# Contents at a Glance

**Introduction** ................................................................. 1

**Book 1: Setting Up Your Marketing Foundation** ............... 5  
**CHAPTER 1:** Framing the Marketing Process .................. 7  
**CHAPTER 2:** Defining Your Customers .......................... 17  
**CHAPTER 3:** Sizing Up the Market ............................... 49  
**CHAPTER 4:** Setting Your Goals ................................ 61

**Book 2: Getting Started with Your Campaign** .................. 73  
**CHAPTER 1:** Tech Tools to Have .................................. 75  
**CHAPTER 2:** Making the Business Case for Social Media .... 105  
**CHAPTER 3:** Plotting a Social Media Marketing Strategy .... 131  
**CHAPTER 4:** Managing Your Cybersocial Campaign ......... 157  
**CHAPTER 5:** Leveraging Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for Social Media ........ 179

**Book 3: Content Is King: Content Marketing** .................. 235  
**CHAPTER 1:** Growing Your Brand with Content ............... 237  
**CHAPTER 2:** Creating a Content Marketing Strategy ........ 259  
**CHAPTER 3:** Long-Form Content Marketing: Blogging, Online Articles, Ebooks, and More .......................... 277

**Book 4: Using Social Media** ............................................. 301  
**CHAPTER 1:** Marketing and Communicating with Twitter .... 303  
**CHAPTER 2:** Building a Following and Running a Facebook Marketing Campaign .... 325  
**CHAPTER 3:** It’s All in Your Image: Instagram and Pinterest .. 349  
**CHAPTER 4:** Marketing Yourself and Your Business with LinkedIn ........... 373  
**CHAPTER 5:** Being Prepared for What’s Next ................... 389

**Book 5: Incorporating Traditional Marketing** ................. 415  
**CHAPTER 1:** Creating Marketing Communications .......... 417  
**CHAPTER 2:** Generating and Placing Print and Outdoor Ads .. 435  
**CHAPTER 3:** Broadcasting Your Message ...................... 455  
**CHAPTER 4:** Snail-Mailing and Emailing Your Customers Directly .... 469  
**CHAPTER 5:** Looking At Brochures, Promotions, Trade Shows, and More ........ 487
# Table of Contents

## INTRODUCTION
- About This Book ................................................................. 1
- Foolish Assumptions .............................................................. 2
- Icons Used in This Book ...................................................... 3
- Beyond the Book ................................................................. 3
- Where to Go from Here ....................................................... 3

## BOOK 1: SETTING UP YOUR MARKETING FOUNDATION ... 5

### CHAPTER 1: Framing the Marketing Process .......................... 7
- Seeing the Big Picture ............................................................ 8
  - Following the marketing wheel of fortune .............................. 8
  - Understanding the relationship between marketing and sales ... 9
- Jump-Starting Your Marketing Program .................................. 11
  - Marketing a start-up business .............................................. 11
  - Growing your business ...................................................... 11
  - Scaling your marketing to meet your goal ............................ 12
- How Small Business Marketing Is Different ............................ 13
  - Dollar differences ............................................................. 13
  - Staffing differences .......................................................... 14
  - Creative differences ........................................................ 14
  - Strategic differences ....................................................... 14
  - The small business marketing advantage ............................ 14
- Making Marketing Your Key to Success .................................. 15

### CHAPTER 2: Defining Your Customers .................................. 17
- Anatomy of a Customer: Knowing Who Your Customers Are .... 18
  - Collecting customer information ...................................... 19
  - Geographics: Locating your market areas ............................ 23
  - Demographics: Collecting customer data ............................ 24
  - Psychographics: Customer buying behaviors ....................... 25
- Determining Which Customers Buy What ................................ 27
  - Viewing your sales by market segment ............................... 27
  - Matching customers with distribution channels .................. 29
  - Catering to screen-connected customers ............................ 32
- Getting to Know Your Product: Seeing It through
  Your Customer's Eyes .......................................................... 32
  - When service is your product ............................................. 33
  - Your product is what Google says it is .............................. 33
- Illogical, Irrational, and Real Reasons People Buy What You Sell . . . 35
Notifying Search Engines about Updates ........................................... 83
Snipping Ugly URLs ........................................................................... 84
Using E-Commerce Tools for Social Sites ............................................. 86
  Selling through links .......................................................................... 86
  Displaying products on social media services ........................................ 86
  Combining a virtual storefront with a payment service ....................... 88
  Reviewing sample products for selling on social media ...................... 89
Keeping Your Ear to the Social Ground .............................................. 96
  Deciding what to monitor and why ..................................................... 96
  Deciding which tools to use ............................................................... 97
  Using free or inexpensive social monitoring tools .................................. 97
Measuring the Buzz by Type of Service .............................................. 102

CHAPTER 2: Making the Business Case for Social Media ...................... 105
Making Your Social Debut .................................................................. 106
Defining Social Media Marketing ....................................................... 107
Understanding the Benefits of Social Media ....................................... 112
  Casting a wide net to catch your target market ..................................... 112
  Branding ............................................................................................. 114
  Building relationships .......................................................................... 115
  Improving business processes ......................................................... 115
  Improving search engine rankings .................................................... 116
  Selling when opportunity arises ....................................................... 116
  Saving money on advertising ........................................................... 118
Understanding the Cons of Social Media ........................................... 118
Integrating Social Media into Your Overall Marketing Effort ............... 119
Developing a Strategic Social Media Marketing Plan ......................... 121
  Establishing goals ............................................................................... 121
  Setting quantifiable objectives ......................................................... 124
  Identifying your target markets ...................................................... 125
  Estimating costs ............................................................................... 125
  Valuing social media ROI ............................................................... 125

CHAPTER 3: Plotting a Social Media Marketing Strategy ....................... 131
Locating Your Target Market Online ............................................... 132
Segmenting Your B2C Market ........................................................... 132
  Demographics .................................................................................. 134
  Geographics ...................................................................................... 134
  Life stages ......................................................................................... 137
  Psychographics or lifestyle .............................................................. 139
  Affinity groups .................................................................................. 139
Researching B2B Markets ................................................................. 142
Conducting Other Types of Market Research Online ........................... 144
  Identifying influencers ..................................................................... 144
  Understanding why people use social media services ....................... 145
Setting Up Your Social Media Marketing Plan ................................... 147
CHAPTER 4: Managing Your Cybersocial Campaign

Managing Your Social Media Schedule .................. 158
Controlling the time commitment ...................... 158
Developing your social date book ..................... 159
Creating a social media dashboard .................... 160
Assembling Your Social Media Marketing Dream Team . 164
Seeking a skilled social media director ................ 165
Looking inside ........................................ 166
Hiring experts ......................................... 166
Creating a Social Media Marketing Policy ............. 167
Staying on the Right Side of the Law .................. 170
Obtaining permission to avoid infringement .......... 170
Respecting privacy ..................................... 171
Revealing product endorsement relationships .......... 173
Protecting Your Brand Reputation .................... 175

CHAPTER 5: Leveraging Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for Social Media

Making the Statistical Case for SEO ...................... 180
Thinking Tactically and Practically .................... 182
Focusing on the Top Search Engines .................. 183
Knowing the Importance of Search Phrases .......... 185
Choose the right search terms ......................... 185
Where to place search terms on your site ............ 188
Understanding tags and tag clouds .................... 189
Maximizing Metatag Muscle ............................ 190
Tipping the scales with the page title metatag ........ 192
Pumping up page description metatags .............. 193
Optimizing Your Site and Content for Search Engines . 194
Writing an optimized first paragraph ................. 195
Updating often ........................................ 195
Making your site search engine friendly ............. 198
Optimizing for local search campaigns .............. 203
Optimizing for mobile search ......................... 204
Building Effective Inbound Links ..................... 205
Google PageRank ..................................... 206
Knowing what makes a good inbound link .......... 208
Hunting for inbound links .............................. 209
Implementing your link campaign ..................... 211
Reaping other links from social media ................ 212
Creating a resource page for outbound links ......... 213
Optimizing Social Media for Search Engines ........ 216
Placing your search terms on social media .......... 216
Optimizing blogs ..................................... 217
Optimizing images, videos, and podcasts ............ 222
Optimizing Twitter .................................... 223
BOOK 3: CONTENT IS KING: CONTENT MARKETING

CHAPTER 1: Growing Your Brand with Content

Understanding What Content Marketing Is
- Evolving from interruption marketing to engagement marketing
- Breaking through the online clutter
- Understanding 21st century buying behaviors and purchase processes
- Being customer-centric
- Comparing three types of marketing: online, social media, and content
- Eyeing how different departments in an organization can use content marketing
- Discovering how you can benefit from content marketing
- Defining the three forms of content marketing
- Understanding the Google Effect: How to Leverage the Power of Search
- Creating entry points
- Managing search engines reputably
- Revealing the Broad Reach of Online Content
- Shifting from a Marketer to a Publisher Mindset
- Applying the 80-20 rule
- Adding value, staying relevant, and being shareworthy
- Developing Content to Build Your Brand and Form Relationships
- Understanding what a brand is
- Positioning your brand
- Establishing credibility and becoming the go-to person for a topic
- Understanding the ARMS Theory of Brand Building
- Committing to a Long-Term Strategy
- Benchmarking Other Businesses That Are Doing It Right

CHAPTER 2: Creating a Content Marketing Strategy

Researching Your Competition
- Finding your competition online and monitoring their activities
- Eavesdropping on your competitors’ online conversations
- Finding gaps and opportunities
Identifying Your Audience ........................................ 265
  Determining your target audience and segments ............ 265
  Finding your audience’s hangouts ................................ 266
  Discovering what your audience wants and needs .......... 267
  Finding and connecting with influencers ...................... 268
Establishing Goals and Choosing the Best Forms of Content Marketing ...................................................... 270
Creating a Core Branded Online Destination ..................... 271
  Where: Location! Location! Location! .......................... 272
  Designing your central hub ........................................ 272
  Adding value and making it easy to buy ....................... 273
Surrounding Consumers with Branded Content .................... 274
Comparing Free versus Premium Content Strategies ............. 275

CHAPTER 3: Long-Form Content Marketing: Blogging, Online Articles, Ebooks, and More ......................... 277
Understanding and Using Long-Form Content Marketing for Your Business .................................................. 278
Becoming a Blogger ................................................... 279
  Creating your blog .................................................. 280
  Publishing content to your blog .................................. 283
  Using comments to generate conversations .................... 284
  Making it easy to share blog content ............................ 285
  Leveraging feeds and subscriptions ............................... 285
  Promoting your blog .............................................. 287
  Being a guest blogger ............................................. 287
Writing Articles and Contributing to Websites ...................... 289
  Guest posting your way to greatness ............................ 289
  Writing articles for the Web ....................................... 290
  Republishing and retooling ....................................... 290
  Promoting your articles ......................................... 291
Becoming an Author: Ebooks ......................................... 291
  Choosing an ebook topic ......................................... 291
  Considering length ................................................ 292
  Writing your ebook ............................................... 292
  Designing your ebook ............................................ 293
  Making it easy to share your ebook ............................. 294
  Promoting your ebook ............................................ 294
Writing Press Releases .............................................. 295
  Writing and formatting press releases ......................... 295
  Distributing press releases ..................................... 296
  Promoting your press releases .................................. 296
Publishing Presentations ............................................ 297
  Understanding the value of sharing your presentations .... 297
  Using SlideShare ................................................. 298
  Promoting your presentations .................................. 299
## BOOK 4: USING SOCIAL MEDIA

### CHAPTER 1: Marketing and Communicating with Twitter

- Understanding the Business of Twitter .................................................. 303
- Putting Your Best Face Forward .............................................................. 304
  - Public relations ................................................................................. 306
  - Customer service .............................................................................. 309
- Networking on Twitter ........................................................................... 311
- Building Brand Awareness .................................................................... 312
- Offering Promotions and Generating Leads ........................................... 313
- Promoting Bands and Artists ................................................................. 315
- Sharing Company Updates ..................................................................... 317
- Building Community ............................................................................. 318
- Conducting Research ........................................................................... 321
- Going Transparent ................................................................................ 322
- Advising Employees on Tweeting ......................................................... 323
- Sharing Knowledge .............................................................................. 324

### CHAPTER 2: Building a Following and Running a Facebook Marketing Campaign

- Understanding the Importance of Engagement ..................................... 325
  - Building friends and followers for your business ................................ 327
  - Connecting with your friends and followers ....................................... 329
- Integrating Facebook in Marketing Campaigns ....................................... 331
  - Promoting Facebook via traditional advertising .................................. 332
  - Having a memorable URL .................................................................. 333
  - Using apps to build influence ............................................................. 334
  - Outsourcing your Facebook management .......................................... 334
- Comprehending What Makes Social Marketing Campaigns Work ............. 335
- Identifying Types of Facebook Campaigns ............................................. 337
- Implementing Sharing Contests ............................................................... 338
  - Getting a good response .................................................................. 339
  - Avoiding a flopped contest ................................................................. 341
- Marketing a Facebook Contest ............................................................... 341
- Eyeing the Power of Crowdsourcing ....................................................... 342
  - Using crowdsourcing to create a new product ................................... 343
  - Using crowdsourcing to determine your Facebook content ............... 343
- Preparing Your Business Page for the Campaign .................................... 344
  - Your cover photo ............................................................................. 344
  - A custom tab .................................................................................. 344
  - Contact forms ................................................................................ 345
  - Canvas apps .................................................................................. 345
  - The ticker .................................................................................... 345
CHAPTER 3: It's All in Your Image: Instagram and Pinterest . . . 349
Promoting Your Brand on Instagram ............................350
Creating and Using Your Instagram Account ...................351
Setting up your account ........................................351
Sharing photos ....................................................352
Controlling notifications ........................................354
Determining What Is Photo-Worthy for Your Brand ..........355
Using Hashtags in Your Instagram Posts ......................357
Finding Friends and Fans on Instagram .......................358
Getting Going with Pinterest ..................................359
Understanding social etiquette for businesses on Pinterest ..361
Understanding Pinterest lingo ..................................362
Sharing on Pinterest .............................................363
Choosing what to share ......................................364
Sharing other people's pins ..................................364
Using share buttons .........................................366
Driving Traffic with Pinterest ................................367
Being descriptive but brief ..................................369
Using keywords ...............................................370

CHAPTER 4: Marketing Yourself and Your Business
with LinkedIn ................................................373
Joining LinkedIn .............................................374
Marketing with LinkedIn ....................................379
Optimizing your profile ......................................380
Marketing yourself to your network .........................382
Marketing Your Business Through LinkedIn ..............384
Using online marketing tactics with LinkedIn .............384
Promoting your services through a recommendation ....386

CHAPTER 5: Being Prepared for What's Next ..................389
Reviewing Your Goals ........................................391
Researching Minor Social Networks .........................391
Assessing the Involvement of Your Target Audience ......395
Lurking .........................................................395
Responding ....................................................396
Quantifying market presence ................................396
Choosing Social Sites Strategically .........................397
Understanding the Statistics of Mobile Device Usage ......398
Exploring mobile use of social media .......................398
Demographics of mobile users ..............................400
Getting a handle on mobile activities ......................401
Going Mobile: Create A Mobile Responsive Version Of Your Site 401
Making the choice for responsive design ..................403
Making the choice for a new mobile site ..................404
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making the choice for a mobile app</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing the app route</td>
<td>406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching People on the Move with Social Media</td>
<td>407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvesting Leads and Sales from Social Mobile</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measuring Your Mobile Marketing Success</td>
<td>411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counting on Tablets</td>
<td>412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BOOK 5: INCORPORATING TRADITIONAL MARKETING</strong></td>
<td>415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1: Creating Marketing Communications</strong></td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting with Good Objectives</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining what you want to accomplish</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putting creative directions in writing</td>
<td>419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Effective Marketing Communications</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering the creative process toward a “big idea”</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Following simple advertising rules</td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Media Selections</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting from the media menu</td>
<td>428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deciding which media vehicles to use and when</td>
<td>429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Making of a Mass Media Schedule</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balancing reach and frequency</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing your ads</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating Your Efforts</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2: Generating and Placing Print and Outdoor Ads</strong></td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing and Designing Your Print Ads</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packing power into headlines</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing convincing copy</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making design decisions</td>
<td>439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translating ad production terminology</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making Sense of Print Media Rates</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placing Newspaper Ads</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling your placements</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using small-budget, small-size ads</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requesting your ad placement</td>
<td>446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding value in the classified section</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placing Magazine Ads</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selecting magazines</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduling placements</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Considering Yellow Pages, Directories, and Their Digital Alternatives</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating and placing print directory ads</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting found in online directories</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Billboards and Out-of-Home Ads</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome to *Small Business Marketing Strategies All-In-One For Dummies*

Because you picked up this book, it’s a good bet that you’re a small business owner or marketer who works with small businesses. You likely want to find out as much as you can about how small businesses are marketing themselves in today’s fast-changing world of social media, websites, blogs, mobile phones, and other platforms, media, and post-modern doohickeys. You want to know how you can turn tweets, likes, shares, comments, photos, blogs, profiles, apps, and so forth into dollars. Well, if that's the case, you've come to the right place.

This book presents and explains a wide variety of information, all aimed at enlightening you on what you need to know to achieve success. Whether you need know-how and advice on the basics of current marketing practices, discovering and defining your clients, using Facebook or Twitter to promote your business, leveraging content marketing to draw in customers and potential customers, launching a campaign, optimizing your content for search engines — or kick it old school with broadcast, print, and outdoor ads, you’ll find the help you need here.

The aim of this book is to provide you with the very best ideas, concepts, and tools for marketing small businesses. Using the info here, you should be able to create marketing campaigns that speak to real people in the language they use day in and day out. And you should be able to avoid many common mistakes that end up turning your customers off or wasting your time. Marketing is a tricky business. But you probably already knew that.

About This Book

This book is a generous conglomeration of material from a number of Dummies marketing and social media books, carefully selected with an eye toward getting you going with an overall marketing program.
For a tiny fraction of the amount you’d pay to get a marketing MBA, this book delivers an easily understandable road map to today’s most innovative and effective marketing techniques and strategies. The information you find here is firmly grounded in the real world. This book isn’t an abstract collection of theoretical, pie-in-the-sky mumbo-jumbo that sounds good but doesn’t work when you put it to the test. Instead, you’ll find only the best information, the best strategies, and the best techniques that are working on today’s business environment, both online and off.

This book is also meant to be at least a little fun. Marketing doesn’t have to be a bore — especially nowadays, when it seems to be merging with entertainment and interpersonal communication in ways that wouldn’t have been dreamt of even a decade ago. At any rate, maintaining a sense of humor can be vital when facing the challenges that all small business folk face from time to time.

Within this book, you may note that some web addresses (URLs) break across two lines of text. If you’re reading this book in print and want to visit one of these web pages, simply key in the web address exactly as it’s noted in the text, pretending as though the line break doesn’t exist. If you’re reading this as an ebook, you’ve got it easy — just tap the web address to be taken directly to the web page.

Foolish Assumptions

This book makes a few assumptions about you. For example, you are interested in marketing (duh). You own or work for or with a small business (also duh). Maybe you’ve already started or at least conceived of a marketing campaign and are looking for tips to refine the techniques you’re already developing. Or perhaps it’s something you think may want to try, to boost your income and enlarge your customer base, and are looking to read up on it before you make your move. You’ll find a lot to like in these pages.

If you have little or no experience in marketing so far, no worries. There’s plenty of fundamental information here as well. The early chapters will get you up and running on the core concepts.

It’s also safe to assume that you can — or believe you can — use a computer, a smartphone, and the web and other services of the all-powerful Internet. You may not be a gearhead, but you can tap, click, and search with the best of them.

Finally, this book assumes you’re eager to scoop up and implement new tips and tricks and that you’re willing to acquire some new perspectives on the topic.
Icons Used in This Book

Icons are handy little graphic images that are meant to point out particularly important information about starting your own business. Throughout this book, you find the following icons, conveniently located along the left margins:

This icon directs you to tips and shortcuts you can follow to save time and do things the right way the first time.

Remember the important points of information that follow this icon, and your business will be all the better for it.

Danger! Ignore the advice next to this icon at your own risk. Heeding this info can save you boatloads of trouble.

This one points out slightly advanced material that you can safely skip if you’re in a hurry. But by all means, read these if you want to stretch yourself a bit.

This icon points out specific real-life examples to illustrate a point.

Beyond the Book

In addition to the material in the print or ebook you’re reading right now, this product also comes with some access-anywhere goodies on the web. No matter how hard you work at marketing, you’ll likely come across a few questions where you frankly don’t have a clue. To view this book’s Cheat Sheet, simply go to www.dummies.com and search for “Small Business Marketing Strategies Cheat Sheet” in the Search box.

Where to Go from Here

If you’re new to marketing, you may want to start at the beginning of this book and work your way through to the end. What a radical concept. A clear path of information and practical advice leading to success awaits you. Simply turn the page and you’re on your way. But you can start anywhere. If you’ve already studied
or done some real-world marketing and are short of time (and who isn’t?), feel free to use the table of contents and index to zero in on particular topics of interest to you right now, whether that’s creating a board on Pinterest, upping your visibility in online directories, or working with direct mail.

Regardless of how you find your way around this book, the sincere hope of this endeavor is that you’ll not just amp up your marketing prowess, but enjoy the journey as well. Good luck!
1
Setting Up Your Marketing Foundation
Contents at a Glance

CHAPTER 1: Framing the Marketing Process
- Seeing the Big Picture ............................................. 8
- Jump-Starting Your Marketing Program ......................... 11
- How Small Business Marketing Is Different ..................... 13
- Making Marketing Your Key to Success ........................... 15

CHAPTER 2: Defining Your Customers
- Anatomy of a Customer: Knowing Who Your Customers Are 18
- Determining Which Customers Buy What .......................... 27
- Getting to Know Your Product: Seeing It through
  Your Customer’s Eyes .............................................. 32
- Illogical, Irrational, and Real Reasons People Buy
  What You Sell .................................................... 35
- Buying Decisions: Rarely about Price, Always about Value .... 36
- The Care and Feeding of a Product Line ......................... 41

CHAPTER 3: Sizing Up the Market
- Playing the Competitive Field ..................................... 49
- Winning Your Share of the Market ................................. 52
- Calculating Your Market Share .................................... 55
- Increasing Your Market Share ..................................... 58

CHAPTER 4: Setting Your Goals
- Where Are You Going, Anyway? ................................... 62
- Defining Goals and Objectives Simply ............................ 64
- Budgeting to Reach Your Goals .................................... 68
You’re not alone if you opened this book looking for an answer to the question, “What is marketing, anyway?” Everyone seems to know that marketing is an essential ingredient for business success, but when it comes time to say exactly what it is, certainty disappears from the scene.

People aren’t sure if marketing, advertising, and sales are the same or different things. And they’re even less sure about what marketing involves and how to do it well.

To settle the matter right up-front, here’s a plain-language description of what marketing — and this book — is all about.

Marketing is the process through which you win and keep customers.

» Marketing is the matchmaker between what your business is selling and what your customers are buying.

» Marketing covers all the steps involved in tailoring your products, messages, online and off-line communications, distribution, customer service, and all other business actions to meet the desires of your most important business asset: your customer.

» Marketing is a win-win partnership between your business and its market.
Marketing isn’t about talking to your customers; it’s about talking with them. Marketing relies on two-way communication between your business and your buyers. This chapter gives you a clearer idea of what the marketing process is.

### Seeing the Big Picture

Marketing is a nonstop cycle. It begins with customer knowledge and goes around to customer service before it begins all over again. Along the way, it involves product development, pricing, packaging, distribution, advertising and promotion, and all the steps involved in making the sale and serving the customer well.

### Following the marketing wheel of fortune

Every successful marketing program — whether for a billion-dollar business or a solo entrepreneur — follows the marketing cycle illustrated in Figure 1-1. The process is exactly the same whether yours is a start-up or an existing business, whether your budget is large or small, whether your market is local or global, and whether you sell through the Internet, via direct mail, or through a bricks-and-mortar location.

![The marketing wheel of fortune](image-url)
Just start at the top of the wheel and circle around clockwise in a never-ending process to win and keep customers and to build a strong business in the process.

As you loop around the marketing wheel, here are the marketing actions you take:

1. **Conduct research to gain knowledge about your customers, product, market area, and competitors.**
2. **Tailor your product, pricing, packaging, and distribution strategies to address your customers’ needs, your market environment, and your competitive realities.**
3. **Create and project marketing messages to reach your prospective customers, inspire their interest, and move them toward buying decisions.**
4. **Go for and close the sale — but don’t stop there.**
5. **After you make the sale, begin the customer service phase.**
   Work to develop relationships and ensure high levels of customer satisfaction so that you convert the initial sale into repeat business, loyalty, and word-of-mouth advertising for your business.
6. **Interact with customers to gain insight about their wants and needs and their use of and opinions about your products and services.**
   Combine customer knowledge with ongoing research about your market area and competitive environment. Then use your findings to fine-tune your product, pricing, packaging, distribution, promotional messages, sales, and service.

And so the marketing process goes around and around.

Successful marketing has no shortcuts — you can’t just jump to the sale. To build a successful business, you need to follow every step in the marketing cycle, and that’s what the rest of this book is all about.

**Understanding the relationship between marketing and sales**

People make the mistake of thinking *marketing* is a high-powered or dressed-up way to say *sales*. Or they treat marketing and sales as two independent functions that they mesh together under the label *marketing and sales*.

In fact, sales is an essential part of marketing, but it’s not and never can be a replacement for the full marketing process. Selling is one of the ways you communicate your marketing message. It’s the point at which you offer the product, you make the case, the customer makes a purchasing decision, and the business-to-customer exchange takes place.
Advertising. Marketing. Sales. Promotions. What are the differences? The following story has circulated the marketing world for decades and offers some good answers for what’s what in the field of marketing communications:

- If the circus is coming to town and you paint a sign that says, “Circus Coming to the Fairgrounds Saturday,” that’s advertising.
- If you put the sign on the back of an elephant and walk it into town, that’s promotion.
- If the elephant walks through the mayor’s flower bed, that’s publicity.
- And if you get the mayor to laugh about it, that’s public relations.
- If the town’s citizens go to the circus and you show them the many entertainment booths, explain how much fun they’ll have spending money there, and answer their questions — and they ultimately spend a lot of money at the circus — that’s sales.

Because marketing involves far more than marketing communications, a second part to this circus analogy shows how the story might continue if it went on to demonstrate where research, product development, and other components of the marketing process fit in:

- If, before painting the sign that says, “Circus Coming to the Fairgrounds Saturday,” you check community calendars to see whether conflicting events are scheduled, study who typically attends the circus, and figure out what kinds of services and activities they prefer and how much they’re willing to pay for them, that’s market research.
- If you invent elephant ear pastries for people to eat while they’re waiting for elephant rides, that’s product development.
- If you create an offer that combines a circus ticket, an elephant ear, an elephant ride, and an elephant photo, that’s packaging.
- If you get a restaurant named Elephants to sell your elephant package, that’s distribution.
- If you ask everyone who took an elephant ride to participate in a survey, that’s customer research.
- If you follow up by sending each survey participant a thank-you note, along with a two-for-one coupon to next year’s circus, that’s customer service.
- And if you use the survey responses to develop new products, revise pricing, and enhance distribution, you’ve started the marketing process all over again.
Without all the marketing steps that precede the sale — fitting the product to the market in terms of features, price, packaging, and distribution (or availability), and developing awareness and interest through advertising, publicity, and promotions — even the best sales effort stands only a fraction of a chance for success.

Jump-Starting Your Marketing Program

Small business leaders are most likely to clear their calendars and make marketing a priority at three predictable moments:

- At the time of business start-up
- When it’s time to accelerate business growth
- When they experience a bump on the road to success, perhaps due to a loss of business because of economic or competitive threats

You may have opened this book because your business is in the midst of one of those three situations right now. As you prepare to kick your marketing efforts into high gear, remember that marketing isn’t just about selling. It’s about attracting customers with great products and strong marketing communications, winning them over, and then retaining their business by exceeding their expectations. As part of the reward, you achieve repeat business, loyalty, new customer referrals, and a better shot at long-term business success.

The following sections can help you get a leg up on beginning your marketing program.

Marketing a start-up business

If your business is just starting, your marketing plan needs to address a set of decisions that existing businesses have already made. Existing companies have images to build upon, whereas your start-up business has a clean slate upon which to write exactly the right story.

Before sending messages into the marketplace, answer these questions:

- What kind of customer do you want to serve? (See Book 1, Chapter 2.)
- How will your product compete with existing options available to your prospective customer? (See Book 1, Chapter 2.)
What kind of business image will you need to project to gain your prospect’s attention, interest, and trust?

A business setting out to serve corporate clients would hardly want to announce itself by placing flyers on community bulletin boards. On the other end of the spectrum, a start-up aiming to win business from cost-conscious customers would probably be better off announcing a promotion-packed open house than placing large ads full of praise from affluent business leaders.

If you’re marketing a start-up business, pay special attention to these first few chapters. They can help you identify your customers, make pricing decisions, present your product, size up your competition, and set your goals and objectives.

**Growing your business**

Most established businesses grow their revenues by following one of the following routes:

- Grow market share by pulling business away from competitors. (See Book 1, Chapter 3.)
- Grow customer share either by prompting larger transactions during each visit or by generating more frequent repeat business.
- Grow interest in new offerings that generate additional sales volume for your business. (See Book 1, Chapter 2.)

Almost always, the most cost-efficient route to higher sales volume is to look inside your business first, shore up your product and service offerings, and strengthen your existing customer satisfaction and advertising spending levels before trying to win new prospects, which requires significantly more effort and expense.

**Scaling your marketing to meet your goal**

Small business owners often feel overwhelmed by the marketing task. They aren’t sure how much money they should dedicate to the effort, whether they need to hire marketing professionals, how to weight efforts between traditional media and online communications, and whether they need to create new ads, brochures, and websites to get the job done.