



6 Evaluating how well your current marketing is working

What is marketing?

Marketing is everything that you do to communicate your business to both your existing and potential customers. There are many different ways that you can market your business. Most people use a combination that works best for their particular business.

What works and what doesn't?

If you are spending money on marketing your business it is vital that you know what works and what doesn't. There is no point in investing money when what you are doing is not bringing you a good return. So how do you know whether it is working or not?

Your challenge

Your main challenge is continually to test and measure your marketing efforts. Relying on gut feel is not enough. You will need some tangible feedback. Try the following checklist indicating what you have tried and whether it was successful or not. Note down any tangible evidence that you have to support your definition of success. Have a look at this marketing evaluation checklist and evaluate how successful you consider your marketing efforts have been to date.

CURRENT MARKETING EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Which of the following have you tried and how successful has it been?

Rate each area: 1 = no success, 5 = very successful

Brand identity	1	2	3	4	5
Newspaper advertising	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Yellow Pages</i>	1	2	3	4	5
Radio advertising	1	2	3	4	5
TV advertising	1	2	3	4	5
PR/articles	1	2	3	4	5
Direct mail	1	2	3	4	5
Sales letter	1	2	3	4	5

Networking	1	2	3	4	5
Telemarketing	1	2	3	4	5
Events/talks	1	2	3	4	5
Newsletter	1	2	3	4	5
Internet marketing	1	2	3	4	5
Referrals/recommendation	1	2	3	4	5
Sales person	1	2	3	4	5
Window displays	1	2	3	4	5
Alliance relationships	1	2	3	4	5
Special offers	1	2	3	4	5
Email marketing	1	2	3	4	5

How successfully to test and measure your marketing

You can do this in a number of ways.

- Ask the people who enquire where they heard about your business.
- Keep a note of this information over a defined period of time and analyse it.
- Run specific offers in selected marketing options and keep a record of responses.
- Test headlines on adverts or flyers in smaller batches until you find out which gets the best result.
- You can do the same with sales letters sent by post and email.
- When you run an event, or speak at a networking group, keep a record of how many contacts you make and whether any business results from them.
- Do the same for networking events you attend as a participant.
- When you write an article for a business publication offer a free report that requires the reader to make contact with you. This way you will not only get the details of some potentially good prospects but you can test how many people read and responded to your article.
- Before and after sales data is useful when you are running a brand awareness campaign.

MARKETING EVALUATION – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- ▶ Decide how you are going to evaluate your activities in advance.
- ▶ Keep a record of the evaluation data you collect.

- ▶ Work out which has been the most successful marketing activity.
- ▶ Plan to repeat all successful activities.
- ▶ Ask yourself why certain activities have not been successful.
- ▶ Check that the marketing activities you have chosen are right for the audience you wish to target.
- ▶ Stop any expensive marketing activity that is costing more than the return it gives you.

How to use this information

Over a period of time, monitoring and measuring the success of your marketing will enable you to build a very clear picture of how to spend your valuable marketing budget. There will be no more last minute decisions or trial and error, as you will have the evidence you need at your fingertips, and you will be able to use the information to make informed decisions.

Think, test and measure