**Annual Marketing Communications Plan Template**

This annual marketing communications plan template is designed to help you map out how your business is going to effectively communicate with your target audience, and meet your marketing communications and business objectives.

1. **Purpose**

The ‘Purpose’ is similar to an executive summary. It can be useful to act as a quick reference for your business to remind you why you have developed your marketing communications plan, and what you hope to achieve from it.

It doesn’t need to be detailed – a couple of summary paragraphs or a set of bullet points can suffice.

1. **Current situation**

The ‘Current Situation’ section is similar to an introduction. In this section outline your organisation’s current and previous (over the last five years or so) marketing communication strategy and activities. Include what has worked, what hasn’t and why.

You may also include information such as your current:

* market share - the percentage of your entire target market that you have as a customer
* market awareness – how well is you brand known and recognised within your target market

You may also like this section to contain a brief competitor analysis asking:

* how you rate (comparing strengths and weaknesses) against your competitors
* what your competitors market share is (in comparison to yours)
* what marketing communications activities are your competitors currently doing, and what seems to be working and not working and why?

1. **Business and Marketing Objectives**

In this section list your overall business objectives, and match them with your marketing objectives. Good objectives should be SMART:

* Simple
* Measurable
* Actionable
* Realistic
* Timely

Please see below for an example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Business Objectives** | **Marketing Objectives** |
| To increase our profit by 10% from $xxxxx to $xxxxxx by 31 December 2017 | To increase our market share from 35% to 45% by 31 December 2017 |

Note that an increase in market share should positively affect your profit.

1. **Target Market Segments**

Use the Marketing Communications Worksheet and the Client Segmentation Tool (you can add these to this plan as appendices) to help you segment your target market, and provide a summary in this section. See below for an example

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Target Market Segment** | **Who they are** |
| Mature prospective clients | * Generally 55+ * Looking to or already have retired * Unhappy with the current service they are getting * Generally more conservative and traditional in their attitudes and beliefs etc. |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. **Target Market Segment Client Value Proposition**

Use the Marketing Communications Worksheet and the Client Value Proposition Tool (you can add these to this plan as appendices) to help you test and/or develop your client value proposition for each of your market segments, and how they differentiate your business from your competitors. Provide a summary in this section. See below for an example:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Target Market Segment** | **Client Value Proposition** |
| Mature prospective clients | We are the only business that works with you to ensure we can meet your unique needs, to help you easily transition from working to retirement |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. **Key messages and communication channels**

Use the Marketing Communications Worksheet (you can add these to this plan as appendices) to help you develop the key messages you wish to communicate to each of your market segments, and which communication channels you should use. Provide a summary in this section. See below for an example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Target Market Segment** | **Key messages** | **Key Communication Channels** |
| Mature prospective clients | * We will partner with you to help you’re your retirement easy * We provide all the practical information and support you need to start planning for your retirement | * Trade conferences (that this target market are likely to attend) * Snail mail * Email * One-to-one phone calls and meetings |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

1. **Tactics, measures of success and person responsible**

In this section, you can now bring together sections three to six to map out:

* exactly what communications activities you will undertake in the next 12 months, which will help you achieve your objectives
* when you will roll them our
* the target audience, key messages and communication channels
* how you will measure the success of each tactic and;
* who in your business is responsible. Please see below for an example:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Business Objectives** | **Marketing Objectives** | **Communications tactics/activities** | **Date/s** | **Target Audience/s** | **Key message/s** | **Communication Channel/s** | **Measure of success** | **Person responsible** |
| To increase our profit by 10% from $xxxxx to $xxxxxx by 31 December 2017 | To increase our market share from 35% to 45% by 31 December 2017 | Exhibit ABCD Conference | 23 March 2017 | Mature prospective clients | We will partner with you to help you’re your retirement easy | ABCD Conference | To obtain the details of and permission to contact at least 100 prospective mature clients | John Smith |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

You can then use the Marketing Communications Plan Timeline template to visually plot when each activity is going to take place. This is useful to do as you can print it out and see at a glance of want marketing communications activity is coming up, and how each activity works with the others. The timeline can also be added as an appendix to this document.

1. **Budget**

In this section, you can include your allocated budget for all your activities listed in section 7. As you’re likely to have a more detailed overall business budget this can just be a higher level summary.