Follow this simple step-by-step playbook to create a marketing communications plan that supports its marketing strategy.
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Leverage the framework below to quickly empower your organization's marketing communications strategy.

### MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS Framework

**ANALYSIS**
- Brand Assessment Tool
- Brand Perception Survey
- Industry Analysis Tool
- Content Marketing Assets Database
- Marketing Collateral Management Tool
- Web Content Audit Tool
- Competitor Analysis Tool
- Content Monitoring Tool
- Competitive PR and Advertising Analysis
- Buyer Persona Template

**STRATEGY**
- Buying Process Stage Template
- Lead Acquisition Model
- Marketing Channel Ranking Tool
- Social Media Channel Selection Tool
- Lead Generation Prioritization Tool
- Events Database Template
- Tradeshow Evaluation Matrix
- Objectives Worksheet
- Marketing Strategy Scorecard

**MESSAGES**
- Positioning Statement Worksheet
- Message Mapping Tool
- Content Mapping Tool
- Advertisement Evaluation Matrix
- Press Release Template

**PROGRAMS**
- Advertising Calendar & Budget Template
- Editorial Calendar Template
- Public Relations Calendar
- Social Media Marketing Calendar
- SEO Keyword Database
- Mobile Marketing Planning Checklist
- MarCom Calendar

**PLAN & BUDGET**
- Budget Template
- Marketing Plan Presentation
- Key Marketing Metrics Dashboard
- Campaign Impression Calculator
- Email Marketing ROI Calculator
- Online Advertising ROI Calculator

**MEASURE**
- For more information about the linked resources below, watch the overview videos.
What Is the Purpose of This Playbook?

To help you develop a marketing communications plan that:

- Is guided by the corporate marketing strategy
- Supports individual product-marketing plans
- Achieves your awareness and promotion goals.

Your marketing communications plan directs how you will communicate with various audiences: employees, clients, media, and others.

How to Use This Consulting Playbook

This playbook consists of six stages, each with a description, steps, and action items. Action items include using our premium tools and templates. Our intention with this playbook is to help you:

- **Align** your marketing communications with your marketing strategy and positioning
- **Optimize** your marketing communications for your audience and each communications channel
- **Execute & Measure** your plan using our planning, scheduling, and tracking tools
What Is a Marketing Communications Plan?

Marketing communications (MarCom) plans are often called marketing plans or marketing strategies.

Demand Metric believes the MarCom plan is separate and supports the marketing strategy and individual product-marketing plans.

The marketing strategy traditionally is more strategic in nature and broader in scope, covering the classic four Ps of the marketing mix:

- Product
- Place
- Price
- Promotion

The MarCom plan is more tactical in nature and focuses primarily on Promotion.

Outputs from This Playbook

Stage 1 - Analysis
Brand Assessment Tool, STEP Industry Analysis Tool, Content Marketing Assets Database, Competitor Analysis Tool

Stage 2 - Strategy
Buying Process Stage Template, Lead Acquisition Diagram, Marketing Channel Ranking Tool, Events Database Template

Stage 3 - Messages
Positioning Statement Worksheet, Message Mapping Tool, Content Mapping Tool, Advertisement Evaluation Matrix

Stage 4 - Programs
Advertising Calendar & Budget, Editorial Calendar Template, Social Media Marketing Calendar, SEO Keyword Database

Stage 5 - Plan & Budget
Marketing Communications Budget Template, Marketing Plan Presentation

Stage 6 - Measure
Key Marketing Metrics Dashboard, Email Marketing ROI Calculator
STAGE 1

Analysis

Any marcom endeavor must begin with an analysis of everything within and surrounding your business and its industry.

During Stage 1, you will assess your brand, analyze your industry, evaluate your content, size up the competition and define your audience.

**STEP 1:** Assess Your Brand
**STEP 2:** Analyze Your Industry
**STEP 3:** Evaluate Your Content
**STEP 4:** Size Up the Competition
**STEP 5:** Define Your Audience

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Demand Metric
### STEP 1
Assess Your Brand

**Action Item**

Use the [Brand Assessment Tool](#) to evaluate your organization from a branding perspective.

In conjunction with the brand assessment, leverage the [Brand Perception Survey](#) to facilitate your company’s attempts to analyze brand perception.

This survey helps you understand how your brand is viewed in the market, what brand attributes are preferred by customers, and to identify how your customers competitively position your products/services.

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### STEP 2
Analyze Your Industry

**Action Item**

Use the [STEP Industry Analysis Tool](#) to better understand issues, trends, and conditions in your industry, and to inform strategic planning decisions.

The [STEP Industry Analysis Tool](#) is designed to analyze industry trends along with social, technological, economic and political conditions.
**STEP 3**

**Evaluate Your Content**

**Action Item**

Leverage the **Content Marketing Assets Database** to help you keep track of, or even audit, your content marketing assets.

In addition, use the **Marketing Collateral Management Tool** to ensure your marketing collateral is up-to-date and well distributed, in tandem with the **Web Content Audit Tool** to help you keep track of the content you have on your website.

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**STEP 4**

**Size Up the Competition**

**Action Item**

Use the **Competitor Analysis Tool** to help you determine your market position in relation to your competitors, and identify your areas of differentiation.

Once you have selected and defined your value drivers, score your company against your competitors and use the positioning map to identify and analyze your position in the market.

During your competitive analysis, leverage the **Content Monitoring Tool** to keep track of your competitors content marketing efforts, and the **Competitive PR vs Advertising Analysis** tool to track your PR and advertising programs, along with those of your top competitors.
STEP 5
Define Your Audience

**Action Item**
Use the [Buyer Persona Template](#) to create buyer personas for the key buyers that you intend to target (for B2B industries).

Document their job role, age, education, income, years in role, top priorities, motivation, needs, objectives, media consumption habits, likes & dislikes, habits & skills, research methods, trusted resources, buying authority, budget, and purchasing process.

If you are dealing with a B2C industry, use the [Customer Profile Template](#) to create fictional personas for the key audiences you intend to target.
Strategy

Strategic decisions on what you will focus on are at the core of your marcom success.

During this stage you will define the buyer's journey, diagram an inbound marketing approach, prioritize and select marketing channels, determine strategic events to attend and document strategic objectives and KPI's.

**STAGE 2**

**Strategy**

**STEP 1:** Define the Buyer’s Journey
**STEP 2:** Diagram Inbound Marketing Approach
**STEP 3:** Prioritize & Select Marketing Channels
**STEP 4:** Determine Strategic Events to Attend
**STEP 5:** Document Strategic Objectives & KPIs
STEP 1
Define the Buyer’s Journey

**Action Item**

Use the Buying Process Stage Template to map the buying stages and buyer/seller actions for each stage.

This tool will guide you through mapping your content and sales process to specific stages in your customer’s buying journey to ensure you can support them as they make an informed decision. Today’s buyers are more informed than ever, be sure you have the content and sales process to enable your prospects to sell your solution to their buying committee.

STEP 2
Diagram Inbound Marketing Approach

**Action Item**

Use the Lead Acquisition Diagram to communicate your lead generation & nurturing process.

This Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation provides you with a real-world example of a potential lead generation process. Your lead acquisition model should include Direct & Indirect Marketing Campaigns, Lead Scoring, Lead Nurturing Campaign, and Lead Assignment.
**STEP 3**  
**Prioritize & Select Marketing Channels**

*Action Item*

Use the [Marketing Channel Ranking Tool](#) to evaluate current and planned MarCom channels. Based on this assessment, select the mix of channels you will use to support this MarCom plan.

Additional tools that can help your selection process include the [Social Media Channel Selection Tool](#) and [Lead Generation Prioritization Tool](#).

**STEP 4**  
**Determine Strategic Events to Attend**

*Action Item*

Use the [Events Database Template](#) to organize, summarize and communicate all of your marketing events.

In addition, leverage the [Tradeshow Evaluation Matrix](#) to rate and compare tradeshows based on weighted criteria such as advertising, attendance, location, competitor presence, previous attendance, additional incentives, booth location, reputation, product launches and cost to attend.
STEP 5

**Document Strategic Objectives & KPIs**

*Action Item*

Use the MarCom Objectives Worksheet to formally write your MarCom plan objectives for each audience your plan will address.
MESSAGING IS A KEY PART OF EVERY MARCOM PLAN, AND INSTRUCTS HOW YOUR BRAND IS COMMUNICATED.

In this stage you will define your positioning, analyze your messages, map content to the buyer’s journey, along with assessing advertisement effectiveness and standardizing your press releases.

**STEP 1:** Define Your Positioning  
**STEP 2:** Analyze Your Messages  
**STEP 3:** Map Content to Buyer’s Journey  
**STEP 4:** Assess Advertisement Effectiveness  
**STEP 5:** Standardize Your Press Releases
STEP 1
Define Your Positioning

Action Item

Author your primary message. As you do so, reference any relevant positioning information. If none exists, use the Positioning Statement Worksheet to develop it now.

Your primary message articulates the main thing you need your audiences to know and will:

- State what you’re doing and why
- Have consistency with your MarCom plan objectives
- Address all identified audiences

STEP 2
Analyze Your Messages

Action Item

Use the Message Mapping Tool to document the key messages that are important for your target audience to hear about your product.

For each identified audience, determine what each needs to know that is unique.

For example, a media audience may need amplification of your primary message through a set of secondary messages in a different way than your employee audience. Determine your secondary message requirements now and author them.
STEP 3
Map Content to Buyer’s Journey

Action Item
Use the Content Mapping Tool to create a visual representation of the specific content that you will be sending to each buyer persona based on their stage in the buying cycle.

Use this Microsoft Excel template to identify the pieces of collateral that address your buyer personas pain points and key questions at each stage of the buying cycle.

STEP 4
Assess Advertisement Effectiveness

Action Item
Leverage the Advertisement Evaluation Matrix to provide you with a structured way to evaluate your advertising concept options.

This evaluation tool considers the effectiveness of ad concepts based on:
- Engagement
- Credibility
- Impression
- Action-Oriented
- Significance
- Integrated
- Brand Attribute (Service)
- Brand Attribute (Quality)
- Brand Attribute (Innovation)
STEP 5

Standardize Your Press Releases

**Action Item**

Use the [Press Release Template](#) to create a properly formatted Press Release.

Consider that press releases can be the cornerstone of any publicity program. Our press release template will provide you with the elements you need to properly structure your press release in a way that is both relevant and interesting to the reader.
STAGE 4

Programs

The campaigns and programs you run is where the rubber hits the road with your marcom initiatives. In Stage 4, you will plan and schedule your campaigns including advertising, PR, social media, inbound marketing, and mobile marketing.

**STEP 1:** Plan Advertising Campaigns

**STEP 2:** Plan Public Relations Campaigns

**STEP 3:** Plan Social Media Campaigns

**STEP 4:** Plan Inbound Marketing Campaigns

**STEP 5:** Plan Mobile Marketing Campaigns

**STEP 6:** Build Your MarCom Calendar
STEP 1
Plan Advertising Campaigns

**Action Item**
Use the [Advertising Calendar & Budget Template](#) to organize your advertising campaigns. Track media types, due dates and budget info.

This advertising calendar allows you to differentiate between media type purchased, ad content creation, due date, publication date, and cost. Use this advertising calendar template to organize your media campaigns.

STEP 2
Plan Public Relations Campaigns

**Action Item**
Use the [Editorial Calendar Template](#) to keep track of your editorial opportunities.

In addition, use the [Public Relations Calendar](#) to track public relation activities, timing, type of communication and channel through which you should emit it. After the scheduling, it’s all about execution!
**STEP 3**

Plan Social Media Campaigns

*Action Item*

Use the **Social Media Marketing Calendar** to organize and communicate all of your social media marketing activities.

The communications you could prepare may include topics such as:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Blog
- Pinterest
- Instagram
- Other

**STEP 4**

Plan Inbound Marketing Campaigns

*Action Item*

Use the **SEO Keyword Database** to gather information on the keywords that you are targeting.

Leverage this database to strengthen your keyword strategy as you more easily gather and track the keywords you are targeting. Save time on formatting, easily communicate your findings, and generate new SEO opportunities for stronger results in your content marketing initiatives.
STEP 5
Plan Mobile Marketing Campaigns

Action Item

Use the Mobile Marketing Planning Checklist to ensure you have the right people, processes, and technology to implement a solid mobile marketing program.

Our Microsoft Excel checklist outlines key steps for implementing a successful mobile marketing initiative and enables you to keep your project organized. Easy-to-use drop-down lists enable you to assign owners, dates and status updates to your tasks to keep your initiative on track.

STEP 6
Build Your MarCom Calendar

Action Item

Use the Marketing Communications Calendar to create a master calendar of all channel activity and campaigns you identified in Stage 5 of this playbook.

The communications you could prepare may include:
- Advertisements
- Public Relations
- Social Media
- Mobile Marketing
- Events
- Other

Helpful Hint — Ensure that each communication properly reflects the key messages you identified.
STAGE 5
Plan & Budget

Without a defined budget and an overall plan presented to key stakeholders, your marcom initiatives will not get the approval required to move forward.

In this stage, you will create a budget and prepare a marketing plan presentation.

**STEP 1:** Prepare Your Budget
**STEP 2:** Build & Present Marketing Plan
STEP 1
Prepare Your Budget

Action Item
Use the Marketing Communications Budget Template to develop and track the budget for the channels and campaigns you identified in Stage 5 of this playbook.

Your marketing communications budget will include:
- Total Budget
- Year-to-Date Spending
- Budget Remaining ($ and %)
- Budget Category Breakdown

STEP 2
Build & Present Marketing Plan

Action Item
Use the Marketing Plan Presentation to help you document and communicate your marketing plan.

This document consists of seven stages, each designed to facilitate analysis, planning, and communication of your strategic marketing plan.

Each section discusses the most relevant information regarding your company’s marketing plan (Key stats, SWOT, Objectives, products, channels used, etc).
The final stage in your marcom plan is all about measuring your results. In Stage 6, you will collect key marketing metrics and calculate the ROI your campaigns received.

**STEP 1:** Collect Your Key Marketing Metrics

**STEP 2:** Calculate ROI on Marketing Programs
**STEP 1**

**Collect Your Key Marketing Metrics**

**Action Item**

Develop and implement your MarCom Plan dashboard. Use the **Key Marketing Metrics Dashboard** to define, track, and report on key metrics.

Carefully review the metrics and systems for capturing them:

- Ensure that the measurement systems are in place to track progress toward these objectives
- Consider other measurements you should add to ensure your strategy is effective

In addition, use the **Campaign Impressions Calculator** to determine your cost per impression across various communications channels.

**STEP 2**

**Calculate ROI on Marketing Programs**

**Action Item**

Use the **Email Marketing ROI Calculator** and **Online Advertising ROI Calculator** to calculate results for your marketing campaigns.

These easy-to-use calculators consider metrics and calculate and generate reports, giving visibility on key information including:

- **EMAIL**: open rate, click-thru rate, click-to-open, conversion rates on leads and sales, and the cost per lead and cost per sale.
- **ONLINE ADVERTISING**: maximum cost per click based on the price of your product, cost of goods, lead conversion rate and your daily advertising budget.
Conclusion

At the end of any business process, it’s always a good idea to review it and identify areas for improvement.

Demand Metric has the tools and expertise to help you build an effective MarCom Plan.
- Create or audit your MarCom plans
- Assist with using any of the tools referenced in this playbook
- Provide hands-on marketing assistance to accelerate achieving your marketing department’s goals.
The American Marketing Association (AMA) is the essential community for marketers.

In 1953, Neil Borden transformed the business world when he articulated the strategy of “Marketing Mix” in his AMA presidential address. Borden was just one of many AMA leaders who were not satisfied with existing best practices. These thought leaders sought answers for the future that would propel business growth and elevate the role of marketing.

Today, the AMA leads an unparalleled discussion on marketing excellence. Continuing in the tradition of Borden and so many others, the AMA offers differentiated content that focuses on the tension between Best Versus Next Practices™.

With content coming from unrivaled scholarly journals, like the Journal of Marketing, and award-winning publications, like Marketing News, the AMA offers a robust perspective that understands marketer are expected to provide both solutions for today and solutions for tomorrow.
**Demand Metric** helps Marketing teams get stuff done with practical tools, training, and a simple, modern platform for managing work.

Our analysts identify best practices from fast-growing companies and build Playbooks & Toolkits, Guides & Reports, Training Courses, and Project Templates to help you optimize your processes, add structure to your department, and get your team punching above their weight class.

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