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Get Sticky

First take a look back and learn from your past experiences. What were your successes and how did you arrive at them. What were your failures and how can you avoid making them again. Next pull together information about your company, the market in general, sales staff needs, customer needs, financial information and so on.

The plan should be broken down into the following key elements:

1. **Marketing background:** description of previous marketing efforts and results.
2. **Ultimate Goals:** Write down your company's goals: (Such as: Increase sales, create value for your clients, solve problems, acquire new clients, strengthen customer relationships, brand new product line, and so on.)
3. **Target Market:** Who are your customers? Which business sectors or industries? Where is your geographic territory? What size company? Etc.
4. **Competition:** Who is your competition? List your strengths and weaknesses compared to your competition.
5. **Economy and Environment:** What are the economic and environmental issues that may affect your products and services?
6. **Product or Service Analysis:** Describe products and/or services in detail.
7. **Advertising and Promotion:**
 - a. Image/branding - what kind of image do you want to have (high-tech, friendly, exclusive, high quality)?
 - b. Features – list product or service features to be emphasized
 - c. Pricing – competitive, below competition, premium, suggested etc.
 - d. Customer services – list services and terms offered / compare to competition
 - e. Public relations: List the things you would like to say about your business.
 - f. Media: List the promotional resources to be used such as; direct mail, personal contacts, websites, email, newspapers, magazines, podcasts, internet banner ads, tradeshow, premiums, brochures, press releases, CD ROMs, POP displays and packaging. Determine which media sources you think will be the most effective.
8. **Marketing Budget:** Determine marketing budget. Manage both in-house and vendor resources.
9. **Marketing Strategies:**
 - a. Position: Follower vs. leader, Quality vs. Price, etc.
 - b. Customer-Oriented: Focus on meeting and exceeding customer expectations.
 - c. Convert Features into Benefits: Performance – time saved, Design – Ease of use, etc.
 - d. Emotional Rational: Pride, Recognition, Security, etc.
 - e. Price: Reasons for price structure. High – Best, Medium – Smart buy, Low – Bargain.
10. **Month by Month:** Create a marketing schedule. Input dates for meetings, ad deadlines, announcements, tradeshow etc. Write down what you plan to accomplish each month. Buy advertising & tradeshow space, vendor services and premiums. Send out newsletter, print advertising campaign. Schedule deadlines for completing projects, expand sales force, customer service training, write press releases, etc.

Finally at the end of each month review the marketing plan to determine if you are completing the required steps to reach your ultimate goals. Make notes and/or changes where necessary, check off the items completed. By staying focused and following the plan – you can be successful!
