



Marketing Plan Tool

Appendix

MARKETING PLAN TOOL

This template is meant to be an outline. In some places, examples will be included just to serve as a “go-by.” Please be sure to customize the marketing plan according to the community’s vision.

INTRODUCTION

Describe the Vision of the Community

Define Mission of the Marketing Plan (sample)

The purpose of this marketing plan is to set forth the goals and strategies for the [Community Name] marketing effort. The intended result of this strategic marketing plan is a more focused and therefore more cost-effective effort to attract new firms into the [Community Name], to promote business assistance to existing firms, and to build support within the community for the economic development and marketing programs. This plan will be the roadmap for the marketing activity, telling us where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. It is based on the assessment of strengths and weaknesses and the identification of target industries for the [Community Name].

To facilitate an ongoing process of creative thinking in this marketing effort, it is recommended that a community-wide economic development Marketing Committee be established that includes representatives from area private sector volunteers with a marketing interest or background, industry public relations officers, local media personnel, and other relevant persons. This Committee would not implement the marketing plan, but would provide guidance and creative thinking as the plan adjusts and responds to changing economic circumstance in the community.

SITUATION ANALYSIS (See Module 2: Community Assessment)

Competitive Assessment Summary: [Your Community Here]

1. Strengths (to use when marketing your community – customize)
 - a. Labor Cost
 - b. Labor Productivity and Work Ethic
 - c. Labor-Management Relations
 - d. Electric Power
 - e. Area Technical Training
 - f. Health Care / Medical Services
 - g. Quality of Life

2. Neutrals (These can become strengths or weaknesses according to how much attention the community gives them – See Community Assessments and Strategic Planning Modules)
 - a. Labor Availability
 - b. Market Access
 - c. State and Local Taxes
 - d. Air Service
 - e. K-12 Education
 - f. Cost of Living
 - g. Public Safety
 - h. Natural Gas

3. Weaknesses (Must be addressed in Community's Strategic Plan. Sometimes these are things that cannot be controlled – move on to what your community can build on)
 - a. Ground Transportation
 - b. Telecommunications
 - c. Industrial Sites
 - d. Regional Cooperation

These are only examples

TARGET AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION

Target Industries/Business Sectors (identified through SWOT and industry research)

1. Value-added Food Manufacturing
2. Converted Paper Products
3. Medicinal Chemicals and Pharmaceutical Products
4. Fabricated Metal Products
5. Rubber and Miscellaneous Plastics Products
6. Machinery and Equipment Assembly
7. Electrical Apparatus
8. Retirement Homes, Resorts and Services for the Elderly
9. Back Office Operations
10. Call Centers

Include some brief highlights of the industry and connect it to the assets of the community.

These are only examples

SAMPLE MARKETING PLAN

Goal 1 - To Create and Communicate an Economic Development Identity/Image for the [Community Name]

Objective 1.1

Continue to develop recognition of the “Community” as an attractive location for business and industry with relevant state and regional economic development stakeholder organizations such as ...

Strategies

- Develop and send a “marketing piece” to relevant state and regional economic development organizations, along with a letter or announcement concerning the new, improved “Community” economic development web site. **Immediate 1.**
- Meet with key staff of the relevant state and regional economic development organizations on at least a quarterly basis to discuss prospect activity. **Ongoing 1.**
- Send a quarterly newsletter to the key prospect managers at the relevant state and regional economic development organizations to inform them of recent developments in the community. **Ongoing 1.**

Plan Priorities

This sample plan uses the following terms as ways to prioritize – Others work as well – important thing is to define the terms and make sure all elements of the plan have a priority!

Immediate 1: Key program element that should be acted on as soon as possible. Could be a onetime, discrete activity (e.g. a first prospect mailing) or a repeated activity (second prospect mailing, modified based on results of first mailing).

Immediate 2: Program element like the above, but lower in priority.

Ongoing 1: Program element that usually does not involve a one-time, discrete activity, but is a continuous process and high in priority (e.g. communicating with existing local businesses in a retention and expansion program).

Ongoing 2: Program element like the above, but lower in priority and that should be implemented as budgets and staff time allow.

In general, the overall priority of action steps should be to accomplish the Immediate 1 and Ongoing 1 steps first, followed by the Immediate 2 and Ongoing 2 steps.

Objective 1.2

Expand the use of public relations and media coverage as a means of creating awareness about the business opportunities in the [Community Name].

Strategies

- In conjunction with the various tourism organizations, develop and use a "high profile" local festival or event to attract business visitors and attention to the [Community Name]. The special session highlighting the "Community" to which state and local economic development officials and business executives are invited could be in conjunction with one of the local festivals. **Immediate 2.**
- The Marketing Committee should develop and keep updated an ongoing master schedule covering the next 12-month period. This will include local current events and activities, important historical events, and themes upon which public relations press releases are to be developed. **Ongoing 2.**

Objective 1.3

Achieve an identity for the "Community" as a highly desirable regional business location among corporate executives and site consultants.

Strategies

- Solicit testimonial letters from local employers that can be shared with corporate executives and site consultants outside the community. These testimonials will be useful in many of the marketing plan elements, including the direct mail campaign. **Immediate 1.**
- Conduct a training session for local manufacturing firm management to help them to become more effective lead generators for the "Community" (suppliers, vendors, customers, colleagues). **Immediate 2.**

Goal 2 - To Attract New Business and Industry to the "Community" through an Aggressive Targeted Marketing Campaign.

Objective 2.1

Develop a cost-effective marketing approach to attract appropriate manufacturing industry targets.

Strategies

- Identify specific high-growth and high-potential manufacturing industries at a four-digit NAICS level for the area. **Immediate 1.**
- Identify growth firms in these sectors, considering firms as small as 25 employees. **Immediate 1.**

- Conduct a series of at least three mailings to the relevant corporate decision-maker in each firm, informing him/her about the locational advantages of the [Community Name]. **Immediate 1.**

Objective 2.2

Develop a cost-effective marketing approach to attract appropriate back office and call center targets.

Strategies

- To identify back office and call center prospects, attend call center trade shows and get attendee lists and purchase mailing lists from major call center magazines. **Ongoing 1.**

Objective 2.3

Produce collateral marketing materials to be used in direct mailings and in prospect development.

Strategies

- Develop a general business brochure for the community, focusing on information that is relevant to corporate site. **Immediate 1.**
- Conduct a complete inventory of available industrial and commercial buildings in the “Community” to be used for marketing purposes. **Immediate 1.**

MARKETING STAFF – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Create a table or grid in accordance with the community’s marketing plan and assign responsibility for each of the objectives and strategies. This table should show time frames and other resources that may assist.

SAMPLE MARKETING BUDGET

Estimated [Community Name] Annual Economic Development Marketing Budget

Goal 1: Create ED Marketing Identity for Shoals

Quarterly newsletter production	5,000
Miscellaneous material, regional travel costs	5,000

Goal 2: Attract New Business Through Marketing Campaign

Direct mail materials and priority delivery	10,000
Print general business brochure	10,000
Call trips and follow-up visits	20,000
Prospect development missions other than follow-up visits	10,000
Trade show attendance (2 per year, with booths)	20,000
Site consultant/executive tour of [Community Name]	25,000
Industrial site profiles	5,000
IEDC membership/conferences (2 per year, plus chapter)	10,000
Prospect entertainment/hospitality budget	8,000

Goal 3: Local Marketing for Retention and Expansion of Existing Business

Miscellaneous travel and other expenses for business visitation program	5,000
---	-------

Goal 4: Increase Local Support for Economic Development

Workshop on economic development	2,000
Local mailings, miscellaneous costs	1,000

PERFORMANCE TRACKING

The ultimate success of any plan or program depends, of course, on its being effectively implemented. However, no organization can perfectly anticipate future events or the results of actions taken. That is why ongoing evaluation of performance and results is critical to any plan so that it can be appropriately modified in a timely fashion to be responsive to changing circumstances and to lessons learned.

Evaluation occurs basically at three levels. The least difficult level is the "monitoring" of the implementation of the plan. This mainly involves tracking the strategic actions and the budget to determine if timeframes are being met and if the programs are within budget.

The most significant type of evaluation to the performance of the organization and its implementation of the plan is the "performance audit." This type of evaluation is keyed to the performance of the organization in carrying out the work plan and the specific projects. The following are some of the questions that need to be asked:

- Are the goals and objectives of the marketing plan being met?
- What is working and what isn't working, and why?
- What could be done to improve the system?
- Are inquiries being properly responded to?
- Are telephone follow-ups being done effectively?

- Is the advertising generating a satisfactory level of response?
- Are prospects being handled correctly?
- Are the brochures generating a favorable response?
- Does a different approach need to be used with the direct mailings?
- Are the target industries appropriate to the [Community Name]?

The final aspect of evaluation focuses on the "impact" of the individual projects or on the marketing plan as a whole. This is a "so what?" approach. What impact is the implementation of the marketing plan having on the community? The ability to measure the impact of an economic development or marketing program is dependent upon the ability to measure change locally. This change can be in the number of businesses attracted, the number of new business formations, the number of firms retained or that have expanded locally, the loss or gain of jobs, the rise or fall in the local unemployment rate, the increase or decrease in real estate occupancy rates, etc.

The measurement of impact is most effectively accomplished through an economic base analysis that studies the rate and kind of economic change in the [Community Name]. **See Module 7 – Developing Local Incentive Programs for more information on measuring impact.**