**Marketing and Sales**

Marketing takes time, money, and preparation. One of the best ways to stay on schedule and on budget is to create a written marketing plan. It should describe the actions you’ll take to persuade potential customers to buy your products or services. Your business plan should contain the central elements of your marketing strategy and **your Marketing Plan turns that strategy into action**.

**Most marketing plans cover these topics:**

**Target market**

Describe your audience in detail. Look at the market’s size, demographics, unique traits, and trends that relate to demand for your business.

**Competitive advantage**

Describe what gives your product or service an advantage over the competition. It might be a better product, a lower price, or an excellent customer experience. Sometimes, an environmentally friendly certification or “made in the USA” on your label can be an important factor for customers.

**Sales plan**

Describe how you’ll literally sell your service or product to your customers. List the sales methods you’ll use. Explain each step your customer takes once they decide to buy.

**Marketing and sales goals**

Describe your marketing and sales goals for the next year. Common marketing and sales goals are to generate sales by a specific dollar amount or a specific percentage increase. Also, you should include specifics on building your CRM prospect list with email subscribers and other social media involvement. It is highly recommended that these goals and target be posted prominently in the Sales Department, so everyone is visually reminded often of those goals.

WHAT GETS MEASURED – GETS DONE

**Marketing action plan**

Describe how you’ll achieve your marketing and sales goals. Identify marketing channels you’ll use, such as online advertising, social prospecting, and direct face-to-face marketing. Have a clear pricing strategy and know how you’ll do promotions. Be sure to include steps for good customer support that happens after the sale.

**Budget**

Include a complete breakdown of the costs of your marketing plan. Try to be as accurate as possible. You’ll want to keep tracking your costs once you put your plan into action.

*Plan to compare your marketing and sales costs to the revenue it generates. You want to make sure you’re getting a positive return on investment (ROI).*

**Positive ROI**

Some marketing methods take a long time to achieve a positive ROI. One example of this is “route marketing” which includes visiting a list of prospective clients on a regular route basis. Another long-term ROI is marketing to commercial prospects.

**Our industry relies on and responds to:**

* Water/Flood damage
* Fire/Smoke Damage
* Mold – Asbestos – Lead
* Wind – Hail – Roof Damage

Since we rely almost totally on getting work when a disaster strikes a home or a commercial building, even when we market to these prospects, it’s critical to focus on these key points:

* Create a Maven relationship
* Be consistent in your visits
* Always have a valid reason to visit
* Bring value in advance

Marketing plans should be maintained on an annual basis, at minimum (and ideally reviewed every six months. Measuring ROI will help you know which part of the plan is working and which part needs to be updated.

**For specialized and exclusive help on designing the marketing plan for your business, contact: Dick Wagner. 419-202-6745 Dick@theCRESTnetwork.com**