

Marketing dos and don'ts for the business owner

Successful marketing is just as much about following the right processes as it is about creative (and effective) outputs. You can't expect magic to happen without applying some method.



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This is where many businesses that are new to marketing fail. They are not disciplined about how they manage their marketing implementations. Here is a short list with marketing dos and don'ts for the business owner.

- As the business owner, if you are too busy to provide quick feedback on marketing activities, make sure you assign a project manager to drive the process for you and act as your central point of contact to liaise with outside agencies and avoid delays.
- Always make sure your requirements are in writing. Marketing is “fluffy” enough as it is, and it is crucial to make sure all requirements are clearly stipulated for all to see.
- Understand the scope of work for any project and make sure everyone understands what is included and excluded from a creative project to ensure costs and timings are adhered to.
- Allow for enough time to do proper work, work that requires creativity can't be rushed.

- Always start with a plan: Create a plan with SMART objectives and make sure the plan is followed and closely tracked. This will avoid delays and last-minute changes.
- Keep communication free-flowing and consider using a cloud-based tool to ensure everyone has a line of sight of a project and can keep track of communication.
- Limit the number of outside suppliers you work with since it becomes increasingly difficult to manage them and build a cohesive, focused brand.
- Report on marketing project progress on a weekly basis and track marketing results on a monthly basis to allow for quick changes.
- Know what you want and don't let your suppliers dictate terms. Make it a joint effort and ensure everyone works towards the same goals.
- Understand where you are as a company before you bring in an outsourced marketing department. First, try to do stuff internally before you go outside. Marketing is ultimately a business function like any other and should ideally be housed inside the business.
- When deciding to use an outside agency, pay careful attention to their advice - they, after all, professionals, but don't be afraid to challenge and insist on clear explanations that you understand.

It is all well and good to have ambitious marketing plans, but without careful management and measurement, it will almost certainly disappoint. Pay close attention to how you do marketing - not just what activities you do and how much you spend.

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