

A man in a dark suit stands on a large wooden chess piece (a king) on a sandy beach. He is holding a telescope to his eye, looking out over the ocean. In the distance, another chess piece (a king) stands on a small rock in the water. The sky is a mix of purple and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is surreal and metaphorical, representing business strategy and vision.

PLAN, PROMOTE & PROFIT FROM YOUR BUSINESS

10 Easy Steps to Developing a
12-Month Strategic Marketing Plan

Stephen Fairley

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12-Month Strategic Marketing Plan**

Stephen Fairley

**“America’s Top Marketing Coach”
Business Building Center**

www.BusinessBuildingCenter.com



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Stephen Fairley is a Small Business Coach, professional speaker, bestselling author and President of Today's Leadership Coaching (TLC), Inc, one of Chicago's premier small business coaching companies. He specializes in small business coaching, leadership development, and small business marketing with professional service providers, entrepreneurs, and small business owners.

Stephen was a graduate professor of counseling at one of the nation's largest accredited graduate counseling & psychology programs. Prior to pursuing his doctorate degree in clinical psychology, he was responsible for teaching, training, and evaluating over 1,700 graduate level psychology students on leadership skills, effective team building strategies, and human performance issues. He has worked as a psychotherapist in three private practices, two hospitals, and the largest therapeutic, medium security prison in the United States.

He launched his first entrepreneurial business when he started an organizational development consulting firm in Virginia Beach, VA called TechMaven where he consulted with small businesses and non-profit organizations on new business development, strategic planning issues, team building, and internal leadership development. Since moving to Chicago, he co-founded and was the CEO and Principal Investigator at WorldCast Technologies, a B2B startup in the health sciences field focused on developing new prevention methods for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) using wireless sensor technology. During the same period, Stephen was the Marketing Consultant to Touch Media, a hi-tech, start-up company using touch screen technology to increase the profits of high end restaurants prior to being asked to serve as the President and Vice-President of Marketing.

Stephen regularly speaks at regional and national conferences on topics related to: small business marketing techniques, how to market your consulting practice like a pro, and cutting-edge business development strategies.

He is the bestselling author of three books including: *Practice Made Perfect: 10 Principles for Marketing Your Services* (2002), *6 Keys for Successful Leaders* (2003), and his newest book *Getting Started in Personal and Executive Coaching* (2004), which has become a national bestseller.

Stephen has received national recognition as "America's Top Marketing Coach" by CoachVille, the world's largest coaching association and has been featured in *Entrepreneur* magazine, *Inc* magazine, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Harvard Management Update*, *Business Advisor*, and on the front covers of *AdvantEdge* and *Choice* magazines.

To his clients, Stephen is a "Strategic Business Thinker" who is known for using his powerful psychological insights into human performance and motivational challenges to help his clients reach and exceed their goals. He intertwines these insights with his critical thinking abilities and cutting-edge marketing and business development strategies to deliver consistent results to his clients.

In his spare time, Stephen enjoys traveling all over the world, fishing, and his home theater.

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Plan, Promote & Profit from Your Business

10 Easy Steps to Developing a 12-Month Strategic Marketing Plan

- Are you starting a new business and need to write a marketing plan?
- Do you have an existing business and recognize having a solid plan will help you achieve your goals?
- Looking for some free resources on how to write business plans and marketing plans?

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS REQUIRES A SOLID MARKETING PLAN

There are many books, programs, and software programs available today to help small business owners, professional service companies, consultants, and entrepreneurs write a business plan or marketing plan. However, many of them talk about writing a business plan like an academic exercise—the creation of an all important document that sits proudly on your shelf to show interested parties or to give to potential investors.

I have found that spending your time writing a traditional business plan using traditional methods is a complete waste of time for most people. The traditional standards for business plan writing were developed for the purpose of either finding a major investor or for presenting to a bank manager when asking for a business loan. While some of you may decide at some point to seek out a business loan from a local bank, the majority of small businesses are not interested in giving up a large piece of their business in order to get money from an outside investor.

My name is Stephen Fairley and as a Small Business Coach, I have helped entrepreneurs and small business owners in more than 35 different industries grow and build their business. Many of my clients originally came to me seeking help on writing their business plan. When I asked them what they really wanted to accomplish, I found there were a lot of myths around their perceptions about what a business plan would do for them. It was almost as if they saw a business plan as a 'magic pill' of

sorts. Eventually, I was able to help many of them see that it's not information that determines success or failure; it's action and accountability. Simply having a lot of information about your target market, services/products, and business development strategies in your business plan is not enough. You must take action and hold yourself accountable for the results.

I wrote this book to help business owners like you think critically about this process in a very different way. Instead of creating a traditional business plan that eventually ends up sitting on the shelf, invest your time in developing a dynamic, solid, well-thought out Strategic Marketing Plan that provides you with the critical steps, marketing strategies, and business development techniques to help you grow your small business.

This book will cover the 6 major areas of creating a Powerful Strategic Marketing Plan:

The Right Attitude:	Why you don't need a traditional business plan
The Right Reasons:	The top 10 reasons why you must have a marketing plan
The Right Plan:	10 easy steps to writing and using your marketing plan
The Right Steps:	What to do now that you have the knowledge to create a marketing plan
The Right Strategies:	7 Strategies to find new clients
The Right Start:	How to create a 12-month marketing calendar

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE: WHY YOU DON'T NEED A TRADITIONAL BUSINESS PLAN

Many people just starting out don't take the time to write a solid, actionable business plan before they officially launch their small business. If they write one at all, it is usually when they realize their first year didn't go really well or just after they come back from a business conference where a presenter talked about all the positive aspects of creating a business plan.

However, I would argue that not developing a business plan is totally contrary to the very foundation of successful small business growth. A core principle of building a business is about identifying where you are, deciding where you want to be, and creating a plan to get there (also known as a GAP Analysis). That's exactly what a business plan does for your company.

A business plan, also known as a marketing plan, is simply a written plan that details:

- what your business does
- who your business helps
- what your goals and objectives are
- the financial, marketing and sales strategies you will use to get there

Don't think of it as a Business Plan—think of it as a Strategic Marketing Plan.

About 80% of any good business plan should be focused on sales and marketing strategies because these are the two areas where most small businesses have the most problem with and the largest reasons why they fail according to the Small Business Administration.

It makes sense to spend most of your time on the part that makes the biggest difference to your success. Throughout this website, the terms "business plans" and "marketing plans" will be used interchangeably, but please understand the I believe the majority of your time should be focused on researching effective sales and marketing strategies and developing creative ways to implement them in your small business.

Don't look at it as an academic exercise—see it as a living document.

To be effective, a marketing plan is something you must refer to on a regular basis, not a long essay you write only to collect dust on your shelf. Your marketing plan is a dynamic document that lights your way when the road becomes dark. It gives you specific action steps to take when you're not sure what to do. It defines your goals and outlines the specific strategies, techniques, and actions you will take to achieve your business goals.

Don't see it as a just one more thing to do—see it as a plan for all the things you MUST DO to succeed.

A solid, well thought out Strategic Marketing Plan becomes the driving force for all your actions and business financial expenditures. It is your personal success plan. It's not just one more thing on your to do list, it must be the first and most important thing to do.

THE RIGHT REASONS: THE TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU MUST HAVE A STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

Do you really, truly need a business or marketing plan to build a successful small business? NO. My answer may surprise you but research from participants in the *Inc 500* fastest growing companies survey (sponsored by *Inc Magazine*) shows that many people have built successful companies without a business or marketing plan.

Anything is possible, but the real question is—Is it probable? **What does having a marketing plan really do for you and your business?**

HERE ARE THE TOP 10 REASONS WHY YOU NEED A MARKETING PLAN:

1. A Marketing Plan Increases Your Chances of Long-Term Business Success.

It is possible to succeed without a marketing plan, but having a solid marketing plan that you can follow will significantly increase your chances for success in your business endeavor. A solid, well thought out plan keeps you from making serious mistakes later than can quickly sink your small business.

2. It Gives You Structure in an Otherwise Unstructured Business.

Part of the appeal for many people in starting their own business is the freedom—no one to tell you what to do.

This can be a great feeling, especially when you know exactly what to do every day, month in and month out, year after year or if you already have so much business you can't keep up. However, most entrepreneurs are new entrepreneurs and don't know exactly what they should be doing on a day-to-day to keep the momentum moving forward.

On the other hand, many small business owners are so overwhelmed with the daily activities that they don't take time to think strategically about how to grow their business.

If this is your first try at building a business or if your business is relatively new or you're struggling to find new customers, you need to create a solid, well thought out marketing plan. Having a solid marketing plan can help give you structure and a context for your everyday activities. In your

marketing plan you will put these daily activities into the context of a larger, more strategic plan of how you are going to grow your business.

3. A Marketing plan Can Keep You on the Right Track.

One of my favorite business quotes is from Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland where the Cheshire cat meets Alice for the first time and responds to her questions of where she should go with the classic reply, "If you don't know where you're going, any path will do."

One of the best reasons to develop a marketing plan is to help you stay on the right track. It is so easy to become distracted by problems that arise, new opportunities that sound great or the daily grind at the office, but don't exactly fit with your long-term goals. A marketing plan is not designed to be unduly constrictive, but to provide you with freedom within defined boundaries, the "boundaries" being your short (3-6 months) and long-term (1 to 3 years) goals and reaching financial independence.

4. A Marketing plan Will Help You Count the Cost of Creating Before You Start Building.

Critical to any marketing plan is an outline of your anticipated expenses, your marketing budget, your sales goals, and a clear path to profitability.

Knowing your financial costs and risks ahead of time can be invaluable in planning out your growth strategy and managing your financial budget. You must have a clear idea of what kinds of costs are associated with starting up a new business in your field, along with realistic expectations of how long it will take to obtain enough clients or sell enough products to cover your overhead and provide some profits.

5. It Can Help You Think Outside the Box.

It's very easy to copy someone else's business model, which is what most people end up doing (consciously or unconsciously) when they don't have an individual marketing plan. There are several potential dangers to copying someone else when it comes to marketing your small business:

- You miss opportunities that are perfect for you and not other people due to your unique experiences, knowledge, background, your location, or surrounding demographics.
- You take advantage of "business opportunities" that are not right for you. Many good people fall into the trap of believing MLM (multi-level marketing also known as network marketing) is an easy way to make money. We have all seen the ads "stay at home and make \$3,000 a

month”. But critical to the success of these and other “business opportunities” is the ability and willingness to be a phenomenal sales person. That’s why according to Entrepreneur Magazine, the overwhelming majority of people who start an MLM “business” drop it within 6 months.

- You make the same mistakes as the person you copy. (Note to Self: If you're going to copy someone else, make darned sure they know what they are talking about and you can independently verify their claims of success). There are hundreds of people out there selling their “secrets to success”—which is usually nothing more than their personal story.
- You stop thinking strategically about growing your business and focus on duplicating someone else’s efforts. Just as people are unique, so is success. Everyone achieves it differently. You have to find out what works for you and do it. You can't do that if you're too focused on copying someone else.
- You are afraid to engage your creativity for fear of “messing up the plan.” One of the keys to small business success is found in the way a particular entrepreneur or business owner creatively approaches a challenge and develops a unique solution. Following someone else’s plan can kill your creativity, which can also kill your business.

6. A Well-written Marketing Plan Will Expose Holes in Your Business Ideas.

Regardless of how advanced your thinking skills are or extensive your experience, you probably can't think of every major challenge you will encounter while building your business over the next few years. Writing down your marketing plan will help you expose the traps that could derail your efforts and create alternative plans. It's easy to overlook areas that you are unclear about or are outside of your expertise. I'll show you how to do that in the SWOT Analysis section.

7. A Marketing Plan Forces You to Become Clear.

A great reason for having a written marketing plan is that it forces you to become clear with your personal and business goals, your target market, your financial goals, and how/when you are going to implement parts of your plan. There is something about the disciplined exercise of writing these down that solidifies them and drives them into reality.

8. It Helps You Create a Vision for What You Want in the Future.

Where do you want to be in 12 months? How about 3 to 5 years? Ultimately, your business will be driven by your vision and the process of

developing that vision is critical to your long-term success. The real value of a marketing plan is not just having it done, it's all the time, energy, and research you put into thinking about your business in a strategic way and then implementing those plans.

9. A Marketing Plan Sets Up Measurable Objectives for You to Evaluate Your Success With.

How will you know if you've had a successful year? Will it depend on how you feel or can you set up measurable objectives to compare your results against? If you fail to set measurable standards, how will you know whether or not your specific efforts were rewarded? How will you determine where to put your future efforts and your marketing dollars if you don't know if a given idea worked? A marketing plan with objective goals can help you ask and answer the right questions when it comes to evaluating your marketing and sales efforts. The answers give you indications as to your next steps.

10. A Marketing Plan Sets You Apart as Being Committed to Your Business.

Let's face it, if you're not willing to spend a few days writing up a solid marketing plan to grow and develop your business, why should anyone take your marketing plans and ideas serious? Do you really have anything better to do than to take some time and write down your plan for how you are going to succeed in your business? Writing up a working marketing plan sets you apart from other would-be entrepreneurs and dreamers.

THE RIGHT PLAN: 10 EASY STEPS TO WRITING AND USING YOUR MARKETING PLAN

If you're still reading this book, there is a good chance you will take the next crucial step and set aside some time to start working on your Strategic Marketing Plan. The whole process will probably take you anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, from start to finish, depending on your time availability and how much energy you have already put into thinking about all the pertinent issues. Much of this time will be spent researching and rethinking your original plans and ideas.

There are many ways to write a marketing or business plan, some of which are more helpful than others. In this section we will use a fictional marketing plan from a small business consulting company to illustrate each of the ten components of a marketing plan (which we will refer to from here on as a marketing plan or Strategic Marketing Plan).

Here are the ten critical components you need to create a solid Strategic Marketing Plan:

1. Executive Summary and Company overview—A one page overview of your marketing plan
2. Services and Products –What your business will offer
3. Target Market –Who will buy your products or services
4. Know Your Competition –Who else is selling your products or services
5. SWOT Analysis—Identify your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
6. Positioning, Competitive Advantage, and Unique Selling Proposition—Why should people buy from you?
7. Marketing Strategies—How will people find you and what will they think about your image?
8. Financial Plan—How will you pay for your expected and unanticipated expenses?
9. Contingency Planning—What if everything goes wrong? What's your “Plan B”?

10. Your Biography—What are your credentials? Why can you build this specific business?

Over the next few pages we will talk about the specific sections you should include in your marketing plan. I strongly encourage you to work along in a notebook or type out your answers on your computer as you read through each section, rather than waiting until a later date to start writing your plan. That way, by the time you finish going through this website, you will already have created the foundation of your marketing plan.

1. Executive Summary and Company Overview

An Executive Summary is a one page overview of your entire company designed so that a person totally unfamiliar with your business can easily and quickly know exactly: what you offer, who is your customer or client, and how you can solve their problem. It should be **the last part you write** in your Marketing Plan because most of the information you need to put in it comes from the other sections. When people or books talk about a “1 page marketing plan” this is what they are referring to. Think of it as a 10,000 foot overview—you can see the big picture, but few details.

The common parts of an Executive Summary are:

- the company mission statement
- goals & objectives
- a brief description of: services offered, target market, and marketing strategies.

Company Mission Statement: include a short mission statement of 50 words or so that succinctly states why your company exists, what it will provide, and to whom it will provide it.

Let's use the example of a small business consulting company for purposes of our example. **Please note, this is a FICTITIOUS EXAMPLE. ALL OF THE FACTS, FIGURES, AND DATA ARE MADE UP AND ONLY FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES.**

Northern Consulting Group is a premier business consulting firm that helps small business owners and entrepreneurs experience significant increases their personal performance, the productivity of their people, and the profits from their company.

Company Objectives: describe the top three to five goals and objectives you have for your company. For example,

- To experience at least a 50% increase in annual revenues year over year.
- To make more than \$1 million annually just from my business coaching practice.
- To invest at least 50% of my time in marketing-related activities until I am able to build up a 6 month waiting list.

Services and Products offered: list the full range of services and products you will provide. For example:

Northern Consulting Group will offer: business consulting, strategic business development, and marketing analysis.

Target market: provide as much detail as possible about your top target markets.

Some of the basic information should include:

Northern Consulting Group will target:

- *Entrepreneurs & New Business Start ups: \$100,000 to \$5 million in revenues and 1 to 20 employees, including the owner*
- *Small Business Owners: \$5 million to \$20 million in revenues and 20 to 100 employees, privately or family owned*
- *Professional Service Providers: such as consultants, psychologists, doctors, therapists, lawyers, accountants, and other service firms who have 1 to 20 employees and \$200,000 to \$5 million in revenues*

2. Target Market

If the truth is told, this is probably THE MOST IMPORTANT SECTION of your marketing plan. You can have the highest quality service, the cheapest product with the most features, but if cannot clearly identify who your “ideal target market”—the perfect person/company for your product/service—you will never build a successful business!

It is virtually impossible to spend too much time or energy learning about who your ideal target market is. You want to discover everything you can about them because this can give you the extra edge you need to rapidly attract paying customers and win out over your competitors.

You may have more than one ideal target market for your product or service. If so, you should complete this for each of them, but try to limit

yourself to no more than 1 or 2 target markets because more than that can quickly become overwhelming.

Here are some of the more important areas to focus on (some of these are more or less important depending on your particular product or service).

- Age
- Gender
- Location
- Income level
- Socioeconomic status
- Education
- Industry
- Profession
- Title
- Position in company
- Life stage
- Personal interests
- Motivational methods
- Major personal and professional challenges
- All their points of pain
- Buying habits (do they buy in the spring or the fall; how long do they take to make a decision, etc)
- Any other distinguishing characteristics about them

The point is to create a comprehensive profile of everything you know about your markets because the more you know about your markets the easier it is to identify them and market to them.

If you need more detailed information, you may find the **Target Market Inventory** very useful. It is a comprehensive questionnaire covering all the major areas you need to consider when creating a profile of your ideal target market.

Spend a lot of time defining and describing your target market because 2 of the biggest mistakes entrepreneurs and small business owners make have to do with this area.

Mistake 1: Targeting a market that is too big.

We all have a limited amount of time, energy, and resources. You must focus all 3 of these in order to obtain the highest possible return on investment (ROI) for your limited time, energy and resources.

I recently started coaching the owner of a small manufacturing company based here in Chicago. When I asked him to identify his target market, he replied, “Small business owners in Chicago.” Evidently, he didn’t realize there are over 360,000 small businesses here in Chicago. No entrepreneur could possibly reach all 360,000 small businesses. Even if he had enough money to launch several major marketing campaigns (which he didn’t), he still wouldn’t have enough time and energy to effectively follow up with them all. In fact, I would argue that he shouldn’t even try. Instead I coached him around ways he could more clearly identify his ideal target market and then create effective strategies to reach them.

The point here is that to be successful in business, you must **target a market small enough for you to start focusing on, but large enough so that you have plenty of room to grow without having to significantly changing all your marketing strategies.**

Mistake 2: Targeting the wrong market.

The second big mistake a small business can make is to target the wrong market. At a bare minimum, every person who buys from you must meet at least these 3 criteria:

They must **NEED** you—This is something internal. You cannot create the need, either they want your product or they don’t (there are ways you can tap into it using powerful marketing messages)

They must **WANT** you—This is something you can create, if they already have the need.

They must be able to **AFFORD** you—Regardless of how much someone needs and wants you, if they cannot afford you then they are not a good customer for you.

You need to clearly identify a group of people and/or companies that meet all 3 of these criteria in order to find your ideal target market.

3. Products and Services

Describe which products and/or services you will offer and to whom you will offer them.

Explain why you are offering that particular service to that specific market. For example, perhaps you offer career planning to mid-level executives, creative workshops to aspiring authors, computer support and network administration to local small businesses, or team building experiences to the partners at professional service firms.

Answer the question, “Why does this specific market(s) need my particular product or service?”

List as many benefits your services and products will provide to your target market. You will use these benefits over and over again in your marketing efforts so spend a good amount of time on this section.

Remember, benefits are different from features. A feature is something your product does (a software program for writing marketing plans); a benefit is the end result or value your product/service gives (helps you write your marketing plan quickly so you can start implementing it). Many entrepreneurs and small business owners spend way too much time expounding on the features of their products & services instead of exalting the benefits it provides.

**“People don’t buy features. They buy benefits.
People don’t buy promises; they buy the value you provide.
And people don’t buy claims of success; they buy the results they
achieve.”
--Stephen Fairley**

Using the example of our business consulting company, some of the benefits to business owners and entrepreneurs may include:

- *Enhanced business performance in times of change and transition*
- *Experience significant increases in employee motivation and productivity*
- *Understand the difference between building a company and having a job*
- *Decreasing conflict between managing partners*
- *Discovering how to use your competitive edge for maximum impact*
- *Achieve your personal and professional goals faster*
- *Move from a life of success to significance*
- *Stop tolerating the things in life that keep you down*
- *Identify and overcome the obstacles to achieving business success*
- *Create a business environment that produces better results faster with fewer resources*

Write down the products & services you want to offer, which target market you will offer each of your products or services to, and why that specific market needs your particular product/service. Then write down the specific benefits, results, and value each product/service will bring to each target market.

4. Know Your Competition

Every company, product, and service has competition and regardless of how unique you believe your services or products are there are many other people and companies doing exactly what you do and offering exactly what you offer. With the expanding role of globalization in our world and the ease of which services and products can be found through the internet, you need to do your research to find out:

- Name of company and key executives
- Who some of their major accounts/clients are
- Who your direct and indirect competitors are
- What they offer
- What kind of fees they charge and any “hidden” costs
- How do they price their products/services (percent over cost, by the hour, a percentage of revenues)
- How they package it
- How their business has been going in the last six to twelve months
- If they have an up sell (or back end product)
- If they use any market distribution channels (affiliate programs, chain stores, strategic partners)
- Their reputation in the marketplace among prospects and industry leaders
- Estimated amount of market share (what percent of the total market buys from them)
- Estimated amount of annual revenues
- What the press & media says about them (research articles written about them, interviews with their executives)
- What kind of marketing avenues they use (direct mail, internet websites, direct sales force, networking events, email, print media, radio, infomercials, TV ads)
- How to differentiate yourself from competitors when talking to prospects
- The strengths and weaknesses of their product, service, people, leaders, and company
- The 10 best reasons why prospects should buy from you instead of them

You should educate everyone in your business about your competitors and why people should buy from you instead of your competitors.

It is also important to find out who your ideal prospects believe to be your direct competitors because they may have an entirely different perspective than you do.

Even though this looks like a lot of work you can do a lot of the research through the internet and by making phone calls.

Take our example:

Northern Consulting Group, a business consulting company practicing in Chicago does business consulting and strategic business development for entrepreneurs and small business owners.

The most obvious competitors are other Business Consultants, but they have many other competitors including:

- *personal coaches who work with businesses and professionals*
- *industrial/organizational psychologists*
- *organizational development consultants*
- *marketing consulting firms, PR agencies, and some small media companies*
- *workshops and seminars put on by major companies (e.g., Linkage, Skill Path, Dale Carnegie, Stephen Covey, Anthony Robbins, and the American Management Association)*
- *local graduate business programs with courses on business development skills, small business marketing, and sales skills*
- *a stagnant economy because companies cut back on their budgets during these times*
- *best selling books and tapes on business coaching, and strategic business development*
- *regional and national conferences on business development, marketing strategies, and small business marketing solutions*

A competitor is anyone or anything a prospect can or will spend money on that they perceive will achieve the same or similar results and benefits that you state your services provide.

Reread that carefully, because who your competition is depends on **your client's perspective, not yours.**

You do not need to know every one of your competitors, nor do you need to know everything about them. You do need to know who the key players

are in your area, which ones target your exact market, the one who are the most aggressive in their sales and marketing efforts, and the best of the best.

How do you find out all this information about your competitors?

Here are three simple ways to do a competitive analysis:

1. Use the power of the internet. Many companies have websites; read through every page and take notes. Use your favorite search engine to track down articles they have written, stories about their key executives, or their company history.

2. Send for some information. Call them up as a prospect, ask their sales department several key questions, and request they mail you some information about their products, programs, or services.

3. Visit their store (if they have one). If you don't feel comfortable doing that send one of your friends or employees in. Ask lots of questions and listen carefully to their answers. What are they telling people about you, your service/product, and your company? If they don't have a storefront, call them up on the phone and ask questions like an interested prospect.

5. Conduct a SWOT Analysis

When writing a marketing plan or a marketing plan you need to conduct a SWOT analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Look at your business venture as objectively as possible to determine what strengths you have, the weaknesses you need to be aware of, the opportunities you need to explore, and the potential threats to your plan.

To give you a better idea, below is a SWOT analysis based on our example of a Chicago-based small business coaching company called True North.

Strengths: Northern Consulting Group has partners who have strong skill sets in small business development, sales and revenue generation, and in the psychology of marketing. Our extensive business and sales experience ensures that clients will be provided with access to some of the best business techniques and sales & marketing strategies available today. We are highly skilled in helping small business owners in critical areas such as business growth & development, people management

skills, work-life balance, strategic planning, teamwork, motivation, and achieving goals.

Weaknesses: Northern Consulting Group has 2 primary weaknesses:

- Long sales cycle—in a down economy, small business owners become overly cautious and risk-adverse. This significantly increases the sales cycle as they consider every possible option, including the option of doing nothing and maintaining the status quo. This increases the sales and decision making process from a usual 30-60 days to more in the area of 90 to 120 days. It also increases the number of times TLC must initiate contact with the small business owner before they make the final decision. This impedes cash flow and drains much needed people resources for targeting new prospects.*
- Finding ideal clients—even though there are a great number of small businesses in the Chicago area, they are often isolated and unconnected, making them difficult to find. After identifying people in our target market, we must know how to quickly distinguish suspects (“tire kickers”) from real prospects (“car buyers”), who need, want, and can afford our services.*

Opportunities: While there are several hundred consultants and coaches already in the Chicago market, there are significantly fewer who specialize in small business consulting. Furthermore, there are even fewer who aggressively market their services. In spite of all the positive press and growing number of consultants, most small business in Chicago still lack awareness of the power of business consulting, which can be both a positive and a negative—a positive in the sense that they have not been tainted by a bad experience, and a negative in the sense that it always takes a longer time to sell the service if you have to educate your prospects about what you do and how it can help, before you try to sell them on investing in your consulting services.

Threats: It is estimated the number of consultants and coaches entering the field is doubling about every year. The barriers to entry are currently minimal. Also, because of poor economic conditions, many other types of consultants are moving into the field, including: human resource consulting firms, traditional management consultancies, psychologists, executive recruiting firms, organizational development companies, law firms, accounting agencies, as well as a growing number of personal coaches.

Most of these people do not have any training or real experience with business consulting. We must clearly and concisely distinguish Northern Consulting Group from all of these competitors. We must be very intentional in educating our clients about those differences and what they will receive from us versus our competition.

6. Positioning, Competitive Advantage, and Unique Selling Proposition

Using the information, research, and analysis you did for the Know Your Competition and SWOT sections, outline how you will position yourself and your services. Here are some good questions to get you started:

- In light of what I know about my competitors and my target market(s), what are the top five to ten reasons why someone should buy from me versus any other company?
- How can I take advantage of my competitor's weaknesses?
- Why am I the best and only person for the job?
- What skills, abilities, and experiences does my product offer clients/people that they can't receive elsewhere?
- How can I emphasize the value I bring to the table?
- What do I want to be known for, having the lowest price, the most selection, or the highest quality? (Most products or services can only fully take advantage of 2 out of 3 of these)
- What are my competitors known for?
- How can I find, retain, and motivate the best people possible that can help me succeed?

7. Marketing Strategies

Here is where you list all the different marketing techniques and strategies you will use to identify prospects and land new clients. Here are a few common strategies our company example Northern Consulting Group could use in their marketing plan:

- *Referrals from former and current clients*
- *Referrals from Strategic Referral Partners (SRPs)*
- *Speaking about a topic that interests and informs your target market (how to implement high impact marketing on a low impact budget, how to motivate employees without using money, achieving freedom and work-life balance, etc)*
- *Publishing articles in newspapers, magazines, and trade journals that my target audience would read*
- *Internet strategies (website, e-zine)*

- *Direct sales efforts (sales letters, cold calling, postcards, direct mail letters)*

Let's briefly outline a sample marketing plan for increasing your referrals from Strategic Referral Partners (SRPs).

Here are the steps to creating referrals from SRPs:

- Identify the industries, fields, professions, and positions that are in a place where they could refer prospects and their clients to you.
- Create an initial list of people who meet the first criteria.
- Write a letter to each person that briefly introduces yourself, your services, and request a face to face meeting with them to talk about a potential strategic partnership.
- Follow up each letter with a phone call and request an hour of their time to talk about possible mutual referral situations.
- Go to the meeting and convince them you can help their clients and want to develop a mutually beneficial business relationship with them. Do not ask them to "sell" your coaching services. Be clear that the only thing you want is an introduction to their clients so that you can offer them a free coaching session.
- Offer the SRP a reward, such as free consulting or a referral fee for every person they refer to you.
- Follow up with them on a regular basis (every four to six weeks) with an email, newspaper clipping, newsletter, or phone call to see how things are going and if you can be of service to them.
- Do everything you can to refer people to them. This has to be a win-win-win situation for it to work.

Obviously, this is an oversimplification, but you get the picture. After listing all the different marketing strategies you will use, the next step is to create a 12 month chart that outlines when you will use each strategy.

8. Financial Plan

This is often the scariest part of writing a marketing plan. One of the biggest reasons for small business failure is lack of available funding to keep it going. This is certainly the case for many new start-ups. The financial section of your marketing plan should include:

- Your currently available funds (cash in hand for expenses)
- A list of your current monthly sales revenues for every category (individual clients, paid speaking engagements, training programs, product sales, etc)

- A 12 month timetable in which you estimate how much revenue you will bring in per client per month (assuming you will not keep every client forever)
- A forecast of new sales —how many new sales do you anticipate per month and at what rate
- A comprehensive list of all marketing activities and anticipated expense of each one
- A simple profit and loss statement (P&L) in which you subtract your anticipated expenses from your anticipated revenues. It gives you a visual picture of how much you need to sell in order to run your company, how much money will be spent in overhead and marketing costs and when you will make a profit. It also allows you to run different scenarios (best case, worst case, average case, minimum sales case, etc), which can help in determining your expenditures.

If you take the time to carefully lay out your financial plan, anticipated expenses, and current revenue generation, these numbers should give you a pretty good idea of how much money you need to have on hand in order to properly fund your first year or two of business.

Often the easiest ways to write up and keep track of these financial charts is by using Excel or another spreadsheet program, but the most important part is the actual process of “running the numbers” rather than the program you use to calculate the numbers.

9. Contingency Planning

This is a difficult section for many people to write because you don't want to think about all the things that could go wrong. Most people are overly positive when starting up a business and that's great because you will encounter enough tough times without being cynical and pessimistic when starting out.

However, the time you spend on thinking through the major potential stumbling blocks and what you will do if you encounter any of them is well spent. Some of the more common obstacles to building and sustaining a small business include:

Lack of funding—Not having enough cash on hand to sustain your business while trying to grow it. The results are not being able to actively market your services, pay yourself a salary, or even an inability to pay your bills. Do you have a solid idea of how much money it will take to launch and sustain your business over the first or next year or two? What are you really willing to do to make this business go? Are you really

serious about it or are you just “playing around”? Do you have enough in savings to maintain your current lifestyle for at least 6-12 months while you focus on building your business? To what extent are you willing to go to make this business venture successful? Will you take out a 2nd mortgage, max out your credit cards, take out a personal or business loan, seek out money from friends, family members, an angel investor or take on a wealthy business partner? Each of these options needs to be carefully considered.

An economic downturn—Many people and businesses have experienced financial struggles over the past few years and many of their prospects have significantly cut back on expenditures. Do you have a clear idea of how an economic downturn will effect your product or service offering and what you will do to combat this?

Unable to secure many Strategic Referral Partners (SRPs)—SRPs, also known as marketing distribution channels, can be the lifeblood of your new company, but it may be difficult to convince them to refer to you when you're just starting out. In addition, you typically have to spend a lot of time meeting with various SRPs before you find one that actually delivers on their promised referrals.

Not meeting your sales goals which leads to slow or no new revenue growth—In order to cover your marketing and cost of living expenses you need to be able to set and meet sales goals.

- What are the major problems (local, national, global, competitive, etc) that could keep your particular business from being successful?
- What will you do if your traditional sales and marketing efforts meet with little or no results?
- What will you do differently when your well-laid out plan doesn't work perfectly or when your marketing campaign takes 3x longer to produce results than you had planned for and costs 4x as much as originally budgeted?
- Do you have emergency funds available to help you keep your doors open during slowdowns and slumps?
- How will you modify your product/service to meet the every changing demands of your consumers/clients and their changing demographics?
- Is your business too dependent on the local economy or can you expand it to service a larger area?
- What will you do if you don't have enough income to pay your employees, yourself or your sales people?
- How closely can you watch your new product/client sales?

- How much business/many prospects do you have in the pipeline at any given time?
- What is your prospect to customer conversion ratio?
- Do you have a trust business advisor or business coach you can turn to for advice and strategic business development ideas?

In your contingency plan, you need to account for what you will do if any or (God forbid) ALL of these cases arise. What measures will you take? All of these questions are important to plan for in case they occur.

For each major problem you can identify, briefly outline how you will recognize it and the specific steps you will take to overcome it if it should occur.

10. Your executive biography

Talk about your background focusing on the issues and experiences you believe will be important to your prospective clients and what experience makes you the right person to start/run your business. Remember, most people work with you not just because of your product or service, but also because of your interpersonal style, your experiences, background, and what you stand for so be wise and honest about what you say and don't say in your executive biography.

SUMMARY

So far we have focused on how to significantly increase your chances of building a successful business by developing a Strategic Marketing Plan. Now you have three questions you need to consider:

- Will you follow through and write your Marketing plan?
- When will you complete it?
- If you do, how will you use it to guide and direct your company?

Ultimately, the long-term success of your business depends on your ability to think strategically about your product or service, uniquely position your company to your prospects, identify ideal target market, and consistently attract prospects in a cost efficient manner.

In the next section, we will walk through the specific steps you need to take in order to start creating your Strategic Marketing Plan.

THE RIGHT STEPS: WHAT TO DO NOW THAT YOU HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE TO CREATE A MARKETING PLAN

Step 1: Establish a financial budget: How much can you spend every month? What are the different marketing strategies going to cost you? You need to include costs so that you can plan ahead and set aside the necessary funds to drive your marketing efforts. This will determine what kind of methods you can use. If you haven't done so already, take a couple hours and create a financial budget for your marketing plan.

Step 2: Select your strategies: In order to select the most effective marketing strategies you must first clearly define your Ideal Target Market—the person or company who is most likely to buy from you initially, repeatedly and at the highest profit margin. If you have more than one then list both of them (most small businesses can't adequately service more than 2 or 3). Each target market requires different strategies. I have listed the 7 basic categories you can use to find new clients along with several dozen strategies for each of the major areas in the next section.

Next, describe the benefits, results, and value of your product or service and your unique competitive advantage—why should your prospect buy from you? Below is a list of just some of the strategies you can use. Look for ones that play to your strengths, not your weaknesses, but don't ignore ones just because they are outside of your comfort zone

For example, let's say you're a professional service provider and you decide your business would be best served by using 5 marketing strategies:

- a monthly postcard mailer to your list of 2000 decision makers for the next 24 months
- follow up phone calls to your mailing list
- giving 4 presentations to networking groups who service your target market
- building a consistent client referral system where 25% of your clients refer at least 1 new client every year
- creating relationships with 20 different channel partners who already work with your target market

Step 3: Identify the specific steps: Take each marketing strategy and break it down into individual steps. So with our example, if you want to send out a monthly postcard mailer you would have to write the copy, have the postcard designed, printed, and mailed out every month and

since you're a smart business owner, you don't have 1 postcard developed, you have 2 with 2 different marketing messages on them so that you can test the results and see if one's better.

You also write down how many follow up phone calls you will make every week to your prospect list. If you make 170 phone calls a month or 43 calls a week you will make it through your entire list in 1 year, but this doesn't take into account that it takes an average of 6 attempts before you actually reach your intended prospect. You will also need time to write up a few talking points for when you do get them on the phone.

Step 4: Create the metrics: How will you know if your strategies are working? How will you measure success? Quantify your efforts and results whenever possible (send out 20 letters per week, call 10 people a day). What are your costs, projected income from these efforts and how will you measure success? How will you measure the success of your marketing plan in terms of services and products sold? How much money, or what kind of ROI do you want to receive from your marketing efforts?

Step 4: Outline the time frame: When will you implement these strategies? A 12-month calendar can be helpful for keeping track of when you will do each activity step-by-step. So, following our example, write down on your marketing calendar when you want to have the postcard copy finished, when you want the design and printing done by and the specific dates you will mail them out every month. Write down the date when you'll have the talking points done and when you'll start making the phone calls. List how many calls you will make each week.

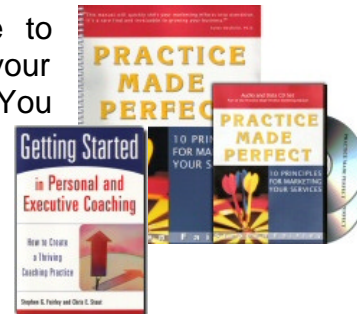
Step 5: Write down the game plan: Put all of this into writing. I recommend a calendar you can hang on your wall to track your efforts. As you go through each marketing strategy write down the specific steps you need to take to reach your goal and mark down the dates when you will finish that step by.

This becomes your marketing calendar and let's you know exactly what you need to do on a week to week basis to grow your business. Most successful business owners set aside 10 to 20% of their time every week to focus on marketing.

Step 6: Create accountability: Find someone to hold you accountable, perhaps a business coach or trusted advisor.

THE RIGHT STRATEGIES: 7 STRATEGIES FOR FINDING NEW CLIENTS

As you develop your marketing plan, be sure to integrate at least 3 or 4 of these 7 strategies into your plan. These are provided for your consideration. You can find many more strategies in Stephen's books *Getting Started in Personal and Executive Coaching* and *Practice Made Perfect: 10 Principles for Marketing Your Services*.



Strategy 1. Referrals

Referrals are the holy grail of business—everyone wants them. The problem is that most businesses don't have a solid plan to find them and nurture them. The easiest way to build a business is by referrals. Identify who you want to target and develop a plan to talk with them on a consistent basis. This is a longer term strategy (3-6 months).

Strategy 2. Presentations and Speaking

Public presentations, workshops, professional seminars, speaking for associations, or serving on a panel as an expert can be a phenomenal way to land new business. In fact, depending on your target market and specific product or service, it is often the 2nd most effective way to land new business other than referrals and there are some professionals who have become so good at speaking that it has become their #1 way of finding new customers. You must identify what groups your ITM attend and start targeting them for your presentations.

Strategy 3. Direct Communication

This can be in the form of direct marketing letters, telemarketing, sales calls, 1-on-1 sales presentations, newsletters, ezines, personal letters, and fax and email campaigns. It generally has to do with written or spoken marketing efforts to get prospects to take action by either: contacting you, requesting information from you, setting up an appointment with you, or buying something from you. This strategy and advertising typically requires the most money to implement.

Strategy 4. Networking:

At trade association meetings, networking groups, professional associations, chambers of commerce, or formal lead groups. Networking

works well for some people and not at all for others. I have seen some people build their entire business from networking and others who have wasted months of diligent effort without a single sale to show for it. You need to be very deliberate about organizations you join and have a clear goal for your networking efforts.

Strategy 5. Public Relations

As a marketing strategy can take the form of writing articles or columns for local newspapers, trade magazines, professional journals, offering an advice column, being a content expert for the media; television, radio or newspaper interviews, writing a press release, or having stories published about your clients and how you helped them.

Public relations can be great for building credibility and brand awareness, but generally does not result in immediate sales, unless you're selling a low end product, like a book. The major benefit of PR is that it positions you a recognized expert and creates awareness of your product or service. This is a long-term strategy (6-12 months).

Strategy 6. Promotional Events

Generally, this strategy revolves around participating in trade shows, sponsoring a local event, having an open house, or offering “Free” seminars or teleclasses—which are live seminars held over a telephone bridge line.

Promotional events can be useful in lifting your visibility among your prospects and for building your database, but sometimes cost you a lot more in terms of time and money than they are worth. Plus, it's often hard to measure the success of the event.

Strategy 7. Advertising

Usually advertising is described as mass market media like radio and TV ads, newspaper classifieds or magazine ads, yellow pages, flyers and websites.

This is the area most people incorrectly identify synonymously as marketing, but is really just one of the forms marketing and is usually the least effective for a small business, especially any kind of professional service business. This strategy is not recommended unless you have a large marketing budget.

SAMPLE STRATEGIES TO SELECT FROM

As you market and sell your product or services in these 7 different ways, you will find that buyers go through a similar process when making a buying decision. This is often referred to as the “Sales Cycle.” For each stage in the cycle, you need to have different marketing activities to keep likely prospects moving through the sales cycle. In the sales cycle for my coaching and consulting business, I have found prospects typically move from lead generation, to first contact events, to prospect qualification, to an individual consultation, to purchasing a product or service from me, and finally to buying a more expensive product or service. Each industry is usually a little different. Start analyzing the different steps your prospects make as they enter your sales cycle.

Lead Generation

Strategies: develop a list of potential strategic referral sources and meet with them to introduce yourself & your services; ask your clients directly for referrals; make warm calls into your database; build a bigger database; create direct mail, email or fax campaigns; develop a list of possible organizations to speak to; speak to more organizations and associations; attend more networking events; start an ezine; build a website; pass out your brochure; get interviewed on radio, TV or in your local newspaper; write an article; offer a free teleclass; put on a seminar; take out an ad in a newspaper, newsletter or a trade journal; develop and use more powerful audio logos. Special Reports, Free Teleclasses, Direct Mailings, go to networking events, Internet Marketing Strategies, Public Events, PR Efforts, press releases.

Strategies for Following up after the Presentation: don't forget to follow up with a thank you letter or email; be sure to end every presentation with action steps—what each party agrees to do as next steps; have a process for writing winning proposals; immediately set a reminder to yourself to contact the hot prospect in a timely manner.

Contact Events, Teleclass, and Other

Strategies for Presenting to Prospects: give presentations, workshops and public seminars (either low cost or free), offer low cost or free teleclasses as an introduction to what you do; have a low cost product sale—special report, white paper; e-book; develop strategies for overcoming common obstacles people give for not taking time to listen to your pitch; strengthen your phone skills; develop better phone scripts;

learn to recognize “buy questions”; be prepared to ask for the sale at the end of the presentation; take a presentation skills seminar; focus on benefits and results more than services and features; work harder at identifying your target’s points of pain and using them clearly and consistently to demonstrate the value of your services; become more fluent at speaking their language; develop a list of critical questions to ask prospects you present to; don’t talk as much—listen more.

Prospect Qualification

Strategies for Qualifying Prospects: Have people fill out an inventory or questionnaire, offer them a product sale or up sell them from an existing smaller sale; fill out an Intake Form for a consultation; don’t give them something without having them give you something first (a small sign of commitment).

Individual Consultation

Give prospects a 30-90 minute consultation, conduct a Needs Analysis, present them with a Formal Proposal if appropriate, they can choose one of your standard programs.

Strategies for Making the Sale: work on selling benefits and results, not services and features; don’t be afraid to ask outright for the business; look them directly in the eye when discussing prices; be sure you are focusing on benefits and results and alleviating their pain; polish your pitch; keep track of your conversion rate (how many times you present to prospects versus the percentage who actually become clients); work harder at disqualifying people who are merely time wasters and not genuinely interested in buying your services; only present to people or organizations who need, want and can afford your services; write down answers to common objections and memorize your replies; be sure to end each conversation with next steps for both parties and a timeline when appropriate.

Paid Product or Service

Offer them your products or other people’s products, become a distributor of assessments, create standard training programs

Up sell Product or Service

Always have an up sell—more coaching, advanced products (bundle your products for bigger sales), another training or coaching program, think in terms of levels and lengths (3 month programs, 6 months, 12 months, 2 year programs)

THE RIGHT START: HOW TO CREATE A 12-MONTH STRATEGIC MARKETING CALENDAR

The next few pages are an illustration of how you could lay out a 12 month marketing plan. For each month the activities include a variety of marketing strategies like: direct mail efforts, networking events, database contact, promotional email campaigns, presentations, trade shows, follow up sales phone calls, warm calls into the database, and press releases. Each of the activities and the follow up contacts have been color coded for easy understanding.

As you look over the 3 month example, notice how the different activities are staggered for maximum effect and how each major event (like the tradeshow or presentation) is quickly followed up by phone calls or emails to keep the momentum moving in the right direction. Notice also how the direct mail outs are timed in coordination with the follow up phone calls and the monthly ezines. The emails campaigns are designed to fall on different days so you can eventually track the open and conversion rates and find out which day of the week produces better results for your various promotions. The key to remember is to keep in touch with your prospects every 2-3 weeks and to create a powerful combination of individual and electronic 'touches.'

Microsoft Outlook can be very helpful in setting this process up, but any calendar function will suffice. I recommend you start your marketing plan by laying out the overall strategies you want to use and can afford, break each one down step-by-step, determine the dates you will have each step done by, and then write each step down on your marketing calendar.

It may be helpful to print this off your calendar two or three months at a time and hang it in a prominent place in your office. This can help you stay on track when planning out your week because it provides you with specific weekly action steps you agreed to take to build your business.

These 3 months are just for illustrative purposes. Examine them closely to see how each event is followed up immediately with some type of correspondence, either by email, direct mail, or phone calls. The key here is consistency and frequency. Use them as a model when you create your 12-month Strategic Marketing Plan.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
February 28	March 1	2 Put labels on Postcards	3	4 Database 1 Mail out 1000 postcards	5
					6
7	8 MARCH EZINE	9 Start Calls to Database 1--100 Names Per Day	10	11 NETWORKING EVENT 1	12
					13
14 Follow Up Calls to Networking 1 Email for Product 1	15 Press Release	16	17 Saint Patrick's Day (United States)	18 Continue Calling Database	19
					20
21	22 NETWORKING EVENT 2	23 Continue Calling Database Follow Up Calls to Networking 2	24	25	26
					27 Easter Day (United States)
28 Email for Product 2	29 Prepare for Trade Show	30	31 INDUSTRY TRADE SHOW	April 1	2
					3

MARCH MARKETING CALENDAR

- March 2** As part of your direct mail campaign to your company database, the first step is to have the postcards created and printed. The next step is to put the labels on them.
- March 4** Mail out the 1000 postcards to your Database 1
- March 8** Send out your monthly ezine to subscribers
- March 9, 10** Start calling into Database 1 that you sent the postcards to. Make around 100 calls per day.
- March 11** Attend Networking Event 1
- March 14, 15** Make all follow up calls to people you met at Networking Event 1
Send out email 1 promoting Product/Service 1
- March 15** Send out Press Release about your participation in the upcoming trade show at end of March
- March 16-18** Continue calling into Database 1
- March 22** Attend Networking Event 2
- March 23, 24** Make all follow up calls to people you met at Networking Event 2
- March 23-25** Continue calling into Database 1
- March 28** Send out email promoting Product/Service 2
- March 29** Prepare for upcoming trade show
- March 31-Apr 1** Attend Trade Show

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
March 28 Email for Product 2	29 Prepare for Trade Show	30	31 INDUSTRY TRADE SHOW	April 1	2
					3
4 Add Names to Database Press Release	5 APRIL EZINE	6 Follow up Email 1	7	8	9
					10
11 Email for Product 3	12 Follow up Email 2	13 Put labels on Postcards	14	15 Database 2 Mail out 1000 more postcards Tax Day (United States)	16
					17
18	19 PRESENTATION	20 Start Calls to Database 2--100 Names Per Day Follow up Email 3	21 Follow Up Email 1	22 NETWORKING EVENT 3	23
					24
25 Follow Up Calls to Networking 3 Follow Up Email 2	26 Email 2 For Product 1	27	28 Follow up Email 4	29	30
					May 1

APRIL MARKETING CALENDAR

- April 1** Attend trade show
- April 4** Add trade show names to your database for follow up
Send out a press release about your participation in the trade show or to position your product/service
- April 5** Send out monthly ezine
- April 6** Send out follow up Email 1 to people from the trade show
- April 11** Send out email 1 promoting Product/Service 3
- April 12** Send out follow up Email 2 to people from the trade show
- April 13** As part of your direct mail campaign to your company database, the first step is to have the postcards created & printed. Next, put the labels on them.
- April 15** Mail out the 1000 postcards to your Database 2
- April 19** Make a presentation to a group of your prospects
- April 20** Send out follow up Email 3 to people from the trade show
- April 20-21** Start calling into Database 2 that you sent the postcards to. 100 calls per day.
- April 21** Send out follow up Email 1 to people who attended your presentation
- April 22** Attend Networking Event 3
- April 25** Send out follow up Email 2 to people who attended your presentation
- April 25-26** Make all your follow up calls to people you met at Networking Event 3
- April 26** Send out Email 2 promoting Product/Service 1
- April 27-29** Start calling into Database 2 that you sent the postcards to. 100 calls per day.
- April 28** Send out follow up Email 4 to people from the trade show

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat/Sun
May 2 Follow Up Email 3	3 MAY EZINE	4	5	6	7
			Continue Calling Database 2		8 Mother's Day (United States)
9 Follow Up Email 4	10 Email 2 for Product 2	11	12	13 Follow up Email 5	14
					15
16	17	18 Put labels on Postcards	19 NETWORKING EVENT 4	20 Database 3 Mail out 1000 more postcards	21
					22
23 Follow Up Calls to Networking 4	24 Email 2 for Product 3	25	26	27	28
		Start Calls to Database 3--100 Names Per Day			29
30 Memorial Day (United States)	31	June 1	2	3	4
		Continue Calling Database 3			5

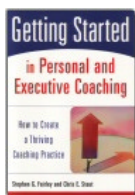
MAY MARKETING CALENDAR

- May 2** Send out follow up Email 3 to people who attended your presentation on April 19
- May 3** Send out monthly ezine
- May 4-6** Continue calling into Database 2
- May 9** Send out follow up Email 4 to people who attended your presentation on April 19
- May 10** Send out Email 2 promoting Product/Service 2
- May 13** Send out follow up Email 5 to people you met at the April tradeshow
- May 18** Put labels on postcards for mail out
- May 19** Attend Networking Event 4
- May 20** Mail out 1000 postcards to Database 3
- May 23-24** Make follow up phone calls to everyone you met at Networking Event 4
- May 24** Send out Email 2 promoting Product/Service 3
- May 25-26** Start making phone calls into Database 3
- June 1-3** Continue calling into Database 3

Here are some other Action Steps you can take:

1. Set a goal for yourself to complete your marketing plan by a particular date.
2. Write down your business goals. Make them specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timed (SMART Goals).
3. Find someone to hold you accountable for reaching your business goals. Perhaps a mentor, business colleague, or a business coach, but not your significant other.
4. Revisit your business goals and marketing plan at least 4 times a year to verify that you are on track and to help you focus on next steps.

Recommended Resources:



1. Recommended books: Stephen Fairley, named “America’s Top Marketing Coach” by CoachVille in 2004, has written two books:
 - ***Practice Made Perfect: 10 Principles for Marketing Your Services***, a training manual designed to help professionals implement high impact marketing on a low impact budget.
 - ***Getting Started in Personal and Executive Coaching*** (2003), the #1 bestselling book in the field of professional coaching, is based on his research findings from a nationwide survey of more than 300 professional coaches and consultants.
2. The Business Building Center is a membership site that gives you access to a proven marketing system, dozens of business building resources, a member’s forum, and opportunities to interact with masterful coaches who have created six and seven figure coaching & consulting practices. If you’re not already a member of the Business Building Center, visit www.BusinessBuildingCenter.com for more information.
3. Action Groups are a part of the Business Building Center for coaches and consultants who want to rapidly implement a proven, step-by-step sales and marketing system. These groups have been used by thousands of coaches all over the world to build the business of their dreams. You can find out more about these Action Groups at www.BusinessBuildingCenter.com

