

Your Marketing Toolkit: Tools and Tips for Effective Marketing



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Table of Contents

1. An Introduction to Marketing:
2. Marketing Tools and Channels
 - Basic Tools
 - Major Categories
 - You
 - Traditional
 - Online (including email and ecommerce)
 - Visual Marketing Introduced
3. Putting It All Together
 - Pulling the Pieces Together
 - Who is the audience, what's your goal and how do you get there
 - Layout the specifics
 - Guidelines - When to send, how often, what to send, length
 - Tips on Building
 - A Brand
 - A Movement
4. Supplemental Tools
5. Staying on track
 - Testing
 - Evaluation
 - Revising
6. Closing thoughts

Section 1: An Introduction to Marketing

This is **MARKETING!!!**



Product



Customers



Let's start our look at marketing by examining a marketing myth and a marketing reality.

The **myth**, "build it and they will come," is pervasive among small-business owners. Many owners believe that their product or service is much better than the competition.

With this thought in mind, they spend little time on marketing. Why should they as customers will beat down the door to get what they offer? Yet customers can't buy if they don't know you exist or if you haven't made a case for how your product or service will solve their problem.

On rare occasions, the owner gets lucky and the audience spreads the word, but those times are rare.

And when business owners do think about marketing, they often focus only on advertising. Advertising is just one small part of marketing. Advertising will get goods out of the door but *marketing ensures that the customer comes back for more.*

Definitions

Advertising: The paid, public, non-personal announcement of a persuasive message by an identified sponsor; the non-personal presentation or promotion by a firm of its products to its existing and potential customers.

Marketing: The systematic planning, implementation and control of a mix of business activities intended to bring together buyers and sellers for the mutually advantageous exchange or transfer of products.

Thus the marketing reality: MARKETING - It's everything you do!

Focusing on the reality of marketing, this guide introduces a variety of marketing tools available, traditional and online, that farmers, growers, market managers and small-business owners can use to reach your customers. This list of tools covers all phases of marketing.

You will note some time is spent covering online marketing. This trend is growing and will continue to do. To fully engage with today's consumers, these tools must be used to their full advantage. The bottom line is that ***small business owners must be online.***

Why an online presence?

Two reasons:

- *It's where more and more customers are going. It's where customers often look for information today.*
- *Your competitors are online.*

If you are going to attract new customers the key is a strategic online marketing strategy. Just look at these numbers:

- 5 billion Google search
- 1 billion active Facebook users
- 205 million pieces of email sent per minute
- 400 hours of video uploaded per minute
- 55,000 Instagram photos posted per minute

Local is often of interest to the online user. (<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/kara-mulder/why-small-businesses-need-b-11869800.html>)

Small-business owners often think that if they don't have a website and are not using social media, they don't have an online presence. This is often not the case. They may very well have a listing on mapping sites such as Google maps and may also have reviews on sites such as Yelp or Trip Advisor. Companies may have listed you in other maps and directories.

(<https://www.forbes.com/sites/thesba/2013/11/25/how-much-is-online-presence-helping-small-business/#43d648212cb6>)

An online presence allows your business to:

1. be open 24/7
2. giving your customer access to your company and product
3. in order to 'check out' what you have to offer and
4. buy.

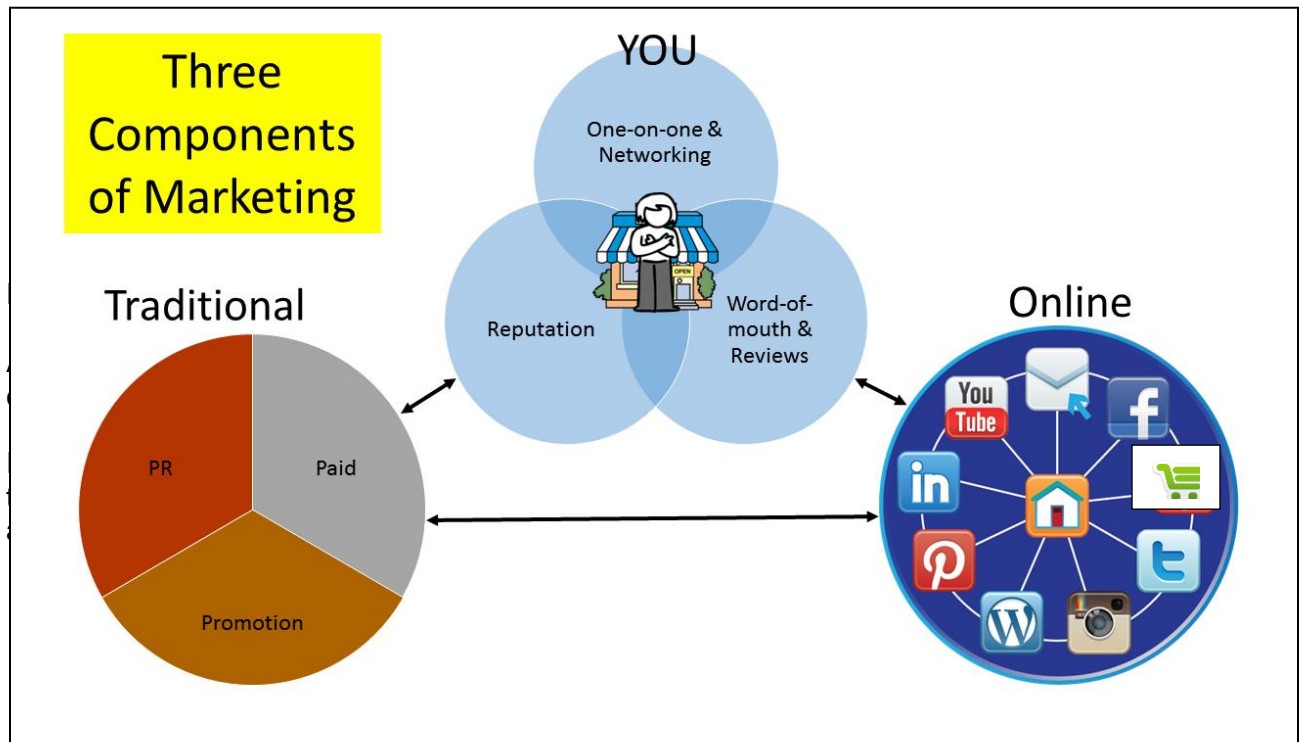
An online presence, through social media, is another tool to build relationships with your customers. It is a great way to connect.

All marketing, both online and traditional can be done in an affordable and effective way to help you meet your marketing goals. As you think about your marketing, your guide should be your customers and your bottom line. You decide what is right for your business. (This article offers some insight into what customers are looking for - <https://evansville.score.org/blog/what-do-customers-want-local-businesses>).

This guide takes a broad look at marketing. It challenges you to think about your audience and how you can connect and engage with them. You will have a variety of tools to make that happen. Don't worry though as many of the new tools are just a different method to reach the same result.

So let's dig deeper into marketing your farm and/or your farmers' market.

Section 2 – Marketing Tools and Channels: You, Traditional and Online



Basic Tools: The Classics

Before starting your marketing journey, there are certain tools that are classics. These are tools you will use no matter how you market. They include:

Business Name – It would seem obvious that your business must have a name. But it may not be as obvious that good names will suggest what you do and are easy to remember. And be sure to check with state and Federal data banks to make sure you can legally use the name you select.

Business Card - A key piece is your business card. The business card can be used in many ways plus they are cheap to print. You can even have a couple of styles for different purposes. Don't forget the back side, its more space for use as a coupon, map, shopping list, or to provide your mission or even tell a joke.

NOTE: A business card held where you can read it takes as much space on the retina of your eye as a billboard on the highway. And you have a lot more time to read and digest it than the 5- 6 seconds you have to see and read what the highway sign said.

Logo - It all starts with your brand, and that brand needs a logo. If my farm is Johnson Family Farm in Pleasantville, North Dakota, I should have a logo that gives some indication of who I am and what I'm doing. What is my product? Has my family been farming on this land for decades? Do I have a characteristic that I'm known by? Am I committed to farming practices such as being good stewards of the land or preserving

bee/pollinator health? All of these things can be used to build a brand around and a logo to compliment. (Check out the logo for the Red River Market - <https://www.facebook.com/redrivermarket/>)

Logo tips - <http://blog.fiverr.com/attract-more-customers-with-an-eye-catching-logo-design/>

If you decide to work with a graphic designer, they can walk you through the process of discussing what feeling and essence you'd like for your logo. If you want to do it on your own, there are numerous online tools to create your own logo. The perks of working directly with a designer are that you'll get a more customized logo or personalized experience. The downside is that it will likely cost more. Check out this article in Agenda Marketing - [8 Important Things to Consider When Creating A Logo](#). Remember to include your farm name in the logo and share it proudly - it is music to a consumer's ear.

Looking to hire a graphic designer but don't know where to begin? Check out [CarbonMade](#). It's an online portfolio of creative professionals available to hire. You can search the site for a variety of creative needs, which includes the work of over [40,000 graphic designers](#). You can filter your search by geographic location to find someone in or near your community. Another option that many people use is <https://www.fiverr.com/>.

If you're feeling creative and want to take a stab yourself, Tailor Brands allows you to design an online logo for a small fee. You can create a free account, answer a few simple questions, and they'll give you multiple logos to choose from. If you see one that sparks your eye, you can buy it for a reasonable price.

Your Tagline, Elevator Speech, and Key Message – You will never know when someone will be asking you about your business. You need to prepare and practice a:

Tagline – A short, 3-7 word, phrase that connects

Elevator speech – Prepare a 30-second introduction to you and your business.

You may have longer but this speech can get the conversation started.

Key messages – If given a chance, what does your business espouse as priorities. You may have one to three such that define your company, its core values and its mission.

Other Material – Depending on your business type and situation, you will probably need some of the following:

- Letterhead stationary
- Brochure
- Electronic signature

Marketing Tools and Channels

When thinking about the marketing channels available to you as a grower, producer or market manager, there are countless ways to promote (and sell) your product and services. These tools range from direct interactions with customers to engaging in the online social media world to everything in between. For the purposes of our toolkit, we are going to divide the tools into three broad categories: **You, Traditional** and **Online Marketing**.

You

Your Story

One of the key things to remember as a small-scale grower, producer or market manager is that **you are a brand**, and that in order to sell your product successfully, you should sell your image, which includes you, your farm/location and the community along with your products and services. In marketing, this means “telling your story.”

To Find Your Story, Answer Why

It's important to take time to tell your story as you build your public image. This is a look at who you are and why you are doing what you're doing?

You might be farming because you just love food, farming or being outdoors. Or maybe you love nature and the soil and want to do everything you can to make it as healthy as possible. Or you might make a really amazing salsa or bread because you learned to create as a child with your grandmother's secrets and that was something deeply meaningful and special to you, and something you want to continue. Or you have an obsession with fermentation and like to ferment everything you can! Whether your “why” is totally quirky or super sentimental, be as honest and genuine as possible in your why.

Your story is the beginning of building your marketing strategy and reputation as a business owner.

Check out this Ted Talk with Simon Sinek called [Start With Why](#) to learn more about this principal to a successful business.

Tell Who You Are

After you've determined your why, it's time to write your story. Where have you been and how did you get to the place of operating your business? Who else is involved and what's their story? In the business of small-scale food and farming, your customers care and want to know you.

Check out [Forager Farm](#) for a great example of a farm business that describes who they are, their history and why they do what they do.

Provide Your Mission, Products, Services and Practices

This should be the easy part, but it's important to have well written descriptions. What do you offer that is unique and different from your competitors? What are the benefits to your customers?. Having this information available and easily accessible to the public (whether it be on your website, social media or directly at your booth at the farmers market) will be helpful to continue to amplify your message and build awareness about what your business has to offer.

Storytelling is the key, according to this article from Entrepreneur. It moves people from listening to having a conversation (<https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/270420>).

Storytelling gives a glimpse of the soul or the reason for your business.

<https://blog.drumup.io/blog/the-secret-to-successful-storytelling/>

Here are some tips on how to make your story telling more effective.

<https://hbr.org/2011/03/the-art-of-purposeful-storytel>

<http://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2014/12/05/business-storytelling>

<https://hbr.org/2003/06/storytelling-that-moves-people>

Your Network

Good networking is a skill and an art. When preparing for a networking opportunity, be sure to bring along your business cards and brochures. Here are some resources to help you make your networking effective.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCKynKVqzFg>

<https://www.slideshare.net/glennmuske/networking-empowering-leaders-bowman-2016>

Go to a networking event with a plan in mind. Maybe you know some people who will be there who you would like to meet. Can you learn more about your industry? Maybe you just will reinforce past connections. Remember you can't meet everyone and this is not the time for a long conversation. You want to give your name, make a connection with the person, and then plan for a later meeting.

Note: If you're attending an event that is listed on Facebook or another platform that shows confirmed attendees, look through the list of attendees in advance to see if there is anyone you definitely want to meet. This will help you to make a plan for your networking event including what items you might want to bring along and what information you should have ready to share. If the people you want to meet are online, reach out and try to make that initial contact before you ever get to the event.

Your Reviews and Word of Mouth

As a business owner, you want to encourage your customers to talk about your business. Getting that done often starts with your encouragement.

Study shows over 50% of small-business owners like word-of-mouth marketing -

<http://video.cnbc.com/gallery/?video=3000624091>

Customers have always done this. And today, they can, and are, doing it in much more. They are commenting, taking pictures and videos, and providing reviews.

In terms of reviews, make it easy for the customer to leave a comment when they leave. Tell them where you are listed for reviews – e.g., Yelp, Trip Advisor, Google Maps, your own internal review site, etc. (e.g., Papa's Pumpkin Patch – [front page](#), [reviews](#), [photos](#);

Don't believe that your business may be reviewed. We review bathrooms, why not your business? <https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/destinations/2017/05/18/cleanest-gas-station-bathrooms-every-state/101747444/?csp=travel>

In order to garner more reviews, some companies will send customers an email to encourage a review; possibly with a gift or discount for sharing a review. This works well if you want to build more reviews to your online presence.

It is important that you read what is being said about your business. You need to conduct a 'vanity' search on a regular basis to know what is being said about you and your business. You can do this by checking out review sites and doing a search – look for your business name. Customers may be using other sites so set up a Google Alert to receive updates of when you or your business is mentioned online.

All reviews are done online, however. People have been talking about their interaction with businesses for years in face-to-face meetings. Here it is important that you develop a cadre of listeners. Their job is simply to listen and provide you with a sense of “the word on the street” about your business.

For those reading reviews, when online,” the “who” doing the review is less important than the “what” is being said. When “on the street, both the who and what will influence our thoughts.

For you, the owner, having names to contact can be very useful. If it is a positive review, you can thank them and ask if there was something more they would have liked. If it is a negative review or someone is commenting about a problem, then you can take care of the issue before it spreads further.

Reviews are a trusted resource. It's to your benefit to encourage them. It also gives you feedback into how your business is performing.

Traditional

Traditional marketing is a rather broad category of marketing that encompasses advertising as well as marketing. It can include the physical pieces you create (business cards, mailings, posters, signage), any paid advertising you do, as well as public relations (PR) work you employ to gain attention for your business. It includes three defined categories (<http://managementhelp.org/marketing/advertising/defined.htm>):

The idea of all traditional, and really all marketing, is to increase awareness and building your business both sales and reputation.

Advertising – Paid marketing through traditional channels of print, radio, and television.

Advertising using the local paper, radio or television can be an effective tool in small, rural towns. Supporting your local media is important in an overall marketing strategy. It's part of your supporting the local community. You need to use it even if you do little in terms of sales in the local area. You are a community member and part of the economic engine by employing local people and contributing to the economy.

The one nice thing about paid advertisements is you can put your message across exactly as you want. There is no editor or writer who may re-interpret your words and thoughts. Plus you can add a visual element to be even more effective.

You have many options such as flyers, banners, and signs along with online marketing alternatives. Some of the common items used include:

Local Paper Advertisements – In small communities, the local paper ranks high as an effective marketing tool. Local advertising rates are not expensive. As pointed out in the article noted just below, you need, as with all marketing, to have a focus and understanding of what you want your ad to accomplish. Advertising just because you think you should or someone has convinced you to do so is NOT a reason.

<https://businesstown.com/articles/the-secrets-to-effective-newspaper-advertising/> - Also provides tips on writing a good ad and answers some common questions

One final comment about advertising in local papers is to remember that they may not be publishing every day. Plus with their limited staff, you need to get your ad copy in early.

Local Radio and Television Advertisements – Like the local newspaper, these avenues can be effective. Each station has a regular audience, although that audience will vary by time of day and by each show. The station can work with you in identifying a time slot that will be most effective for your business. They typically have package deals that will also get your message in front of other audiences. With this in mind, you can set up a tracking system to build a more effective marketing plan.

Flyers – These can be used in many ways. You can insert with the paper, do a door-to-door campaign, stick on cars (be cognizant though of people just tossing them and creating a litter issue), posted on bulletin boards, included in a bill sent from another business, etc.

Tips on effective use and examples of flyers can be found here (<http://www.printaholic.com/15-tips-for-writing-effective-flyers/>). One of the key reminders is proof reading. Also keep it brief. Not on this list but often recommended is to focus on one item or one theme. Don't confuse the reader with multiple calls-to-action.

Direct Mail - If a cold email campaign can get a 16% return, think how well you might do using a database of people from the area, or even better, people who have been to your business before.

<https://www.marketingprofs.com/chirp/2017/31731/how-direct-mail-is-winning-in-the-age-of-the-internet-infographic>

Yellow Pages – Once considered the “must have” advertising platform, today's changes have made it less of a requirement. Your business will typically get a basic listing at no charge. Whether you do anything more depends on your audience. More and more people do not use, or even get, this source. However, they are often put online, thus becoming a part of your online presence you may not even think about.

Directories – Some communities will put together a directory of the businesses and services a person will find in the area. Also, you may have a group such as local foods, wineries, or scenic trail put something together.

There may be a reason to be listed in these. Again, it shows your support for the community. For new people in your town, it can be a useful tool. Finally, the directories are often placed online so you get another online presence with little effort on your part.

Promotions – Something you do that has a cost and promotes your entire business

Promotions are often thought of in terms of special events. But it is something bigger including:

- brochures
- give-aways – pencils, hats, flashlights, totes, etc.
- holiday events
- in-store events,
- sponsoring a bowling team,
- contributions and participation in community events,
- being on community or non-profit boards,
- service in elected positions,
- or any such activity that gets your business and your name in front of the public.

You will also promote your business through online channels (more later).

Promotions should include your business name and provide contact information. You should be using your colors and your logo. Your business card (see more at the beginning of this section as well as below) is also part of your promotional effort.

Cautionary note - Although often low in cost, business owners must remember that donations and sponsorships can, when totaled up, have a large fiscal impact making a hole in the bottom line.

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2016/05/your-small-business-and-donations.html>

This also is the category where you would put many of your **signs and banners** (see end of this section). Certainly some such items focus directly on selling a specific item (visual cues can be referred to as the “silent salesperson”), but often the intent is to let people know your business is open and ready to help.

The idea of promotions is to increase name recognition and your brand. It is best when you can participate in events that have a connection to your business, i.e., sponsor a fund raising for the local animal shelter when you run a pet-sitting service. You want to find things that interest and engage the audience. Promotions usually highlight the entire business or farmers’ market.

While promotion tools are many, these three are worth highlighting.

1. Local Cable Access or Public Access Television – Your community may have one or more local cable television channels. Public access is

less of an avenue for advertising products and services and more of a promotional channel for your business or market. Often equipment is available and you may get some help in editing the footage you take.

Such channels can be used to promote your business or a farmers market. You can use them to

- educate,
- in a “be the expert” show where you and various guests can answer questions and discuss new trends, and
- as a general show maybe about community events and local nonprofits and businesses, with you or one of your employees as host, your business as the sponsor, and even more employees doing editing and camera work.

Public access television tends to be slightly less effective as your message has much more competition. Again, know your audience and pick the show and time when that audience is online. Television is less likely to reach Gen X or Millennials.

Things you might do for a farmers market include:

- weekly show highlighting events at your market,
- in-season vegetables,
- recipes and cooking demonstrations,
- interviews with customers
- farmers to talk about their growing operation including vides in their gardens and fields.
- Question-and-answer sessions
- Trips to other local events
- Trips to other farmers markets

2. The Power of a Press Release - Getting timely coverage on local media outlets (television, print and/or radio) is a huge win for a small business. A story through one of these outlets is free and is a great way to bring attention to a special happening at your business, and will ultimately increase your brand awareness and sales.

You will find two fillable press release templates for you to consider using for upcoming events in the Appendix.

Quite often business owners will complain that their press releases don’t get picked up. Remember the following will help change that:

- They must be news
- They are more likely to get published if they are before the event
- You need to have a “hook” or something that grabs the reader’s attention and interest.
- They must identify with an audience

3. Be the Expert - One way to establish yourself and your business is to become the identified expert on a topic. This doesn't happen overnight. It happens gradually, quite often as you are writing informational articles that are being carried in various publications. Many local experts become that by having a column in the paper where they answer questions on their established topic.

You also can begin to establish connections with the traditional and online media outlets by providing timely information. A key to working with the media is to understand you need to be able to respond when they need you. Often the media is on a deadline and needs a quick response. Be prepared with some ready answers at your fingertips. It's best if you don't "wing it," but have some identified key points you want to cover.

Finally, get connected with influencers, those who are seen as people to watch and listen to. To do this, again, means being visible and making connections with them early and often. The connections you make must be focused, offering information, a new update, or a reflection on something they have done.

Resource: <https://www.inc.com/drew-hendricks/10-ways-to-establish-yourself-or-brand-as-a-thought-leader.html>

Signs and Banners

"Your business needs a sign even if customers rarely come to your door"

A discussion of business promotions would not be complete without thinking about signs and banners. For many businesses that first identifying element is the sign outside as people come in our door (<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2016/07/your-small-business-needs-a-sign.html>).

Your sign, using your colors and logo, is your mark in the visual world.

Your signs might be as large as a highway billboard or a "temporary marquee sign" on the street or a post-it note stuck on the wall. They can be lawn signs (be sure these are legal in your area).

For a farmers market display, your sign should be something that can be **read from 3-5 feet away**. The two most common pieces of information people want are **price and education**. Your signs must be durable and secure. You don't want someone hurt or frightened from your sign blowing away. You also may want to **let people know if you take electronic payments**.

Signs/banners may be stationary or mobile (your sign on your vehicle or a banner you take from show to show). You find signs anywhere, and everywhere – on a blimp, alongside the road, painted on buildings, on rocks, on the sidewalk, and on people and animals. They can be permanent or temporary. Use paint or chalk.

Signs should draw attention. So often we put a sign across our booth when at a trade show or even on the back wall of the booth. It is difficult to see that sign unless you are nearly directly in front of the booth. And those on the back wall must also overcome all of the other visual distractions in order to be read.

If possible, signs should come out from the store or booth. Plus the sign and the store name should offer some sense of what you provide.

Signs are used not only outside the business but should be within your business location. They may show prices or discuss how the product can be used. A sign could suggest other products to use in combination with an advertised one.

Signs direct people to your business, tell people about your business, and advertise your products and services.

Effective Signs and Banners

Did you know that your eye perceives a roadside billboard and a business card the same in terms of the space taken on your retina? And while you have 2 – 6 seconds to read a roadside billboard, you can take a business card with you for a reference.

Letter size – Below you will find some rules-of-thumb regarding how far away you can read letters of various sizes. You will also find information on how far you can read a certain size letter at different speeds.

Those rules though are developed in perfect conditions. The level of traffic, the height of your sign, the number of other signs competing with yours, and distractions can all make your sign literally disappear from registering with your intended audience.

<http://www.signsnow.com/distance-and-visibility>

Sign Legibility Rules of Thumb -

<https://www.usscfoundation.org/USSCSignLegiRulesThumb.pdf>

Signage - <http://blog.stouse.com/4-critical-factors-signage-letter-size-visibility/>

Depends on

thickness of letters

white space

Kerning (space between letters)

typeface

Color - <https://blog.smile.io/does-color-psychology-impact-customer-loyalty>

Contrast

Includes duration of readability – 4 inch letter at 65 mph has only 2.1 seconds

More Resources on Signs

- <https://smallbiztrends.com/2013/06/business-signs-work.html>

- <https://www.score.org/resource/business-signs-are-great-marketing-tool>
- <https://startupnation.com/grow-your-business/signage-important-marketing-tool-for-small-businesses/>

You can learn more about visual merchandising in Section 4 in the “Visual Merchandising” section.

Public Relations – Recognition you earn through your work and personal lives.

Public relations requires the least amount of money but takes the most time. It is an effort to build the business image.

Public relations often means working with the media. To do that effectively, one must develop a relationship with the media. Find the people who write on local issues and/or your type of business. Talk with them to determine what type of stories they are interested in. Offer to answer questions they may have. Send them articles about your business but also about the industry in general. Provide them information about the people working in the business, sponsorships of an event, and donations.

In addition, your public relations message occurs through actions of you and your business. Examples of such messages include:

- your environmental awareness and actions,
- shopping local,
- supporting and highlighting other local businesses, non-profits, etc.
- sponsoring a bowling team, soccer team, chess club, etc.,
- contributions and participation in community events,
- service and support of local projects
- being on community or non-profit boards, and
- service in elected positions,

This link takes you to a toolkit that is a great example of developing a good PR event. You may want to use a modified form of it for an event on your farm or at your market.

Visual Marketing (See more in Section 4 – Supplemental Tools)

All three of the traditional marketing categories, advertising, promotions, and public relations, plus the basic tools and the upcoming online tools, include a visual element. The visual element must have a consistent look. The look should be appealing and eye-catching. Logo use should be on everything and there should be a consistent color pallet used for all materials.

If you have a CSA and create posters to place around your community, a consumer should be able to connect this poster back to the banner that hangs at your booth at the farmers market and to the ad you have in the newspaper. You want people to be able to recognize your business without even seeing your name. That is part of your brand.

The visual pieces you need depend on where your business is operating. If your main source of sales is a farmers market, a well made banner that prominently shows your business name and logo is essential. If a CSA (community-supported agriculture) is your major outlet, a well designed promotional campaign during the CSA sign-up period will include a poster to hang at key locations in your distribution area. Or if the majority of your product sales are online, you may want to create a nice takeaway piece that can be left at high-traffic locations throughout your community that are supportive to your business.

If you sell directly at a farmers market, this is a great article from Modern Farmer, [Do's and Don'ts: Marketing At Farmers Markets](#). It highlights key things to remember when creating an engaging booth that will attract and retain customers. You will also find more information about signage and the visual aspect of marketing in Section 4

If you are selling product at a farmers market, at a fair or in a physical store, **make the experience as beautiful, friendly and visually interesting as possible**. You need a captivating physical experience that will catch the eye of your potential customers.

This same idea, being visually appealing, is also true for your social media and online efforts. That alone won't win customers but it will slow their scanning to dig deeper into your marketing material. Set the stage with beautiful, well-displayed products that load quickly and are easy to navigate.

If you're looking for some simple, effective ways to merchandise your booth to drive sales, and create engagement with your customer, check out this presentation called [Merchandising to Win: How to Merchandise Your Booth to Maximize Sales](#) from Ashley Morken, creative guru and owner of [Unglued](#), a modern craft and handmade shop in downtown Fargo, North Dakota.

The visual tool must extend to your packaging. Packaging is often considered to be as much a part of the sale as the product that is in the package.

Online

Today, the online space is a "must have" component of a successful marketing plan. While it need not be a big component, you need to be online.

Being online includes not only the efforts you take to get your business in front of the world, but it must include **seeing what others are doing**. How can you compete if you don't know what others are doing? You can look at sites of your competitors as well as find groups of individuals gathered around a common theme. One such group is:

e.g. - "Market Gardening Success Group" on Facebook

If you think about it, the online world is nothing new.



Reasons why you develop an online presence is to be where your customer base is. Even if the majority aren't there now, some are and others are rapidly moving in that direction. Currently, people age 60 and older show the highest rates of online adoption.

Rural needs ecommerce - <https://ruralengagement.org/2017/06/09/four-advantages-of-e-commerce-and-how-it-can-increase-your-profit/>

Another reason to be online is it is the best way to connect with people traveling to and through your community. An online presence provides a way to help people learn more about your business, check out your store hours, find you on the map, connect and engage with you, and learn about new items and upcoming promotions. And, of course, you can sell your products and services if you want.

An online presence also provides opportunities for online advertising and promotion. Think about how that might fit into your marketing strategy.

Being online may seem daunting and expensive, but it doesn't have to be. You can learn how to do much of the work yourself and there are tools that make it easier.

In all honesty, being online is probably not something you need to choose. You are probably there already with online maps and reviews. So why not take advantage of that presence?

The online world has many tools available. It is not possible or feasible that you would use them all. Let's take a look at some of the spaces you may already be as well as what may be the best places to start your online presence.

Claim Your Space

It is very possible that you already have an online presence. Often that presence begins with being listed on a map. So your first step is to claim your space on the online mapping sites. This involves:

- Conduct a vanity search to see what is already being said about you online. Search (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc) for your business and your name.
- While the search may lead you to review sites, you should check them directly for comments that have been made.
- Claim your bubble. If you have ever looked at an online map, you may have seen businesses already on the map. Yours may be one of those businesses. You need to claim it. Check the information listed and fill in missing details.
- Search your business on maps. Here are two examples – go to <http://www.gybo.com> or <https://www.bingplaces.com/> and discover if your business is already online. If it is you can claim your ‘bubble’ or you can create a bubble.
- And don’t forget the GPS systems – see information at <http://powerofbusiness.net/claim-your-business/>

More information about these first steps and more can be found at:

<https://www.slideshare.net/glennmuske/marketing-your-farm-or-farmers-market>
<http://powerofbusiness.net>

Website

A website is an incredibly valuable component of your marketing effort, and can be used for a number of strategies including storytelling/blogging, direct sales/CSAs, recipes, internship/job opportunities, upcoming events, and how to connect for further information. **We encourage it as your first online space.** The reason for saying this is it is the one space you have full control over. Social media sites are controlled by someone else. When they change the system, your efforts are lost.

To start a website, you will need to claim your domain (the name that appears in the web address bar). GoDaddy is one of largest domain purchasing sites and a good place to start. Search the name you want to appear in the “find your perfect domain” search bar. Ideally, this should be your business/farm name. If it is available, it will give you options to purchase the domain with various suffix (.com, .org, .net, etc.). The .com suffix is preferred as it is the most widely recognized.

When considering a website, you will need to determine is if you want to create your own website or if you want to hire someone to do it for you. It really boils down to your personal skills in this area and how much money and time you’re willing to spend. A key thing to remember is that if you hire someone to create your website, you want to own it (You need to own the code and the domain for the site.), have total control over it, and be able to make updates after the site has been created.

Essentially a website designer will probably build the “bones” of your website and create the original content. Future updates can be done by that designer or another person who

you may hire. It may be that you or an employee then will make frequent updates so as to keep your website fresh.

To do its job, a website needs to be nurtured, updated and maintained regularly. If a potential customer visits your website and finds information about a CSA sale you ran 3 years ago, that does not show a thriving business. Once an event or promotion is past, take it off the website.

If you have a few web skills and the ambition to build your own site, there are several online tools available for you to consider:

- [SquareSpace](#) is an easy, inexpensive website builder. It provides numerous templates to choose from, and gives pricing options that can allow for a simple personal website or a business site that allows for product sales and to accept donations.
- WIX
- Wordpress is another possibility. It is a blogging platform that allows you to develop websites with many pre-developed themes.

In developing a website you can find lots of information on what makes a good website – easy to navigate, descriptive, no grammatical errors, color, pictures, etc. In that list of to-do's you will also see a need for fast loading. Here are a couple of resources to help develop your site.

<https://testmysite.thinkwithgoogle.com/>

<http://www.socialmediatoday.com/technology-data/how-speed-affects-your-website-infographic>

Social Media

Before looking at specific social media platforms, you must understand the key to all of them. **The driver for each is being SOCIAL!!!**

In order for it to be successful, **you have to engage**. These platforms are not a place where you put information out there and that is the end of your work. You have to continuously communicate with your followers (aka current or potential customers) in order to keep them engaged. If they comment on a post, tweet or photo, respond as quickly as possible. If they share your post on their personal newsfeeds, thank them for the share. If they send you a personal message, respond.

Use your business page presence to engage off your own timeline. If you notice something that align or is of interest to your business, respond with your business voice. Example: If the farmers market you sell at creates an event for a Fall Festival, write a post from your business profile in the event page or post saying that you're excited to be involved and what you're bringing to the festival. Capitalize on existing social media audiences to continue to build your personal audience.

Again, they are social networks. You can mention a product or a sale you have and even a sale but do so in limited amounts only, 20% of the time or less. And remember that many of your "selling" posts will not get much of any reposting or engagement.

Start a Facebook page

Many business owners start with a Facebook page as their initial online presence. This may seem odd but it can work. They do it as Facebook is easy, intuitive and FREE! Plus it has a huge number of users.

Facebook makes it easy with [step-by-step instructions](#) to create your business page. You will need to have a personal account to do this (**Reminder – You will have both a personal profile and a business page!!!**), and if you’ve followed the previous recommendations in this toolkit, you should already have a logo that will be used as your profile picture. If you decide to pursue a Facebook page, it’s important that when you are working with a graphic designer to create your logo, they know this and they can create a complimentary cover photo. You are also free to use a personal image for the cover photo. Many farm businesses will use pictures of their food or farmstead. However, as you can see from the image below, the cover photo is prime real estate on your Facebook page and will likely be the first thing your customer sees when they visit your page. It should express who your business is and visitors should get this at first glance. (See more about photos and visual elements in Section 4).

Image: Facebook Banner - Profile Picture (AB) and Cover Photo (Ocean Beach)



When creating your Facebook page, you’ll need to write your “About” as well as “Your Story” but again, you should already have this from previous exercises.

After your page is created, it’s time to invite your friends and customers to “Like” your page and start posting. It’s important to find a rhythm as to how often you post. Posting at random or not often enough can leave your followers with a negative impression of your page. Likewise, posting too frequently can have an adverse effect.

Facebook has a handy free tool called “**Insights**” which you will be able to see at the top of your page home screen. This tool allows you to see each post and

how much engagement (post clicks, likes, shares and comments) and reach (number of unique users who saw your post). After you've created your Facebook page and begin posting, follow your insights closely to see what works and what does not. Try to determine the commonalities amongst successful posts and what may be lacking in those with less engagement and reach.

For more details on how to create a successful Facebook post, check out this HubSpot article titled "[The Anatomy of a Successful Facebook Post.](#)"

Introduction to Facebook:

http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/ebiz/files/msu_ebiz_facebook.pdf

Bricks to Clicks in Rural Areas – Marketing Your Business

http://srdc.msstate.edu/trainings/webinar%20recordings/2016/Bricks%20to%20Clicks-Barnes-5_10_16.mp4

Why Instagram?

Instagram is where you can make your product shine through visual content. Visual content (aka photos and videos) dominates on all social media platforms, and Instagram is purely visual content. It's a great way to capture the everyday process of your business and let your followers (aka customers) know what you're up to, and allow them to continue to engage with your brand.

All you need is a smart phone and an Instagram account and you're ready to go. One thing to note about Instagram is that posts must be made from a smartphone, not a computer. You can comment on posts from a computer, but original posts and modifications to posts can only be made through a smartphone.

So, what makes a good Instagram post? It varies widely but it really starts with a high quality image. Food is very popular on Instagram so for business growing or making food products, anything that visually engages people in the creation of your food will likely do well. Animals are also a hot button on Instagram so if there is a furry friend at or near your place of business, don't be afraid to include them on posts (except where food safety is an issue, of course). Also, don't be afraid to feature yourself in posts. Today's consumer is looking for more than just a product - they are looking for a relationship and an experience. Customers can establish a personal relationship with you at a farmers market or during your CSA deliveries, but you can continue to develop and nurture that relationship online. Don't be afraid to let your customer get to know you. After all, it is called **social** media.

One note about Instagram is that you want to make sure you're using great photos. That is what initially draws people in to become your followers and potential customers - compelling images. Most new smartphones are equipped with pretty decent cameras and with a little guidance and some practice, you'll be well on your way to taking great photos and creating an effective Instagram account. Check out this Huffington Post article, "[29 Instagram Hacks from People Who Take Really Good Photos](#)" to get started.

Need convincing about why you should be on Instagram? Check out this Forbes article, "[10 Reasons Your Brand Needs To Be On Instagram](#)."

One final note on Instagram, spend a little time perusing around the site to get a sense for what is posted and the tone used in posts. It's a little different than Facebook, so you'll want to spend a little time getting a lay of the land before you begin posting. However, don't spend too long contemplating whether or not you're ready to get on Instagram. Getting good at social media takes practice, so the best thing you can do is get on there and start trying.

If you're looking to find ideas for the tone and types of photos to post on Instagram, try following a few accounts that have similar business types to yourself. There are many farm and food businesses on Instagram, and each highlights different aspects of their business. Use a hashtag to find accounts that are similar to your own business. Some popular hashtags on Instagram are #farmlife, #smallfarm, #localfood, #meetyourfarmer and #farmersmarket. You can also search by your specific area of expertise (i.e. #womenwhofarm, #ancientgrains, #lefse, etc.)

Tweet on Twitter

Another popular social media site is Twitter. Some consider tweeting as doing a short blog (140 character max). It does accept photos and short videos. And again, hashtags are important.

http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/ebiz/files/msu_e_biz_twitter.pdf

Blogging

We have already discussed blogging. It is not a specific tool but a means of offering information usually through writing but also using pictures and video. It is growing rapidly in the local foods arena. It is great for storytelling and you, as the owner, can show other sides of who you are. Blogging has some of the highest interaction rates, great for building your community.

http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/ebiz/files/msu_ebiz_blogging.pdf

Video

Don't feel comfortable writing. Then perhaps video is your angle. Just like blogging, you can show how something is done or introduce people to your farm or market. You can also have get customer comments. YouTube is the current industry leader. Again, your smart phone and apps you can get for free are all you need.

If you enjoy creating and sharing video, there are also options to share videos (pre-recorded or live) on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Marketing experts project that video will continue to grow and dominate online content, so taking one small step in the door will be helpful as the media landscape changes.

Other Social Media Sites

You're likely aware of numerous other social media platforms that exist. Considering that most small businesses have limited time and manpower to run these other platforms, we have discussed what are those most used in the local foods/ farmers' market/ sustainable agriculture area.

However, you should not automatically rule out another tool just because we didn't mention it.

- Pinterest has lost some of its momentum but still has a large following in local foods, cooking, and gardening.
 - Guide to Pinterest advertising - <https://searchenginewatch.com/2017/05/22/a-visual-guide-to-pinterest-advertising/>
- LinkedIn, more often thought of as a business-to-business platform, might be where you connect with other market managers or producers.
- Podcasts is an audio recording, unlike video which has audio and visual tracks. It continues to have a solid audience of listeners.

Promoting Posts

Facebook and Instagram, and others, allow users to "boost" or promote posts. Boosting or promoting posts means that you pay for a specific post to be exposed to social media users who are not currently following your account. Boosting can be a very effective way to strategically build your audience, and to attract potential customers for specific opportunities.

Promoting posts is fairly cost-effective and for less than \$50, you can grow your audience, reach, and ultimately drive your sales.

It's important to note that you don't want to promote all posts, and you want to be strategic about when and why you decide to promote. Be thoughtful about what is worth it for you to boost. Certain events you host or attend that connect you with current or potential customers are good posts to boost because the dollars you spend to boost will hopefully translate into future sales. You don't want to boost posts too often because your social media account will lose the authenticity that your followers appreciate.

Read more about boosting and promoting in Section 4.

Email

Often forgotten in the social media hype is email marketing. While you may think of it as the junk mail of old, and it can be, today's tools allow you to focus on previous customers and/or individuals who have indicated they are interested in your business. (Social builds awareness; Email builds loyalty - <http://marketingland.com/email-vs-social-works-best-b2c-213020>). Email has high rates of effectiveness in comparison to other tools.

You can offer directed emails of new products or complements to existing products. You can remind customers of upcoming events, such as a birthday, and items you have that

may fit the need. You can also use email to send a regular newsletter or to brag about an achievement or award that one of your customers received

Tools like MailChimp and Constant Contact are available to help you manage your email marketing.

E-Commerce

If you mention having an online component to your small business, people will often think of having a web-based shopping platform. However as you have seen, and will continue to see, an online presence can mean many other things. In its full definition, not all ecommerce sites necessarily let you make purchases. Some are just online catalogues or sites that demonstrate how the product works. Some ecommerce definitions also include email and web services.

For the purposes of this marketing guide, however, we will just examine the electronic transaction, or market basket/ and sales, component of ecommerce.

A successful ecommerce site requires that you establish your credibility with the buyer. It starts with:

- An easy to navigate website
- Fast loading of pictures
- Clear, crisp pictures, usually taken from multiple angles – (“When a shopper is about to make a decision, there are few things more important than a product image” – Armando Roggio)
- Accurate color rendition
- Full and complete descriptions
- An “About Us” section that tells your story and helps the buyer connect with you.
 - Don’t know what you would say. Check out the big guys -
<https://smallbiztrends.com/2017/05/instagram-bio-examples-small-business.html>
- A review site completed by past purchasers
- Easy to use shopping cart
- A clear return and user complaint statement
- Although not required, consider “free shipping”

Today, the lines are more and more blurred as ecommerce only sites are opening stores and brick and mortar stores are moving into ecommerce. The biggest in each category, WalMart and Amazon, are going toe-to-toe more and more. Yet that doesn’t mean there isn’t room for you. Small businesses, with your defined niche, can find markets that the big players are not going to pursue.

An in-depth guide to ecommerce is available from <http://communityvitality.unl.edu/etailing> . You will also find additional resources listed below.

Other alternatives – Before leaving ecommerce, we need to remind you of alternatives to having your own sales site. Amazon allows other business owners to list products on their website (<https://services.amazon.com/content/sell-on-amazon.htm>). Also you might

try a site such as Etsy, Shopify, or eBay or other local or regional sites. Some states offer a local foods site such as Indiana Grown or the Oklahoma Food Cooperative.

Ecommerce Resources

Tips for a successful ecommerce site -

<https://smallbiztrends.com/2015/05/successful-ecommerce-business.html>

Ecommerce Checklist -

http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/ebiz/files/msu_ebiz_ecommerce_checklist.pdf

Ecommerce Resources –

http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/learning_center.html

Check out: Direct Marketing Food Specialty Products for ideas.

SRDC - <http://srdc.msstate.edu/ecommerce/ebiz/index.html>

Online Resources

Poor website will cost your business - <https://smallbiztrends.com/2017/04/poorly-designed-websites.html>

<https://www.slideshare.net/glenmuske/social-media-helping-customers-find-the-farmer-part-3>

Entrepreneur's Guide to Facebook Advertising

https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/292516?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email

Social media and Email Marketing Tips to Increase Farm Market Sales -

<https://learn.extension.org/events/2138>

Small Businesses Must Get Big on Social Media -

http://www.bostonherald.com/business/business_markets/2017/04/booting_up_small_businesses_must_get_big_on_social_media

Farm Business and Marketing, presented by Farmers' market Federation of NY, offers tips on making your market sizzle, social media in general, and information about getting started with the major social media tools.

<http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/farm-business-and-marketing/>

Ag and Social Media - <https://causematters.com/ag-social-media/>

10 Reasons Why to Shop Your Local Farmers Market – video with linked resources for your use - <https://www.nutrition.gov/farmers-markets>

Section 3 – Putting It All Together

Okay, so you now have a full toolbox. Now how can you use them effectively? What tool do you use when and how often do you use a tool? It's strategy time.

Begin with your goals in mind. Most owners think about increasing sales. That's a great short-term goal. But you need to think long-term. Think about increasing visibility, enhancing your reputation, or building your brand. You want to ensure longevity. Check out these examples to think broadly in building your marketing plan.

<https://www.dragonsearch.com/blog/common-online-marketing-campaign-goal-objective-examples/>
<http://www.winmarketing.co.uk/business-and-marketing-objectives.html>

To develop achievable goals, you need to know who is your customer and what your customer wants.

Know Your Audience

In understanding the customer, you must know who your likely customer is, what is the problem, and what tool will reach them? Describe them in such terms:

Demographics – Age, gender, education, occupation, location
Income
Experience level (Remember, this is a perception)

Life-style – Adventuresome, open-minded, tried-and-true, level of self-confidence

Children in the household?

Marketing to Moms - <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/social-business/5-things-brands-need-know-about-marketing-moms-infographic>

Product use – light vs heavy, at home, professional vs amateur
How does he or she feel about adoption of new innovation?

What feeling/emotion are you trying to elicit from the customer – safety, security, well-being, happy, fear, amuse, entertain, excite, etc.

What is the customer's knowledge level? Do you need to educate or just inform?

What perceptions do they have?

What marketing are they aware of about the item and what it can do?

Where is your ideal customer in their life cycle?

What's their generation?
Who are their peers?

Generational Marketing -
<http://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2016/09/28/generational-marketing-tactics>

Generations: What Matters -
<http://digitalsparkmarketing.com/generational-differences/>
Marketing to Millennials video with Megan Myrdal -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ocjygFN-Lyg&index=9&list=FLPpvPIptL24gG3CbY8_WRbg

Boomers- - brand, items are a commodity
Gen-Xers – deals, time saving, cynical, items are individualized
Millennial – Review, word-of-mouth, experience
Generation Z – young so hard to define, security; peers important;

Where do these generations get information and make purchases?

A Cautionary Note on Generational Breakouts -
<https://searchenginewatch.com/2017/05/23/targeting-generational-buzzwords-like-millennials-means-targeting-no-one/>

As you see there are many ways to identify your customer. While you don't need a complete profile, the better the profile, the better you can target your marketing.

This article shows you just how you might use this information to target a specific audience when doing a Facebook ad or promotion - <https://fizzle.co/sparkline/facebook-ad-targeting>

NOTE: In terms of local foods, the Farmers Market Coalition has identified that the largest purchasing power for local foods is families with children and retirees.

As part of your customer profile, it is important to know how you can engage them with your business. The engagement part is crucial. Customers want a two-way conversation. Businesses that fail to listen are less likely to build the “ambassador” or customers who help spread your story.

Set Your Goals

With the information you have, you can create SMART goals for your marketing strategy, a critical piece for success. SMART goals help you determine what you want to accomplish and when.

- Specific – Are your goals clearly defined?
- Measurable – Can you measure your goal?
- Attainable – Can you achieve your goal?
- Relevant – Is this goal important to my business?
- Time-Bound – When will you accomplish this goal?

To learn more about writing SMART goals - <http://powerofbusiness.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Creating-Online-Marketing-SMART-Goals-Print.pdf>

So you have a customer profile and the best way/s to engage them. Now think about:

- Identify any special events, holidays, or promotions you want to run.
- Keeping your business and its message in front of your target audience on a regular basis.

As you develop the goals, understand what you want from each one. Examples include:

- Get a lead for a potential customer
- Sell a product
- Engage with customers
- Have customers download a PDF
- Have customers achieve a desired Call to Action (CTA)

Resources

While it is important not to let resources, time and money, dictate your marketing plan (a lot of marketing can be simply great bootstrapping (<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2016/07/what-gets-in-the-way-of-your-small-business.html>), you need to keep your plans grounded in reality. Most of you don't have enough resources to do everything you want. It may be best to start small and build as you feel more comfortable with the tool. This is true for your marketing efforts but especially true for social media..

Tools by Audience Type

Remember that different tools may work better for different customers. (A product demonstration might be done by video while encouraging people to come to the market might be a group of pictures on Instagram or a Facebook Live video). **The best way to find that tool is to ask your customer.** At the same time, get their contact information such as email address, physical address, and phone number if possible. Direct marketing campaigns continue to have good success rates as do email marketing campaigns.

While there are some general guidelines in terms of what audiences are most likely to be reached by various tools, it is important to caution yourself about making generalizations. Your audiences may not fit the mold. Successfully marketing to them may require a completely different approach.

Here are some general information identifying what audiences use what tools.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Audience_segmentation
<http://www.mediaocean.com/digital-marketing-guide/audience-targeting>
<https://searchenginewatch.com/2017/05/15/how-marketers-can-position-their-company-to-grow-with-generation-z/>

By generation

Boomers- - traditional tools but are fastest growing group of online users
Gen xers – Online – no time so hard to catch – short, use lots of information, email/direct mail – mutli-media, available when they want

Millennial – live for today, want it now; creative and cutting edge;
interactive/engaged; local; do good; example – podcast versus radio
Generation Z – TV; Online; Virtual

<http://www.aabri.com/manuscripts/10575.pdf>

In rural areas

Local papers do well
Bulletin boards in grocery stores and cafes do well for printed flyers
Announcements in local churches
Rural people listen to the radio although with precision ag available, more
farmers are listening to podcasts and checking social media while sitting
in the tractor.

Marketing – What, When and How

What to Post

Once all your accounts are up and running, what goes in them (i.e. what do my followers/customers want to know about)? This “what” is typically referred to as **CONTENT**.

Determining what to post depends on your customers - their wishes and needs along with your goals. Remember if you are talking about social media, the goal is **SOCIAL**. Certain media types are better for each one.

To drive engagement, posting the everyday happenings in your business life can be effective. Photos and videos really bring a post to life, so as much as possible, snap a photo or take a video. It can be as simple as seeing the first seedling pop out of the ground, snapping a photo and captioning it with “Spring is here!” This simple post might seem useless from a sales perspective, but it keeps your followers engaged with what is happening, and is a simple reminder that you’ll be sharing food in the near future.

If you’re looking to attract CSA customers, sharing photos of previous CSA boxes or delicious recipes made with CSA ingredients with links to where people can register is effective.

As a local food purveyor, you’re probably fully aware of what seasonal food gets people really excited. Once you have them, be sure to share it in your various marketing platforms.

The main thing to do is make sure you keep posting. Also, don’t be afraid to highlight things that are happening that are related to your industry or community. As a business owner and expert in your field, your followers are interested in your perspective on topics that relate to your business.

And, if you’re totally at a loss for what to post, fall back on a great recipe or a cute animal.

How often to post

Marketing is not a one-time thing nor is it done when you make the sale.

- It takes **3-5 times to remember your business exists and 7-10 times to take action!**
- People will forget 40% of what they have seen or heard within 3 days and nearly 90% within a week.
- Remember that people are exposed to 3000-5000 marketing messages per day (depending on how these are counted).

Being strategic about what, when, where, how often and how much you post. Learn from experience. Trial and error is a great guide.

In terms of social media, experts suggest 2 posts per day in Facebook, 3 posts in Twitter, and 2 posts per day in Instagram (<https://blog.bufferapp.com/how-often-post-social-media>). And if you blog, the recommendation is once a day and you should update your web page weekly.

Yet, this answer gets into the question of resources. For either **Facebook or Instagram, one post per day might cover your need.** Yet for Twitter, with a very short shelf-life, two posts per day, at different times, is probably the minimum.

Pictures and smartphones make this task easier. Also, content management tools, such as Hootsuite, let you work efficiently by scheduling posts in advance. .

In terms of blogging, once a week might be your goal.

All of these are basic guidelines. Specific campaigns or audience needs may require you to be very flexible.

For more thoughts on how often to post, check out these links:

<http://www.shortstack.com/how-often-you-should-post-to-social-media-infographic/>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3036184/the-best-and-worst-times-to-post-on-social-media-infograph>

<http://socialmediafuze.com/how-often-small-businesses-post-social-media/>

Regular presence is key!!

Time of Day to Post

From experience, we know that people are busy and have schedules that change. Although we start marketing for a workshop at least six weeks out, most of our

enrollment comes in the last week and actually in the last day before the deadline. Specific advertisements seem to work best the day before or the day it actually starts.

According to October 5, 2016 article in Entrepreneur Magazine –

“The best times to post vary by industry, channel and target audience. On five of the major social media networks -- Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Pinterest -- user interaction peaks at certain times. The report reveals that Thursday at 5 p.m. (all times Eastern) is an ideal time to send out a tweet, while Thursday at 8 p.m. provides the greatest chance of a customer clicking, liking, sharing or commenting on a Facebook post.”

A good set of guidelines of when to post is available from TopNonProfits - <https://topnonprofits.com/posting-guide/> . Once you know your audience though, these may need to be modified.

Other resources suggest that the best times to post are early morning, as work starts, over the lunch hour, and at the end of the work day. Another good time is the middle of the evening. Again, these are only guidelines and you need to do your own analysis.

Idea - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-times-post-pin-tweet-social-media-infographic#sm.0000005u3ug2ytfm6zj51a3ibydrj>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3036184/the-best-and-worst-times-to-post-on-social-media-infograph>

And while there are better times to post, it is agreed that the worst time to post is never. However, there are tools, such as Hootsuite, that let you do your posts on your timeline but have them posted at your audiences' preferred times. (Just a reminder – if you are posting across various time zones, you need to take that into consideration.)

Mapping Out the Strategy

Once you have identified your marketing goals, it is important to lay out the details. More than dollars, time always seems to be the limiting factor. There are only so many hours in a day and you are wondering how can I add this to my To Do List?

When building your strategy:

- Identify each tool you will use and how often it will be used - Make a List
- Assess the Value
- Be Honest
- Be Flexible
- Cut the Cord – What can you let go of completely or assign to someone else?

Watch this video to get a clearer idea of how to prioritize - <https://youtu.be/FWx6dzsqAjo>

Download this pdf to easy reference - <http://powerofbusiness.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Creating-Social-Media-Strategy-Print.pdf>

Tracking Your Planned Marketing

In order to track the plans you make, find a tool you like. Most people do it using a spreadsheet. We have developed one for your use (Appendix A). We have also included other examples or you can easily develop your own.

<http://powerofbusiness.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Making-Time-Content-Calendar.pdf>

Two additional examples for mapping out when you are marketing event/advertisement/post/etc are also available. Although the one plan indicates it is only for social media, it would be simple to also include all of the tools you will use. The second plan includes information on if the marketing is local or national or if is part of a sales campaign (or the purpose of the ad) or PR or market research.

Resources –

- <https://offers.hubspot.com/thank-you/excel-templates-to-make-marketing-easier>
- <https://www.smartsheet.com/free-marketing-plan-templates-excel>
- Multi-function spreadsheet that will incorporate all marketing tools - <https://smallbusinesssavvy.com.files.wordpress.com/2017/04/example-marketing-calendar.xlsx> .
- Social Media Marketing Map – Univ of Utah Extension - Summary article with link - <https://www.joe.org/joe/2015august/tt3.php>
 - Map only - https://usu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0dCByPY8A0Q5Dr7
- Spreadsheet designed for social media but easy to include other tools - <https://offers.hubspot.com/thank-you/excel-templates-to-make-marketing-easier>
- Spreadsheet includes information on if the marketing is local or national or if is part of a sales campaign (or the purpose of the ad) or PR or market research. - <https://www.smartsheet.com/free-marketing-plan-templates-excel>

Building A Brand, A Movement

A BRAND

The term “brand” is used often when talking about business marketing. The term encapsulates multiple elements that are important to your business and product.

A Brand is:

- what consumers know and believe about your business
- your company's face in the marketplace
- how consumers respond to what they know and believe about your company
- your way of differentiating yourself within the marketplace
- why people shop your store and buy your products rather than a competitor's

When people hear the word brand, most think of a brand name like Coca-Cola or Nike, but when we think about a brand more completely, it's not just the specific product, but what your

customer thinks of when they hear your name. It's the specific qualities and attributes that they associate with your product or service.

One of the key tenants of creating a solid brand is authenticity. This is something that's difficult for large companies, but easier for small. Most small businesses are able to provide an authentic brand and consumer experience because, unlike major manufacturers, you have opportunities to engage directly with your customers through farmers markets, CSAs, and other direct sale outlets.

Moments to meet with current and future customers provide not only the opportunity to make direct sales, but also offer marketing opportunities. How can you make these moments more special for your customer? What value-adds are they getting because they are buying from you? Is it a special ribbon or a handwritten note thanking them for their business? Is it a favorite family recipe your sharing to compliment what they've purchased. Always think about how you can make your customer feel valued and appreciated.

However, even though small businesses have an advantage in the authenticity department, they sometimes fail to properly define and articulate their brand. This goes back to knowing the why of your business and putting that forward in everything that you do, including your public and social presence. You must have a solid identity and logo in order to allow others to understand and articulate who you are and what you do.

Your customers are that and more. They have the potential to be a valuable asset, or liability, for your company in the marketing department. Help them to know as much about you and your business as possible. Show them your why, and reward them when they help to continue to amplify your brand awareness. It can be as simple as thanking them for a review, referral or social media post, a handwritten thank you, or a special gift of your choosing. Again, the more your customers love not only your product but also your brand, the better you'll be.

Want more information about branding including what business owners think of it. Then go to: <http://communityvitality.unl.edu/directmarketingfood> . Register and then head to page 12 for more help.

A Movement

All companies and brands aspire to grow - engaging more customers and ultimately building a more successful business. But when does a brand move beyond a brand and become a movement?

Local food businesses are in a particularly interesting place to move a company from a brand to part of a larger movement. Why? The ideals and values that are behind the growing national movement to use more local food are at the core of many local food businesses (small, family-owned, locally focused, sustainable practices, etc.). Your customers are already primed through this national conversation and just need you to give the extra nudge to see how you are connecting them with the larger movement. How can you do that?

Live your mission: If you are a small local food business, live your mission through how you conduct your business and where you spend your money. Proudly support other local businesses and when you do, share that experience on social media. If the dollars you earn at the farmers market are used to buy supplies at the local hardware store,

share this experience on social media. Thank you customers for patroning you, and that this this allows you to continue to patron other great locally owned businesses. This is real and allows consumers to know that the dollars they give to you are staying in their local community. It makes customers feel that they are contributing to something beyond the themselves.

Be human centered: To grow your business beyond just a business - to be something that customer feel they not only want to a part of - you must be human centered. This can be seen as two-fold.

- The first is your customer. You have to be thinking about the experience, behaviors and motivations of your customer and be thinking of new ways to serve them. What are your customers asking for? What services are you offering that make your customer feel valued? If you have a regular customer, ask how they enjoyed the products they purchased last week. If they posted something on social media that referenced using your foods, acknowledge that action on social media, as well as in person. This blending of the lived and social media experience is vital for authentic relationship building.
- The second is those who work with you. You want everyone who is involved in your business to feel valued, appreciated and excited to be doing the work they are doing. Make sure your staff understand who you are and why you're doing what you're doing. Whether it is your accountant, a summer intern, or a great friend who helps you make large batches of barbeque sauce a few times a year, these people are part of your business and are therefore by default in your marketing toolbox. Make sure they understand and feel a part of the work you're doing, and that they are able to explain this to others who may ask.

Resource

Standing Out From the Competition Through Branding -

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=cvicollect>

Section 4 – Supplemental Tips and Tools

The information to this point introduced a set of marketing tools and discussed how to develop a strategy to market your products and services along with your business. This section will add additional tools and tips to enhance that strategy even further. These tips and tools include:

- Specific Farmers and Farmers Market Marketing Thoughts
- A Call-to-Action or “The Ask”
- Online Advertising or Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising
- Partners
- The Visual Element
 - Taking Good (Food) Photos
 - Using Video
 - Visual Merchandising
 - The Silent Salesperson
 - Effective Signage - How Large Should Letters Be?
- Logos
- Being Consistent
- Local
- Service

Specific Farmers and Farmers Market Marketing Tips

Get listed in local foods directories. Check with your state’s tourism and/or agriculture department for directories, calendars of events, etc. as places to list your market or your farm. Also, connect with your local chamber of commerce/tourism effort to get include in their marketing materials.

Make sure you have an appealing Farmers Market Display

http://www.uvm.edu/newfarmer/marketing/marketing_resources/FarmersMarketDisplay.pdf

Tune Up Your Farm Market Booth to Boost Sales -

<https://learn.extension.org/events/1659>

Farmers’ Market Display Checklist -

http://www.uvm.edu/newfarmer/marketing/marketing_resources/FarmersMarketDisplayChecklist.pdf

Do’s and Don’ts When Marketing at Farmers Markets -

<http://modernfarmer.com/2014/07/dos-donts-marketing-farmers-markets/>

A Variety of Ideas for Promotions and Special Events -

<https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/types/promotion-and-special-events/>

Farmers Market Promotion: Special Events - <http://igrow.org/community-development/local-foods/farmers-market-promotion-special-events/>

New Farmers (And Market Managers) Guide - <http://www.davisfarmersmarket.org/new-farmers-guide/New%20Farmers%20Guide-v9.pdf>

A Call-to Action or “The Ask”

When people see your message do you ask them to do something. In the traditional world, this was simply called “the ask.” In today’s online world, it is referenced as a “call-to-action” (CTA).

Both of these focus on reality that people rarely will take action without being asked. So you need to be sure to have a CTA or ask for every marketing piece. The “ask” may be to buy. But it also may be to contact you, to read more, or to get more information.

The CTA can be done with great wording and visual cues. But don’t get cute and make people think about what you want. Make it visible. Ask the reader to do something.

CTA Defined - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/what-is-call-to-action-faqs-ht#sm.0000005u3ug2ytfm6zj51a3ibydri>

CTA Examples - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/great-call-to-action-examples#sm.0000005u3ug2ytfm6zj51a3ibydri>

Online Advertising

Earlier we examined the major online tools used in marketing. Yet, many small business owners are disappointed in the results they get from them. There are several reasons for this including the huge numbers of users making your business website, posts and emails only one of many received by the audience. Because of the numbers, the fact that your audience is not online 24/7, and the time pressure people feel, your posts have a relatively short life (A tweet is only viable for maybe 30 minutes and a Facebook post for a couple of hours).

Today, many marketers try to remedy this lack of numbers by turning to the advertising capacity available from most social media sites and search engines (e.g., Facebook ads and promotions; Google AdWords; Instagram ad, Twitter promote). These marketing opportunities are often called pay-per-click (PPC).

Good Starting Piece - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/managing-and-organizing-google-adwords-campaigns#sm.0001lhr4jpntvfihryy1ro7pesahv>

Pay-per-Click Primer - <http://www.ppchero.com/learn-the-basics-of-testing-ad-copy-a-ppc-primer/>

Pay-per-Click - <http://www.wordstream.com/ppc>

Pay-per-Click pitfalls - <https://smallbiztrends.com/2017/03/ppc-pitfalls-small-business.html>

Facebook Business - <https://www.facebook.com/business/>

An Effective Facebook Ad Campaign - <http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-set-up-an-effective-facebook-ad-campaign/>

A Primer for Google AdWords - <https://smallbiztrends.com/2017/04/google-adwords-tutorial.html>

Compete with Google AdWords - http://www.wordstream.com/download/docs/compete_in_adwords.pdf

Like any other marketing tool, PPC can be effective if you take the time to learn it and test, test, test – different messages, different CTAs, different visuals, different times, etc.

Partners

Looking for partners is a great way to help stretch your marketing resources. It may also bring new potential markets to your door. You can partner with:

- Like businesses – Develop a directory
- Like businesses even further by developing a “trail” or a focused theme. You can also bring in other businesses who might support aspects of an engaged experience
- Focus on a local area – a community or geographical area
- Focus on an event
- Cross-promotion - <https://townsquared.com/ts/resources/cross-promotion/>

As you think about developing partnerships, this article will help guide your development. <https://www.inc.com/magazine/201504/erin-geiger-smith/tipsheet-the-tricky-art-of-parenting.html>

The Visual

Taking Good Food Photos

Good food photos have you tasting the food while seeing it only with your eyes. Often it is done with the camera above and slightly off to the side of the food. Yet, it can also be done at eye-level of someone about to take a bit. Lighting is crucial. Try to avoid harsh shadows. And the food must look fresh so for the camera it is often somewhat under-cooked.

To provide you with more guidance, we contacted our colleagues and got a list of resources to help you take good food photos.

Food Photography: Lighting and Compositional Basics - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AeNvLM3nfc>

Great Food Photos - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4T2I1AaEqM4>

How to Make a Lightbox to Photograph Food - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26mMPKS83c4>

How to Photograph Food for a Professional Look - <https://www.lightstalking.com/how-to-photograph-food/>

How to Photograph Food - <https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/how-photograph-food>

Creating Quality Images - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jy7ZH4yxKVw&feature=youtu.be>

Examples of Food Photos for Ideas Via Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/foodphotography/>

Photo, Images and Logo Sizes and Copyright

Practically every marketing tool you will work with has preferences. One of the preferences you will see is in terms of photo and image size. If you realize these sizes ahead of time, it makes it easier for you to work with that platform.

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/ultimate-guide-social-media-image-dimensions-infographic>

It's also important to understand that copyright laws prevent you from just using any image you find. This article provides a good overview of this topic.

<https://mediablog.prnewswire.com/2017/03/29/blogging-copyright-issues/>

Making Data Easier to Understand – Infographics

<https://nextgenerationextension.org/2017/06/02/9-resources-for-infographics/>

Video Best Practices

Just like pictures, video is a great marketing tool. And with smart phones, you always are ready to capture the scene. It can have voice or be just silent. It is a great way to show the set-up and use of a product or to teach/demonstrate.

Make sure you have plan out your message. Indicate what the topic is, then offer the message, and do a summary. People who want the information or becoming engaged by your message will watch 3 – 5 minute videos. However, 30 second videos are increasingly popular with some only 16-20 seconds in length. All of these lengths have about the same conversion rate.

A lot of editing is typically not necessary. Consumers are accepting raw video shots. You can do some titles, headers, music and transitions to improve the flow of your video. When shooting the video, consider using a tripod to eliminate some of the bounce although new apps are finding ways to take care of much of that as well.

Resources for how to take good videos include the following:

<http://marketingland.com/video-ads-direct-response-whats-best-length-209996>

Effective Video - <https://blog.bufferapp.com/video-marketing-tips>

<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/agcomm/training/how-to-capture-quality-video>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Good-Video>

<http://www.techradar.com/how-to/phone-and-communications/mobile-phones/10-tips-for-shooting-better-video-on-your-smartphone-1316097>

<https://www.cnet.com/videos/shoot-better-video-with-your-smartphone/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4mDk45VNN1k>

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/10-simple-tips-to-record-great-looking-home-videos/>

<http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/10-steps-to-successful-video-blogging/>

Visual Merchandising

By now, you have probably figured out the importance of the visual element in your marketing. The next time you stop to read an advertisement, think about what made you stop. Chances are it was a picture or an image. If it was a word, it wasn't just a line a text but just a few words in color or bold or both. The same holds true in the display of your merchandise.

Developing good visual merchandising skills can be something you learn. It comes with practice, practice, practice. Also, take a look at what others do. This site will give you lots of ideas - <https://www.pinterest.com/explore/farmers-market-stands/?lp=true>



<https://www.slideshare.net/glennmuske/visual-merchandising-the-silent-salesperson-74259216>

Logos

Part of your brand needs to be an identifiable logo. Many businesses have both a phrase and a visual element in their logo.

Examples of phrases you would recognize include:

Just do it – Nike
Think different – Apple
Got milk – California Dairy Board – Don't remember California
Priceless -There are some things money can't buy – Master Card
Melts in your mouth, not in your hand – M & M's
The Quicker Picker Upper – Bounty
Betcha can't eat just one – Lay's
Can you hear me now? – Verizon

Examples of visual logos you instantly recognize include:

Coke
FedEx
Target
McDonalds
Nike

Marketing is Being Consistent and Constant

Your marketing message needs to be consistent in terms of message, colors, pictures, and logo.

It also must be constant. Remember that it takes 3 to 5 times to remember your business exists and 5-10 times of seeing your message before people will take action. On average, we forget about 40% of the marketing messages seen within 24 to 48 hours and nearly 75% in five days.

And once you have a customer, don't let them forget you exist. Even with companies that we do business with, our chance of returning drops rapidly. If I am not back in your store, depending somewhat on what you are selling, within a month, my chances of returning drop by 50%. In three months, you only have about a 25% chance of me returning if nothing is done to remind me to come back. Online marketing has been a big plus in that regards.

Repeat customers are highly profitable -
<https://www.sweettoothrewards.com/blog/repeat-customers-profitable-stats-to-prove/> .
Do what you can to remind me you are open and to bring me back.

Local

Three to four years ago, a new marketing approach, so-lo-mo, became quite popular. The three parts to it included social, local and mobile. Social and mobile are today both well-established as crucial marketing elements.

The local part of this effort has taken a little longer to catch on but is rapidly growing in importance. What can we do with local? Think about the recent Pokeman Go craze. It is a location-based game using mobile technology. Clever business owners found ways to use the game in their marketing effort. Or watch your smartphone as you wander into stores today. You will find it suggesting products or telling you that you can use your phone to pay your bill.

Local began with mobile ecommerce but today is so much more. Geolocation, geotargeting, and geotagging have all become part of the marketing tools available. Here is an example of how tracking can be used.

<http://www.gizmodo.co.uk/2017/04/exclusive-heres-what-museums-learn-by-tracking-your-phone/>

Service

Although common sense, don't forget the service aspect of your business. It's required. Service resides in both the traditional as well as in online service. By using both, you are better equipped to quickly see and respond to disappointed customers.

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2016/01/understand-your-customers-online-service-expectations.html>

<http://smallbizsurvival.com/2013/10/weakness-2-poor-customer-service.html>

Section 5. Getting Results or How do you know your marketing is working?

Marketing uses substantial amounts of resources, time and money. It is important to test your campaign before you fully commit to running it. You need to get a ROI (return on investment) when it is over. The return you want is based on the goals you spelled out when starting. Your goal may be sales or foot traffic or likes or increased reviews. All help you build your business for the long term.

So what do you test? Practically anything and everything. Try various pictures or titles. You should also think about the action words or key words you use. If you are doing something online, you may want to try different landing pages to see which one gets the results you are looking for.

Remember that the results will differ depending on the platform the customer is viewing the information. For example, in one test pictures with people had a more effective response rate on desktop computers but pictures without people worked better on a mobile device.

Marketing can be critiqued based on several criteria but really the only one that counts is performance or “are you getting what you want?” If you are, great; if not, can you modify what you are doing or should you just start over?

Answering this question means understanding your goal; evaluating the results; and making modifications to the process.

This section does not intend to cover this topic in detail. We just want to introduce the concepts as a reminder of the need to evaluate in order to achieve success.

What’s Your Goal?

Staying on track starts at the beginning. As indicated, you need to know what your goal is so that you know what you want to measure. Goals are often in one of the following categories:

- Engagement & Brand Building – trust, rapport, loyalty, ambassadors,
- Sales – new ideas,
- New Prospects – benefits, objections, picture life with the product
- Understanding – current frustrations,

And in order to be able to measure remember to develop SMART goals (See Appendix), goals that are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Attainable
- Realistic
- Time-related

When developing goals, it is good practice to have interim goals to evaluated as the campaign progresses and some final goals.

Evaluation

When you think evaluation, a common term used is ROI or return on investment. This can be a measure of sales to the cost of the campaign but may also be a measure of garnered “actions” as to the goal set in advance.

As already noted, the actions can be a “like” but today likes are often considered just a vanity measure. What you want instead are actions and engagement by the consumer such as going to a landing page, commenting on a post, joining a group, or walking into a store to look at a specific item.

With the advent of technology and social media, gathering such data is becoming easier all of the time. This article provides a nice example of Facebook Insights, or analytics FB gathers for you - <https://blog.bufferapp.com/facebook-insights>

All social media platforms offer some level of evaluation data. For webpage performance, you can use tools such as Google Analytics. Plus you can do some simple counts on your own.

For traditional marketing, vendors can often provide some overall statistics. You will need to develop a tool to help you gather additional data. Make the tool as easy to use as possible. Don't gather more information than you need.

REMEMBER - You need to differentiate ads so that you can see what is working.

Revising – Testing and evaluation are good steps but results most often occur when you analyze the data and make changes. Analysis should be on-going and at the end of the campaign. Changes during the campaign focus on tweaks and changes to enhance what is happening. You may also decide to close the campaign early. After a campaign, you determine if your goals were met and if you should do something similar again. If so, when and what changes would you make.

An example of evaluation we did for one of our efforts can be found at:
<https://www.slideshare.net/glenmuske/nacdep-2015-are-we-entrepreneurs>

Additional Resources - The following resources will help you get what you want from your marketing effort.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Marketing Campaigns – Although an online focus, the concepts can work with traditional marketing just as well -

<https://www.cleverism.com/how-to-measure-effectiveness-of-marketing-campaigns/>

How to Measure Your Marketing Efforts – The article talks a great deal about costs, it discusses the idea of qualitative as well as quantitative strategies and some possible goals. <https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-measure-your-marketing-efforts-2295830>

Counting Your Market Visitors – If you run a farmers market, you will want to look at these tools to help you know how many people are coming to your events. -

<https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/counting-visitors-markets/>

Why Social Media Isn't Working – It Must be Fun -

<http://quickbooks.intuit.com/r/marketing/why-social-media-isnt-paying-off-for-your-business/>

A good overview look at testing with information on testing Twitter, Twitter tweets, Facebook, Facebook posts, and LinkedIn. - <https://blog.bufferapp.com/social-media-tests-ideas-strategies>

Testing Ad Copy - <http://www.ppchero.com/learn-the-basics-of-testing-ad-copy-a-ppc-primer/>

Section 6: Closing Thoughts

Marketing:

Everything You Do!

“Build it and they will come” is a myth.

It must be done on a regular basis.

Online is a must.

Online is nothing new – Just different tools for doing the same thing.
You are probably already there.

The “must” is not only to let people know of your business but to see what others are doing!

Quit and your audience quickly forgets (and your competitors love you).

Ever Changing

Marketing is your key to a sustainable business. Advertising may get products out of the door one time, marketing is what brings people back time after time.

Effective marketing doesn't just happen. It is planned with goals and measurement of the results. It's knowing the audience. What tools connect with them, how can you engage them, and what message will bring them to action?

The tools you use today must include online as well as traditional. This article offers thoughts on this changing landscape (How Social Media is Changing the Way We Market - <http://www.farmersmarketstoday.com/how-social-media-is-changing-the-way-we-market/>).

New tools and new ways to use existing tools will continue to develop and audiences will change in the ways that they connect with your business. Today, a Facebook Live event at your farmers' market might be an opportunity. Tomorrow it might be a virtual reality event or using influencer marketing as part of your online ads. Certainly more personalization will be a part of marketing.

Facebook Live - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/facebook-live-guide#sm.0000005u3ug2ytfm6zj51a3ibydrj>

Virtual reality - <http://blog.marketo.com/2017/02/virtual-reality-is-now-a-marketing-reality-gifographic.html>

Influencer marketing - <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhall/2016/04/17/the-influencer-marketing-gold-rush-is-coming-are-you-prepared/#46f556bc34fb>

Personalization - <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/283517>

It is important that one realizes these tools are not the whole of what customers consider when deciding where they will do business. Things such as service and price also form part of the equation.

Good luck with your marketing. Don't worry if you may not get it right. Just keep trying. The worst thing you can do is to have no marketing at all.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Name

Email

Phone

[Insert Business/Farm Name] INVITES COMMUNITY FOR HARVEST TOUR

[City/State] - [Insert Business/Farm Name] welcomes the community to tour the farm and get a taste of harvest on [insert date, time] at [insert farm name and address].

This free, family friendly event will provide the community an opportunity to get to know your farmer and learn about the how foods are grown, tended and harvested in our area.

[Insert Business/Farm Name] has been in operation for [number] years. The farm is owned and operated by [insert names].

[Insert farm story. Two to three paragraphs explaining who you are and how your farm came to be.]

Join us for fun tour to learn more about food and farming, and to get to know your local farmer.

###

Appendix 2 – Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Name

Email

Phone

JOIN THE [INSERT MARKET NAME] TO KICK-OFF FARMERS MARKET SEASON

[City/State] - The [Insert Market Name] is kicking off the season with a variety of local vendors offering [insert what products will be available] on [Insert date, time] at [Insert name and address].

This is the [number of years the market has been in operation] year of the [insert market name]. The market hosts [insert number of vendors] providing fresh, locally grown foods, as well as baked goods and other household products. In addition to the wonderful food, the [insert market name] is a way to connect with your local farmers.

“Farmers markets are a great way to connect the community to the wonderful foods that are grown in our area and the people who grow them,” says [Insert name and farm]. “We love to connect directly with our customers - answer questions and share recipes. Farmers markets are a great place to do this.”

[Write any information about special events that will be happening on opening day. Live music? A community club serving a meal?]

The [insert market name] will run from [insert dates and times of operation, as well as how long the market will run].

For more information visit [Insert website link]

Facebook: [Insert Facebook page link]

Instagram: [Insert Instagram page link]

We look forward to another great farmers market season in [insert city name] and we hope you will join us.

###

Market Stroll Swine

Town of Halifax Farmers Market

Live music, local foods, beer
& wine garden

Kids activity area featuring
Halifax County South Boston
Public Library



209 South Main Street, Halifax, VA

May 20th
6pm-9pm

\$5 admission
Kids 12 & under
free with paid adult



Where cork meets pork!



Live Music with Turkey Scratch 6-9pm



Tickets available at

Halifax Town Hall & Halifax
County/South Boston Visitor
Center during business hours

Halifax Farmers Market on
Saturday 9am-1pm or by
calling 434-476-2343

Proper ID required for
alcohol consumption

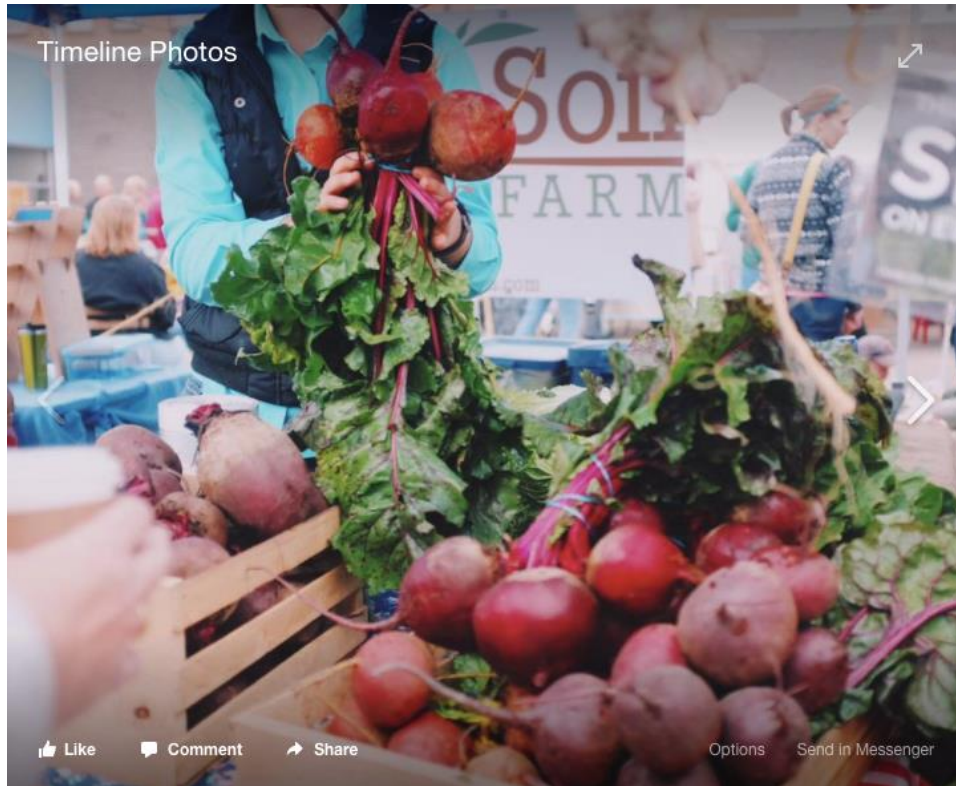
No coolers allowed

RED RIVER MARKET FACEBOOK POSTS

Appendix 4 – FB Post Examples

<https://www.facebook.com/redrivermarket/>

The Red River Market Facebook posts provide nice examples of engaging content to encourage people to attend events, and how to highlight seasonal food products.



Red River Market

Page Liked · October 16, 2016 · 🌐

Who says you can't get big beautiful produce in the fall?! These beets from [Heart and Soil Farm](#)

Appendix 5 – FB Post Examples

Timeline Photos



Red River Market

Page Liked · October 22, 2016 · 🌐

The sun is shining on the market today! Head downtown for the [#redrivermarket](#) — with [Hildebrants Farmers Market](#).

Appendix 6 – FB Post Examples

Timeline Photos



Red River Market

Page Liked · October 29, 2016 ·

Put on your mittens and grab a cup of coffee at the market! ☕

UGLY FOOD OF THE NORTH FACEBOOK POSTS

Appendix 7 – FB Post Examples

<https://www.facebook.com/FMuglyfood/>

These Facebook posts by Ugly Food of the North provide examples of how to highlight community activities, organizations, and individuals who are supporting and growing a local food community. They also provide examples of how to share articles that are written about your business. Sharing content from Facebook pages and highlighting the work of other individuals creates engagement and builds your Facebook community.



Ugly Food of the North shared Bismar Community Food Co-op's photo — with Kurt Kopperud at **Prairie Roots Food Co-op.**

Published by Gia Rassier [?] · March 17 · Fargo, ND ·

Shout-out to Bismar Community Food Co-op for showing ugly fruits + veggies some love!

We can't wait to see #FMuglyfood represented at Prairie Roots Food Co-op, opening this summer!





Ugly Food of the North

Published by Megan Myrdal [?] · March 24 ·

Shoutout to 3rd graders at Clara Barton Elementary School! They took to the cafeteria to tell their fellow students + city leaders about the issue of food waste and how they can make a difference.

Keep up the great work!

<http://www.kvrr.com/.../clara-barton-students-present-food-w.../>



Clara Barton Students Present Food Waste Projects - KVRr Local News

FARGO, N.D. -- Local students are giving advice on how to not waste food.

KVRR.COM



Ugly Food of the North in [Fargo, North Dakota](#).

Published by Gia Rassler [?] · May 2 at 5:24pm ·

Check it out! Our [#LittleFreeGarden](#) project got a mention in this [Midwest Living](#) piece on Fargo.

Learn more: [Little Free Garden](#)



Why Fargo Isn't Frozen--It's Cool

A hipster and a small town walk into a big-city bar ...no punch line. That's just a typical night in this North Dakota pop-culture icon with plenty to show off and nothing to prove.

MIDWESTLIVING.COM

LITTLE FREE GARDEN FACEBOOK POSTS

These Little Free Garden Facebook posts show various ways to promote events, how to encourage online sales through Facebook posts, and how to cross promote other businesses/partners to gather new customers.

<https://www.facebook.com/littlefreegarden/>



Little Free Garden in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Published by Gia Rassier [?] · February 23 · 🌐

Throwback: our inaugural #LittleFreeGarden build was exactly ELEVEN months ago!

Check out the video highlights + stay tuned for a BIG announcement about our upcoming spring event.

cc: Ugly Food of the North #FMuglyfood



The Little Free Garden Project: Inaugural Build

The Little Free Garden project hosted its first build event on Saturday, April 23 at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn. Little Free Garden is a project of ...

YOUTUBE.COM



Little Free Garden in Moorhead, Minnesota.

Published by Gia Rassier · May 2 at 2:53pm ·

Grow food. Take food. Share food. Join the #LittleFreeGarden community by getting a pre-built garden or registering an existing garden TODAY.

****pre-built gardens are only available locally, within 10 miles of Fargo-Moorhead****



Register A Little Free Garden

The goal of the Little Free Garden project is to foster communities committed to growing, sharing and cultivating food in small, raised-bed gardens, designed to fit in residential spaces.

EVENTBRITE.COM



Little Free Garden with David Hunstad and Tristan Larson
at [First Ave Promo.](#)

Published by Gia Rassier [?] · May 4 at 7:28am · 🌐

We're so excited to see [#LittleFreeGarden](#) no. 86 find a new home at First Ave Promo + Old Lutheran - longtime friends and supporters of Ugly Food of the North.

cc: Moorhead Business Association [#MoorheadProud](#)



Creating Online Marketing SMART Goals

discover more tips
↓

► **POWER OF BUSINESS**

powerofbusiness.net

► **FRIDAY 15**

powerofbusiness.net/friday-15

SMART GOALS - What is it you want to accomplish and when?

☐ Specific

Are your goals clearly defined?

- Target a specific area for improvement such as number of visitors, number of new customers, number of people who have downloaded.

☐ Measurable

Can you measure your goal?

- Determine a percentage or number you would like to improve on and identify how you will know you have reached the goal.

☐ Attainable

Can you achieve this goal?

- Consider what you want to accomplish, which will provide a benchmark to improve upon.

☐ Relevant

Is this goal important to my business?

- Ask yourself, "What is the most important thing I want to accomplish?"

☐ Time-Bound

When will I accomplish this goal?

- Identifying a target date helps you meet that goal.

ONLINE MARKETING GOAL - write the complete goal here

"Analyzing your goals allows you to make wise decisions about your next online marketing effort."

Appendix 14 – Sample Campaign

Month and Year	EXAMPLE - LOCAL FOODS FARMERS MARKET							Weekly Cost	Type of Marketing
Campaign/Event	Date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Networking Ambassadors Reviews Paid Ad PR; News Story Promotion
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
			Chamber mtg	Paid Ad - paper		Paid Ad - radio			
	Website				Facebook	Blog Post	Twitter		
Cost		\$20		\$50		\$250			
Campaign/Event	Date	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Website Blog Post Email Video Facebook Twitter
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
				Paid Ad - paper					
					Facebook	Blog Post	Twitter		
Cost				\$50					
Campaign/Event	Date	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Customer appreciation
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
				Paid Ad - paper					
	Website				Facebook	Blog Post	Twitter		
Cost		\$20		\$50			\$500	\$500	
Campaign/Event	Date	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Summer kickoff
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
				Paid Ad - paper					
					Facebook	Blog Post	Twitter		
Cost		\$100	\$100	\$150	\$100	\$100	\$100	\$100	
Campaign/Event	Date	29	30	31					Summer kickoff
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	
				Paid Ad - paper					
	Website								
Cost		\$20		\$50					
									Monthly cost
									\$2,260



North Dakota
Farmers Market and
Growers Association
Dakota College at Bottineau
Bottineau, ND 58318
701-228-5649