



Phone Link Ups

"The most successful businesses of the past 50 years have all understood one singular important business principle – Marketing is everything and vice versa."

(Little Green Frog Marketing Think Tank)

Marketing Definition

Monash University's Business and Economics Department offer the following definition of marketing on their website:







"Marketing is a fun, dynamic, complex activity that focuses on providing value to both organizations and consumers. Very simply marketing is about matching what an organisation has (or can do) with someone who wants it. Marketing is about selling, it is about advertising but it is also so much more. The study and the practice of the 'so much more' is what makes marketing so interesting."

To remain competitive in today's ever changing childcare environment, Family Day Care Schemes, need to be able to identify and quickly react to opportunities for continuous growth and sustainability.

Things to consider before you get started

The Important P's of Marketing

When developing a *Market Business* or *Strategic Plan*, you first need to consider the important P's of marketing: Product, Price, Promotion, Place, Positioning, Perception, People Priorities and professionalism.

-  **Product** – Our Family Day Care Schemes = the unique quality CHILD CARE we offer in a flexible home based setting.
-  **Price** – Pricing can be a major issue for customers. Are our prices competitive in the market?
-  **Promotion** – The way in which information is provided to our potential customers. This includes advertising, direct selling, publicity engagements, public relation activities and the Internet. Efficient market research will ensure your promotion reaches the intended audience with the right message at the right time.
-  **Place** – This is the targeted location/s. This could be an entire Shire or targeted areas within a Shire.
-  **Positioning** – relates to how the Scheme wants to be viewed in the market and by perspective customers.
-  **Perception** – of how the scheme/FDC is currently perceived or how it wishes to be perceived by or in the market.

- 🌈 **People** – Schemes need to ensure that they have the right people in their organisation to deliver the marketing. Team members need to have the skills to ensure the marketing is a success eg, team members with effective customer service skills, team members with the skills to develop the marketing plan etc.
- 🌈 **Priorities** – Ensuring the scheme has systems and plans in place to ensure marketing elements are done right the first time, and the scheme is able to deliver what has been promised.
- 🌈 **Professionalism** – Offering a professional and nationally recognized service. Having consistent professional looking formats and media being presented in a consistent and professional manner.

Word of mouth is the best form of advertising, on average 120 people may learn of either a good or negative experience. Research shows

1 person will tell 10 people if they have a bad experience. Those 10 people will tell 6 more people. Those 6 people will tell another 2 people!

The Components of Marketing

Because marketing is based on a sound understanding of the product and the customer, it requires detailed research and data collection.

- 🌈 **Research** – gathering information about the sector in terms of the 8 P's (i.e., competitors, customers etc)
- 🌈 **Analysis** – Identifying strengths and weaknesses and unique features
- 🌈 **Planning** – both long term and short term planning (Strategic plan, business plans, scheme goals, mission, vision)

'It's a lot like making a great cup of coffee. You can have the perfect ratio of coffee, sugar, milk and water All mixed at the perfect temperature, but if you have bad coffee beans to start with - it's always going to leave a bad taste in your mouth.' It all starts with the plan.

(Little Green Frog Marketing Think Tank)

Case Study: Partnership Power - Developing Marketing Campaigns

'Partnerships are one of the most rewarding and positive learning life'

Tracey Sweetman 2007

Ten Family Day Care Schemes from the Hunter, Central Coast, Manning and Great Lakes Family Day Regions united to pool resources to develop a Marketing Campaign to raise the FDC profile within their local market and promote the services of FDC as a whole. The Schemes identified that marketing was lacking in their services, and it was time to 'think outside the square' and develop a marketing campaign that could be useful to all participating schemes.

The schemes engaged the services of a professional marketing company, to assist in the development of a marketing program.

From the outset, the marketing company assured the group that they were their most knowledgeable resource and adopted a personal approach to encourage all participating Schemes to contribute their thoughts and ideas. This high level of interaction between the Schemes and the marketing company ensured that the group was involved in every decision made and had every opportunity to provide feedback on the progress of the campaign - in turn ensuring the campaign remained as authentic as possible.

The group developed a new brand which added credibility to the group, and truly made the group a competitor in the market. Working with the logo to position the brand is the statement – 'let your kids shine'.

The marketing materials developed by the group specifically for the first campaign includes:

- 🌈 **Branding** – Logo and Positioning Statement
- 🌈 **Corporate Brand materials** including:
 - Personalized letterhead and with compliments slips
 - Corporate presentation folder
 - DL-sized promotional flyer
 - 6 page corporate brochure
- 🌈 **Two television advertisements**
- 🌈 **Radio advertisement**
- 🌈 A national **1300 number**
- 🌈 **Website** – including a web page specific to each scheme
- 🌈 **New email address**
- 🌈 A set of **press templates** to be used for all print media

The two television advertisements feature professional photography and animated characters interacting with the photos, interchanging throughout the advertisement to memorable music, which is appealing to both children and adults. The soundtrack of the television commercial will also be used for the radio commercials to increase the recognition of the brand.

The group has found this a purposeful partnership, which they endeavour to continue.

The Benefits of Marketing Partnerships

There are a number of benefits to forming business partnerships, some of these are:

- 🌈 A more affordable marketing campaign as costs shared amongst the group
- 🌈 Strengthens relationships with other schemes and stakeholders
- 🌈 The group is able to draw on the strengths / experience / ideas from a large number of individual group members. This is particularly important for small schemes with limited human resources.
- 🌈 The workload/costs are shared eg, updating websites, organizing advertising features and contacting the media.

- 🌈 A large group of providers advertising under one banner portrays a more professional service to the community.

Tips

- 🌈 Engage a reputable marketing company that listens to and appreciates the experience of the group.
- 🌈 Develop a business plan and establish a process for re-visiting it on a regular basis.
- 🌈 Ensure you keep up to date with what your competitors are offering and adjust your plans and goals accordingly.
- 🌈 Base the marketing on information that is industry specific and promotes the benefits that your service offers that other competitors can't offer i.e., small groups, individual care etc.
- 🌈 Have short term and long term goals, plan and implement marketing to meet those goals.
- 🌈 Plan regular meetings of the marketing group to ensure that goals are being achieved and plans are followed.
- 🌈 Allocate realistic dollars to marketing in yearly budget; don't wait until you can afford it. You need effective marketing to help grow your business.

Considerations: Results to date

There is so much more to marketing than just running the adverts, the group have discovered that there were many issues that needed to be resolved along the way, such as agreements, ownership of intellectual property. Whilst the group developed its own logo it also became clear that there was a need for a second or even third logo to confirm the validity of Family Day Care.

Following the first advertisements there were increased calls to the 1300 number, however in the early stages of advertising it is not always the volume of immediate business that counts but how the brand awareness builds.

The group has noticed a change in perception of the brand of Family Day Care. Once all agreements are in place the group will be running another longer campaign. From this statistics should be available to measure the effect of the campaign.

In Concluding

We all share the common goal of providing a quality service that meets the needs of all stakeholders. Regions can form business partnerships to collaborate together, and to share ideas to assist us all in achieving our goals. Partnerships have the capacity to strengthen relationships within regions.

***Working together is more effective than 'reinventing the wheel'.
'A boat that makes no ripple, is a boat going nowhere'***

Ken Duncan

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