



DEVELOPING A MARKETING PLAN FOR HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

Health marketing campaigns are an excellent way to spread awareness, increase education, or link to resources for any health topic. Marketing campaigns, whether large- or small-scale, are a big undertaking, and often it's hard to know where to start. A marketing plan gives your campaign structure and direction, which can help your campaign reach its goals and deliver more effective messaging to the right audiences. A marketing plan can also be a living document that you refer to at any point to ensure you are on the right track.

The following checklist provides introductory steps to begin developing your marketing plan. Think of the items in this checklist as stepping stones that you can build from as you become more familiar and comfortable with each one. You will also learn about the importance of audience considerations, goals and objectives, communication and marketing strategies, and evaluation methods. Remember, your plan should reflect the information you gather in each step and be driven by the needs of the audiences you are trying to reach.

To begin developing your marketing plan, follow the steps below:

- Gather your team.** It is helpful to include representatives of organizations who will help you promote your campaign, members of the intended audience(s), and people with marketing experience. Be sure your team has a clear understanding of the focus of your efforts.
- Understand your audience(s).** This is one of the most important steps in the preparation of your marketing plan. Knowing your audience is the first step in reaching them. If you haven't yet, consider conducting a community assessment. An assessment can help you determine which communities in your area are most affected and how to best reach them with your messaging.
 - Describe your selected primary audiences.** These descriptions should reflect the audience(s) you are trying to reach. Think about demographics such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, income, and education, as well as what you learned from your community assessment.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR AUDIENCE(S):

- **Community health and social determinants of health**
 - What are the disease trends in the community?
 - What services or resources are available or lacking to support the well-being of the community and its members?
- **The people**—what is the demographic makeup of the community? Learn about their histories and cultures.
- **Strengths and weaknesses**—what does the community do well? What could they improve upon? What are their needs and challenges?
- **Key messengers in the neighborhood and community**—who are the trusted community leaders and influencers? Who makes decisions?

- **Develop goals and objectives.** These goals and objectives should relate to the when, where, and how of your marketing strategies as well as the overall goals of your health campaign. Goals and objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound will be your roadmap to success. Consider using the SMART framework.



Increase traffic to campaign website by 30% from January to September by boosting three Facebook/Instagram posts per week to increase education and awareness of overdose prevention.

- **Communication and marketing strategies.** In this step, you will select the specific channels (e.g., paid media ad placements, social media, newsletters) and the messages to be delivered via those channels. A key part of this step is making sure you have planned enough activities or strategies with enough frequency to meet your goals. Your activities and strategies should be supported by what you learned about your audience(s) and best practices for effective health communication campaigns.
- **Measure success with tracking and evaluation plans.** Your marketing objectives help you know where you are going. Performance measures help you know when you have arrived or if you have wandered off the road. Marketing plans should include strategies for monitoring the implementation of communication strategies, and measuring progress toward communication goals, objectives, and performance measures. Plan to measure each effort from the start of your campaign and use these measures to make course corrections as needed. Consider utilizing the following to help you track and monitor your campaign performance:
 - Tagged links
 - Link shorteners such as Bitly or Ow.ly
 - Data management tools like Adobe Analytics or Google Analytics

Resources

- [CDC Health Communication Strategies and Resources](#)
- [CDC Health Communication Gateway](#)