.

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Pacific States Environmental Contractors, Inc.

CAL LIC. NO. 723241

11555 Dublin Boulevard • Dublin, CA 94568-2909

Phone: (925) 803-4333 • FAX: (925) 803-4334

Estimator: Pete Timmerman

Email: PTimmerman@pacificstates.net

Pacific States Environmental Contractors, Inc (PSEC) is preparing a bid as a Prime Contractor for the project listed below:

Mission Creek (Line L) Restoration Between UPRR and Lemos Lane, In Fremont, Alameda County, California, Zone No. 6 Project.

Owner:

Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

BID DATE: March 8, 2016 @2pm

We hereby encourage responsible participation of Disadvantaged/Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises (D/M/WBE's) and solicit their subcontractor or materials and/or suppliers and trucking quotation for the following types of work including but not limited to:

Concrete, Trucking, Fencing, Hydroseeding, Underground Pipe, Storm Drain, Striping, Signage, SWPPP, Erosion Control, Painting, Landscaping, Irrigation, Street Pile Shoring, Concrete Fill, Pre-Fab Steel Bridge Construction, Hand Railing, Tree Protection, Dewatering and Asbestos Abatement.

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PSEC is willing to breakout any portion of work to encourage Disadvantaged/Minority/Women-Owned Business Enterprises (D/M/WBE's) and solicit their subcontractor or materials and/or suppliers and trucking quotation. If you require any assistance, please contact the Estimator, Pete Timmerman email him at PTimmerman@pacificstates.net or call (925) 803-4333 and bids may be faxed to us at (925) 803-4334. We are an equal opportunity employer.

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Subcontractors and Suppliers interested in this project may contact Carlos Sotelo by phone at (510) 777-5000.

100% Performance and Payment bonds with a surety company subject to approval of Shimmick Construction Company, Inc. are required of subcontractors for this project. Shimmick Construction will pay bond premium up to 1.5%. Subcontractors will be required to abide by terms and conditions of the AGC Master Labor Agreements and to execute an agreement utilizing the latest SCCI Long Form Standard Subcontract incorporating prime contract terms and conditions, including payment provisions. Shimmick Construction's listing of a Subcontractor is not to be construed as an acceptance of all of the Subcontractor's conditions or exceptions included with the Subcontractor's price quote. Shimmick Construction requires that Subcontractors and Suppliers price quotes be provided at a reasonable time prior to the bid deadline to enable a complete evaluation. For assistance with bonding, insurance or lines of credit contact Scott Fairgrieve at (510) 777-5000.

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With a monthly readership of 75,000, SBE reaches a diverse audience, cutting across ethnic and gender lines as well as traditional industry segments.



Marketing Plan in 2016

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make it concrete. Otherwise it's just theory. You need to be able to track progress against the plan. Milestones help us get things done. We work towards goals.

8. **Important metrics.** It takes real numbers to actually work a plan. That might be sales, web traffic or store traffic, leads, presentations, seminars, conversions, tweets, posts, likes, follows, or whatever. Make it measurable.

9. **Review schedule.** Keep your plan as short as possible, just lists and tables, because it's only good for a few weeks before it needs revision. The real world keeps intervening. You need to plan ahead for a monthly meeting to review results and revise that plan.

10. **Budgets.** You have to manage the money. A good marketing plan needs to include budgets for expenses, and the sales that result from the different activities.

About the Author:

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Source: www.sba.gov

FINAL DAYS TO APPLY for SBA's Free Emerging Leaders Initiative

Free seven-month intensive, executive entrepreneurship education series is in final registration period

The U.S. Small Business Administration's free Emerging Leaders executive-level training series is launching in the Los Angeles area.

The Emerging Leaders training focuses on small, poised-for-growth companies with potential for job creation. The seven-month intensive, executive entrepreneurship education series includes approximately 100 hours of classroom time per participant and provides the opportunity for small business owners to work with experienced mentors, attend workshops and develop connections with their peers, city leaders and financial communities.

"The SBA's expansion of Emerging Leaders last year to over 20 new locations made this invaluable training accessible to more entrepreneurs than ever before," said SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet. "The training, mentorship and resources that these small business owners receive help them take their enterprises to the next level, spurring business growth, job creation and stronger communities."

"The initiative has trained more than 3,000 promising small business owners in underserved communities since its inception in 2008, and its impact continues to expand, Contreras-Sweet continued."

The Emerging Leaders initiative has been a catalyst for expanding opportunities for underserved communities. Graduates have reported that nearly 70 percent achieved revenue growth and over 80 percent created new jobs or retained all existing

jobs. Graduates have secured federal, state, local and tribal contract awards over \$700 million.

Recruitment for the 2016 training cycle is in its final days and classes are scheduled to begin in April. Eligibility criteria and information on how interested small business owners can apply can be found at www.sba.gov/emergingleaders.

Source: www.sba.gov

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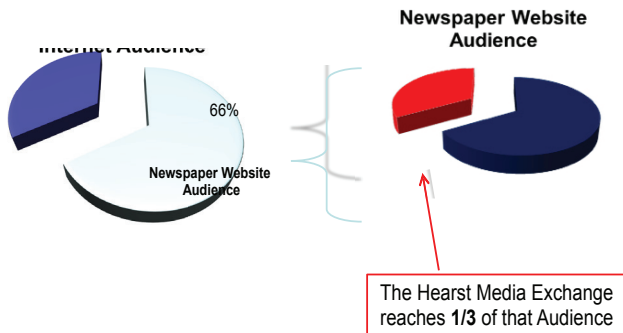
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