



Marketing Plan Example

Based on methods in the marketing plan and Web promotion guide
How Much For Just the Spider? Strategic Website Marketing
by Bobette Kyle, ISBN 1-59113-113-8
<http://www.HowMuchForSpider.com/TOC.htm>

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A Retail Business Example: Arlington Accessories and More

To demonstrate the marketing plan development process detailed in the book, throughout this booklet I develop a sample Web site marketing plan for a fictional retailer. "Arlington Accessories and More" is an independent retail store in Chicago's Northwest suburbs. (The business is entirely from my imagination. Resemblance to any existing store is a complete coincidence.) From her shop in downtown Arlington Heights, Mary Marcos sells handmade scarves, custom-made fashion jewelry, gift baskets, small collectibles, cards, and gift-wrapping supplies.

Mary did not have a Web site, but thought she could expand sales of the jewelry and scarves if she did. Her sister - a designer who has won several awards - makes both. Mary decided to use the five-step marketing plan process to develop an effective Internet presence:

- Step 1: Gather and analyze information
- Step 2: Verbalize her main marketing challenge
- Step 3: Set her Web site objective
- Step 4: Develop general strategies
- Step 5: Choose appropriate tactics

Marketing Plan Process

Step 1: Gathering and Analyzing Information

(This step is explained in more detail on pages 62 - 64 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses*. Also, several information gathering and analysis techniques are described in the "Segmenting and Targeting," "Information Gathering," and "Research and Data Analysis" chapters.)

Read how Mary Marcos gathered and analyzed information in "Analysis Behind the Plan," beginning on page nine of this booklet. Analysis is the backbone of an effective marketing plan.

Step 2: Verbalizing The Main Challenge

(Step 2 is explained in more detail on pages 62 and 64 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses*.)

Mary's main challenge was to establish an effective Web presence. She had an Internet connection in the store and emailed sales notices to existing customers, but had no Web site and conducted no other Internet activities.

As a result of her information gathering activities, Mary found that overall, online retail sales were growing but customer satisfaction with online purchases was low. She also found a daunting number of shopping sites, both specialty and general.

As a way to avoid competing directly with all online stores and to make customer satisfaction easier, she decided to keep a local focus to her Web site. This way, she could differentiate herself online in two ways:

1. She would offer locally made, one-of-a-kind products online, something no one else did in the Chicagoland area.
2. She could draw upon her already established reputation as an ethical and trustworthy retailer. This would improve her credibility with wary online visitors.

Mary wrote down her main challenge: "How do I create a Web site that will expand custom-made scarf and jewelry sales locally while maintaining high customer satisfaction?"

Step 3: Setting the Web Site Objective

(Setting objectives is explained on pages 62 and 65 - 68 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses*.)

From her in-store experience, Mary knew that her best customers were those that had come to know her. They recognized her face when they came in and they opened her emails when she

sent sales notices. They knew she sold quality products and that she would gladly exchange or give a refund if they were dissatisfied.

It's logical that she would take the same general approach with her Web site. That is, build trust and recognition with customers. While she wanted her current in-store customers to use the site, she was most interested in gaining new, loyal customers. So, her online efforts would initially focus on reaching potential new customers. Therefore, her objective became:

"Create a trustworthy, local Web presence that attracts potential new customers."

Step 4: Developing Strategies

(Step 4 is explained on pages 62 and 68 - 70 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses.*)

After developing her objective, Mary designed strategies to meet it. When developing her strategies, she kept in mind what she learned from her analyses (See the examples later, in "Analysis Behind the Plan").

She was building a plan that would meet her objective of "creating a trustworthy, local Web presence that attracts potential new customers" while avoiding direct competition with large, general retailers.

Since she did not yet have a Web site, one of her strategies would be to build one that reflected her values and supported the positioning statement she created in Step 1. She developed her full plan now so she could integrate her positioning into the site.

Mary's second strategy addressed trustworthiness. After her site was complete, she would begin building a trustworthy online reputation as she built site awareness.

Finally, her third strategy would focus on targeting and attracting new online customers for her scarves and fashion jewelry. To summarize Mary's plan so far:

Arlington Accessories and More Web Site Marketing Plan

Objective: Create a trustworthy, local Web presence that attracts potential new customers.

Positioning Statement: "Arlington Accessories and More" offers custom-designed fashion jewelry and scarves for ladies who want to stand out in a crowd. Our attractive, one-of-a-kind products are made by an award-winning artist with 15 years of design experience.

Strategy 1: Develop a Web site that effectively reflects the main positioning statement.

Strategy 2: Build Web site awareness locally in ways that instill trust.

Strategy 3: Reach and interest potential online customers: "Ladies who want to stand out in a crowd."

As she moved toward accomplishing each strategy, she would evaluate the wisdom in adjusting or changing strategies. After developing strategies, she moved onto tactics.

Step 5: Choosing Tactics

(Choosing tactics / marketing programs is explained on pages 62 and 70 -73 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses*. Several promotional tactics are explained, and expert resources given, in Section 3: Promotional Tactics.)

Mary's final list of tactics is in the plan summary, in the "Write Up" section of this booklet.

The Write Up

Much of Mary's time was taken up with running her store, so she chose to forego a formal write up and work from a marketing plan summary. Her plan is on the next page. If she were working for a retail chain or had to support her plan with backup data - for her bank or company executives, for example - she would likely have completed a formal write up.

If you need to include a formal write up for your own plan, see the article "What to Include in Your Marketing Plan Write Up" at <http://www.websitemarketingplan.com/Arts/WritePlan.htm> (Note: "Arts" and "WritePlan" in the URL are case sensitive).

The next section, "Analysis Behind the Plan," explains the analysis Mary completed in Step 1 of her plan.

Plan Summary

Web Site Marketing Plan: Arlington Accessories and More

Main Challenge: How do I create a Web site that will expand custom-made scarf and jewelry sales locally while maintaining high customer satisfaction?

Positioning Statement: "Arlington Accessories and More" offers custom-designed fashion jewelry and scarves for ladies who want to stand out in a crowd. Our attractive, one-of-a-kind products are made by an award-winning artist with 15 years of design experience.

Web Site Objective: Create a trustworthy, local Web presence that attracts potential new customers.

Strategy 1	Strategy 2	Strategy 3
Develop a Web site that effectively reflects the main positioning statement and builds trust.	Build Web site awareness locally in ways that instill trust.	Reach and interest potential online customers: "Ladies who want to stand out in a crowd."
<p>Marketing features to include in the site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Testimonials from customers. 2. Personable FAQ page, with photos of the designer and award-winning designs. 3. Newsletter sign up/registration. 4. Fresh, up-to-date content: local trunk shows, exclusive online offers, fashion events, small freebie, etc. 5. Product photos w/ links to auctions and/or order form. 6. Map and address of store. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Join/register with local organizations such as Better Business Bureau and Chamber of Commerce. 2. Pursue online accreditations such as BBBOnline, iCOP, and Truste.org. 3. Participate in local woman-oriented groups: Online forums and Civic organizations. 4. Support local charities. 5. Conduct fundraisers and announce with press releases, with more info. on Web site. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cross-promote with complementary retailers such as clothing and upscale gift stores. 2. Offer exclusive online deals. 3. Announce and print URL at all points of contact: receipts, email signature lines, phone messages, business cards, store window, etc. 4. Register with all local directories, search engines, portals, and fashion/lifestyle sites. 5. Conduct local online auctions through an eBay store.

Analysis Behind the Plan

Gathering Information on the Internet

(Details for getting started and gathering information about competitors, your own company, customers, suppliers, and potential entrants are in the "Gathering Information" chapter of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses.*)

Mary spent some time searching and found sites for local and online retailers; several associations; and retail-related articles. She put together a resource page, complete with clickable URLs, to use while creating her plan.

Gathering Competitor, Customer, Company, Supplier, and Substitutes Information

(More details are on pages 94 - 100 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses.*)

Mary used the resource page she put together to gather information about her business environment.

Industry Analysis

One approach to industry analysis is Porter's Five Forces. An adaptation for Web sites is explained on pages 116 -118 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses.*

The adaptation is simplistic compared to Michael Porter's full analysis and does not do it full justice. To truly understand Porter's Five Forces Model, it is best to read his books *Competitive Strategy* and *Competitive Advantage*, sold here:

<http://www.websitemarketingplan.com/ap/PorterCompStrat.html>

(Note: "PorterCompStrat.html is case sensitive.)

Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning

(More about this is in the "Segmenting and Targeting" chapter and on pages 28 and 137 - 138 of the marketing plan and Web promotion guide *How Much for Just the Spider? Strategic Web Site Marketing for Small Budget Businesses*.)

Mary spent some time analyzing her target customers and refining her store's positioning relative to her competition. Mary's two sentence positioning statement became:

"Arlington Accessories and More" offers custom-designed fashion jewelry and scarves for ladies who want to stand out in a crowd. Our attractive, one-of-a-kind products are made by an award-winning artist with 15 years of design experience.

At all points of contact with her target customers, Mary kept her positioning statement in mind.

The Plan

After completing Step 1 (this "Analysis Behind the Plan" section), Mary was ready to go to Step 2 (above, in the "Marketing Plan Process" section).

She applied her newfound insight and ideas to steps 2 through 5. If you do the same, you are sure to see an improvement in your site's performance upon implementing your marketing plan.

About the Author

Bobette Kyle draws upon 12+ years of Marketing/Executive experience, Marketing MBA, and online marketing research in her writing. Bobette is proprietor of the Web Site Marketing Plan Network, <http://www.WebSiteMarketingPlan.com>, and author of the marketing plan and Web promotion book *How Much For Just the Spider? Strategic Website Marketing For Small Budget Businesses*, <http://www.HowMuchForSpider.com/TOC.htm> ("TOC" in the URL is case sensitive).

Additional Marketing Planning Methods

The planning method used in this example is, of course, not the only way to go about completing a marketing plan. Follow these links to more resources and other planning methods:

Articles About Different Approaches to Planning - <http://www.marketingplanarticles.com>

Marketing Plan Software - <http://www.websitemarketingplan.com/mplan/software>

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