

These questions are designed to help you 'think marketing'. They are not exhaustive but noting your answers to the topics they cover will give you, and others, a valuable insight into how and where your business can improve its promotion.



Marketing fact-find[©]

Knowing Your Market

- What business are you in ?
- Who are your main customers ?
- Where are your main customers ?
- Why do they buy your products or services ?
- Could they buy other products or services from you ?
- What are the real needs of your customers ?
(Find a need and fill it)
- Are all your customers in the same industry, trade, region or country ?
- Are there other ways in which you can segment your customers ?
- What does this tell you about your product(s) ?
- Are there other sources of (untapped) customers ?
- Are you in the right business ?
- Is your market expanding, stagnant or declining ?
- What is your market share ?
- Is your business growing or shrinking faster than the national/regional average in your market ?
- Is your market seasonal ?
- What other markets could you move in to ?
(There is no point in trying to resist market forces too powerful to influence)
- What proportion of your customer base provides the major part of your turnover ?
- Do your larger customers enjoy terms that reduce your margins ?
- Are you optimising this sector ?
- What is the true cost of generating the smaller proportion of your business? Is this worthwhile ?
(Knowledge of your costs and prices is essential to avoid selling too much of your product or service at little or no profit)

[Marketing fact-find...]

Competition

- Know your competitors - What are they up to ?
How ? Why ?

Products and Pricing

- Why do your customers buy from you rather than from your competitors ?

(Try to be different, or at least perceived to be different... the U.S.P... otherwise you compete only on service or price)

- What will your customers be prepared to pay for your service ? What is it worth to the customer ?
What would they have to pay elsewhere ?

Advertising and Sales Promotion

- What do you want to achieve ?
- How are you prepared to resource it ?

(Time, people, budget, professional agencies and advice)

Communications Tools

- What are the most accepted/relevant/cost-effective promotional media for your type of business ?

(Television; Radio; Cinema; Editorial; PR/Press/Media advertising/inserts; Internet/Website/Email; Literature; Direct Mail; Posters; Exhibitions; Group Presentations; One-to-One Presentations; Telephone; Fax; Sponsorship; Access to happy customers for endorsement; Word of Mouth recommendation; Sales Promotion - offers, discounts; Freebies, Gifts etc)

Corporate Identity

- How appropriate and effective is your 'image' as communicated on your premises, signage, stationery, literature, website, advertising, uniforms, vehicles, etc ?

(A marketing audit of the material you use will establish what is working, and why - and help screen out what doesn't work or is inconsistent)

People

- Telephone/Reception manner
- Staff attitudes/availability/presentation/training

Distribution and Sales

- Who sells your business, products and services ?
How ?

(Ideally you need a dedicated function with its own strategy, time allocation, budget and monitoring)

Thank you for your time. Stating the website from which you downloaded this form, please return your considered answers to: info@mainlymarketing.co.uk

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