

The route to success: a marketing roadmap for you and your business

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WHILE most businesses have a good idea of what they are driving their marketing efforts towards, few actually have pinpointed a destination and created a detailed roadmap to help navigate the sea of marketing options and choices en route.

Without a roadmap or plan, your marketing efforts could break down halfway or take a wrong turn and end up somewhere entirely different! Businesses without marketing roadmaps often find they underestimate the performance of their marketing or focus only on solving short-term problems, rather than working on the long-term growth of their business.

Creating this marketing roadmap before you embark on your trip is the only way of ensuring that you're adequately prepared – that you've got enough money to keep you going, that you're travelling with the right people, that you're taking the best possible route and that you're going to get to your destination on time. It's the only way of making sure that your marketing strategy is right for you.

Now is the perfect time to make sure you have a marketing roadmap that will guide you towards your goal and that your business will be where you want it to be in 12 months' time. Here is a guide as to how you can create an effective marketing roadmap for your business.

Set your destination – What do you want your marketing to achieve? Your targets need to be clear and specific as possible, as these will be the basis of your roadmap and will determine all of

the marketing decisions that you make. You can use your destination goal to work backwards and determine how much marketing gas is required to get you there. For example, if you have a goal of \$1 million revenue and you know that your sales conversion rate is 20 per cent and average dollar sale is \$500, then you'll need to map out marketing strategies to generate at least 10,000 qualified leads during the year.

Don't drive alone – Make sure you have the right people onboard with you – remember, a road trip is so much more difficult (and less enjoyable) when it's just you in the car! Your employees need to clearly understand the business's objectives so that they can work towards them. It also pays to have people outside of the business, such as a coach, mentor, or advisory group, supporting you and making sure you stay on track towards your destination.

Decide on what to bring – Which products and services will you offer and what benefits do they offer to your customers? You will need to decide on which offerings to keep, which you need to get rid of and which new ones you need to add. Perhaps some products are seasonal and only need to be stocked at certain times of the year. You will need to ensure that the benefits that your products and services offer are clearly defined, so that they can be communicated to your customers.

Map out a route – What is the message you want to communicate about your business and what are the marketing activities you will use to send it? How will you target your customers in order to achieve those targets that you set in Step 1? Some forms of promotion will be more effective for your business than others and you will need to research these and find out which ones work better for you. For example, advertising may be more effective for you than direct marketing

and perhaps you haven't explored the cost-effectiveness of internet marketing, social media marketing or public relations. Decide on what mix of promotional activities you will implement each month. From this, you can create a marketing budget to help you stay on track. **Set some stopovers** – How will you test the effectiveness of your marketing initiatives in achieving their objectives? How will you know if what you're doing is profitable or not?

Testing and measuring is an important yet often neglected part of the marketing process. You will need to determine how often you need to stop to measure your progress and which monitoring tools you will use to do it.

This could include feedback forms, asking prospects where they heard about your business, online testing software for online orders, measuring the number of enquiries and tracking the number of mentions in the media.

Plan a back-up route – What will you do if your marketing doesn't achieve what you want it to? You will need a contingency plan with alternative marketing strategies, just in case the unexpected happens.

Taking the time to plan ahead and create your 12-month marketing roadmap now will prepare you for the unknown road ahead and will help guide your decisions along the way. Start planning for your trip now.

It is much easier to be focused when you have someone to hold you accountable. At 10X, we provide tailored advice and support for Gladstone region business owners who want to fast-track their results.

Contact Katie on 4970 1444 for the opportunity to attend a complimentary Boardroom Edge – Gaining the Unfair Advantage & Increasing Profits; a dynamic workshop designed to add real value to you and your business.