



## My First Three Months of 2010 Marketing Calendar

Thank you for taking the time to download this 3-month marketing plan calendar. If you follow this plan each week, you WILL begin to see an increase in activity for your business.

I've been involved in marketing for over 15 years and there are some things which hold true. The first is this:

**The most important part of marketing to make it effective and successful is consistency.**

We all get busy doing a plethora of things and often marketing efforts are put to the wayside. Or, after marketing for a while, you may end up being so busy you don't think you need to continue. Hogwash! Your marketing efforts must always be done in order for your business to be successful.

So you mailed out a postcard and it didn't work. Does this mean you shouldn't do it anymore? With so many advertising messages bombarding us everyday, people need to be exposed to your message numerous times and in a variety of contexts (emails, direct mail, articles etc). Consistency with your marketing is the only way to get through the clutter.

Remember, out of sight out of mind. Don't ever let your clients and potential clients forget about you. Always be marketing to make sure they don't.

In order to make it easy to stick to your marketing, I've broken down what to do each week for the next three months. Once completed, check it off and move on to the next week.

Make it a commitment to follow this plan over the next three months and watch as your business grows. If you need any help, ideas, copywriting materials or other marketing assistance, simply contact me directly [via email](#), or [visit my site](#) to learn more.

Here's to your success!

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Before we get into action, the following questions must be answered. Skip these questions and face your own peril.

**What are your goals and objectives for 2010?** To increase business income by 20%? Add X amount of new clients per month? Generate Y amount of new sales? Target a new audience? Expand your reach within a geographic area? Without set goals, your marketing will have no direction.

**List your four top business goals for 2010 here:**

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

**What is your marketing budget?** Be realistic (and optimistic) because if spent correctly, your marketing dollars will more than pay for themselves. Remember, without marketing you don't have a business because no matter how good you are or how many degrees you have, if no one knows what you do, how are you going to make any money?

No matter what you do or what service you provide, make the paradigm shift that you are really in the marketing of your product or service.

**Over the next three months, I will commit to investing \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my marketing efforts.**

**What is your unique selling proposition - (USP)?** what makes your product or service different and better? What differentiates you from others and you can communicate it through all your marketing mediums (website, direct mail, brochures, phone calls etc.)

Without one, your marketing won't provide people with a compelling reason to hire you or buy from you - and this will end up wasting your time and money. Not sure what sets you apart? Send an email to [me](mailto:me) to receive a free branding and USP worksheet.

**What sets me apart from my competition (my Unique Selling Proposition) is:**

## **Pick a lane! Who is your target market?**

You may not want to hear it, but choosing a niche is one of the simplest (and least expensive) ways to grow your business. It's easy to know what to say and how to say it when you know exactly who you're talking to.

You see, marketing is about two things - communication and creating relationships. And the way you approach these two activities varies depending on whom you're communicating with. The things that are important to a married 35-year-old woman with two kids are not necessarily the same for a 25-year-old single male. You need to narrow your target market so you can understand how to effectively talk to your ideal client.

So 'picking a lane' (your niche) is the best way to get really clear on who you're talking to and how to talk to them

Answer these questions - why do people buy from you, what pleasures do your customers derive from working with you (or buying your product) and what pain do you solve for your customers? How does your offering fulfill basic human needs? (ie: people want to make money, save money, improve self-esteem, feel safe, improve their looks and social status, etc).

Who are your ideal clients? What do they do? What are their biggest problems? Where can you find them? Start thinking about a large target market and narrow it down to your niche market and even further to your IDEAL CLIENT.

Who wants and needs your product or service? What are their age, income and any other characteristics? What makes your target group different from the general population? By doing this, you'll find it less expensive to market to these people and bring in greater results than having the mentality 'everyone needs my product or service'.

Most business owners are reluctant to define their target market because they are afraid of losing business. However this is completely wrong! When you become known as an expert in one niche then you can go out and find other niches that need your product or service.

Being specialized and narrowing your niche has fantastic benefits. An orthopedic surgeon makes more than a general practitioner and a mechanic that specializes in Volvos (or other specific make) makes more than a mechanic because people are willing to pay more for an expert in a specialized field or one who understands a specific audience the best.

**My target audience is: (be as specific as possible)**

**The problems I solve for them are:**

OK, now that you have completed all of the above, let's get into action.

## Week 1

Develop a free report, tip sheet, case study whitepaper, or other non-advertising information guide. We do business with those we know, like and trust. When you give away free information to your potential client, they have a chance to experience you without a sales pitch.

The report or guide doesn't have to be long, but it does have to provide valuable information and it CAN'T be a sales pitch.

For example, a roofing company may create a tip sheet titled: *'7 Questions you must ask your next roofer so you don't get ripped off'*, where they educate the consumer on what to watch out for when hiring a roofing company. The report isn't promoting the roofing business per se, but it is setting them apart from the competition and because they gave away the information, they are regarded highly with the consumer who received it.

An auto mechanic could create a checklist sheet which can be put into a glove compartment titled: *'10 things to look for to ensure a breakdown-free car trip.'* Now with this in a person's glove compartment, every time the person goes on a road trip, they'll remember this auto mechanic and will most likely use them in the future.

You could create a paper which describes a case study where you show potential clients successful stories other clients had working with you.

The possibilities are endless on what you can give away in order for people to get a 'taste' of you. If you need assistance or ideas, [send me an email](#).

### Week 1 Checklist:

- Create free report, tip sheet or other useful informational material
- Determine what networking events to attend this month (note: remember, consistency is key. You want to attend networking events where you're ideal clients will be and you need to go to them regularly.)
- Contact 5 of your existing or past clients via phone, personal visit or a letter (no emails!) to check in and see how they are doing

## Week 2

**Change your voice mail.** Voice mail has become an indispensable tool to running an efficient business, however most small business owners rarely take advantage of this medium as a marketing tool.

Record your outgoing voice mail message to include information valuable to the caller, such as your office hours and include a short marketing message. You could mention a special offer you have going that week, invite them to visit your website or offer them to download a free report or ebook you are offering.

You can eliminate stating the obvious that you are not available to take their call (if they've reached your voice mail you obviously aren't available to take their call). Instead, use your voice mail as a marketing machine.

The voice mail could sound like this: "Greetings, you've reached Terry of Dancing with Cows. My office hours are from 9:00 AM to 5:30PM Pacific Time. Please leave your message on this private line and I will return it within 4 hours. In the meantime, please be sure to visit my website at [www.dancingwithcows.com](http://www.dancingwithcows.com) and download my latest report on creating effective marketing promotions. Much obliged!"

Change your voice mail often and you'll soon find people calling it just to find out what you're latest offering or special offer is.

**Change your email signature.** Each time you send out an email, it can act as a mini-billboard for your business. Just ten emails a day adds up to 3,650 mini billboards being viewed a year. Creating and using your email signature is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to get increase the number of people who visit your website or call you.

You'll want to include your contact information such as first and last name, your phone number and web address. Adding your logo can be beneficial however most people make the logo too big or make it an attachment which can often cause the email to go to the spam folder.

Give people a reason to click on your website or to contact you. Put your free giveaway or special offer in the signature line. Tell them of your latest specials with links directly to your web page or order form. Get them to interact with you any way possible. Remember to change it often and you'll begin to see how effective this tool can be.

**Send a 'We Miss you' letter or postcard to any client who hasn't done business with you in the past 6 months.** Business owners are always looking to gain new customers, when, if they just worked with their current client base, they'd probably be able to generate more business than they can handle.

If you've been in business any length of time, you know that getting new client costs seven times more than generating business from an existing client. So take a few minutes and put an offer together to send to those clients who haven't used your services or bought your products in a while. I know you'll be pleasantly surprised at the results.

To learn more about effective 'we miss you' and other past-client-retention programs, sales letters and postcards, [send me an email](#).

## Week 2 Checklist

- Change voice mail message
- Change your email signature
- Contact 5 of your existing or past clients via phone, personal visit or a letter (no emails!) to check in and see how they are doing.
- Create and send 'We miss you' sales letter or postcard to send to any client who hasn't done business with you in over 6 months

## **Week 3**

**Create a newsletter or blog.** Whether you do an e-newsletter (ezine) or a paper newsletter which you mail to your target audience, a newsletter is an excellent way to keep in constant contact with them.

Blogs are also an easy way to keep in front of you prospects and clients. They can be created free using such programs as WordPress, TypePad. Blogs are simply your ideas, thoughts and opinions put on a web page which also allows your audience to add comments and share ideas with you.

Done correctly, a blog can quickly help you to create your own 'community'. Blogs allow you to update them anytime you desire which gives you the freedom to add material when you want. However, like all marketing, it must be done consistently in order to be effective.

A newsletter on the other hand can be sent weekly, every two weeks or even monthly. More than just a sales piece, a newsletter should contain useful information for your audience along with a current promotion or event you are having.

If you choose to do an e-newsletter, you'll need to research such companies which allows you to collect and send out emails and newsletters to your audience easily and effortlessly. Companies such as 'Constant Contact', 'Aweber', and 'Emma' are a good place to start your research.

A mailed newsletter, although more expensive than an e-newsletter, often is more effective because they are put physically in your audiences' hands. This 'interaction' increases awareness in your audiences' mind and allows you to promote other products or services you provide easily.

Whichever format you choose (or both) it needs to be done on a regular schedule. If you 'train' your audience that every Tuesday they'll receive an e-newsletter from you, then you don't deliver, it reduces your professionalism with them and you are viewed as unreliable.

To learn more about e-newsletters, newsletters and blogs, or if you are looking to have these done for you, [send me an email](#).

### Week 3 Checklist

Create newsletter, e-newsletter or blog. If you currently do send out one of these, create a plan of topics, special offers, events and send dates for the remaining of the year.

## Week 4

**Create a testimonial gathering program.** If you say how great your business or service is, no one will believe you. If someone else says how great your business or service is, people will believe it to be so. A nuance of the human species. They might not even know the person who is giving the testimonial, but a testimonial from someone can add a great deal of credibility to all your marketing materials.

Send a letter or email to your best clients (or better yet, take them to coffee or lunch) and ask them for one. Most people are afraid to ask for these, however if your clients are happy with your company, they will more than willing to help you out.

Ask them to put the testimonial on their letter. If they need direction on what to say, present them with these three questions:

- 1) What was it like before you worked with me?
- 2) What was it like working with me?
- 3) What is is like after working with me?

You can also make it easier for them by creating a generic testimonial template where they simply need to give minor changes and sign it.

The best time to ask for these is immediately after the sale or when the client is enjoying your product or service. Make gathering testimonials a routine when it comes to working with your clients. They add instant trust to your future marketing efforts and will significantly reduce the reluctance some people may have of doing business with you.

**Ask for testimonials. Ask for testimonials. Ask for testimonials!**

**Create a survey for your current clients.** Do you *really* know what your clients think of you? What bothers them? What additional products or services they wish you offered? A survey is an excellent way to get feedback on how you are performing.

Use a free survey software like SurveyMonkey.com. They'll let you ask up to ten questions and receive up to 100 responses - FREE. So get asking and start finding out what your clients think of you. Who knows, you may be surprised on how they view you, and the information you receive can only help you in the future including new products or services you may be able to offer them.

To learn how to effectively create a survey, including what questions to ask, [send me an email](#).

## Week 4 Checklist

- Contact current and past clients asking for testimonials
- Develop a routine or checklist to ensure testimonials are gathered from each client or customer.
- Create and send out survey to clients

## **Week 5**

**Have a soup-to-nuts system for earning and gaining referrals.** Referrals are a fantastic way to generate more business, and if you've treated your clients and customers right, they'll be more than happy to send new prospects your way.

One of the best methods to gaining referrals is to offer incentives to the referrer. It could be a percent discount off their next purchase, a gift card to a restaurant or shopping location or it could even be cash.

I worked with a CPA who mailed everyone of his clients a sheet that said: *Would you like your taxes done for free? Simply refer four new people to my office.* What can you do or offer people to get them to want to refer more people to you?

Whatever you offer, let everyone know about it. When you deliver your product to your customer, add a referral sheet with it. Create a one-third sheet which describes your referral offer.

Another way to get referrals is to giveaway coupons or gift certificates. At the height of a customer or client's relationship with you (the moment after they make the purchase with you), give them an opportunity to talk you up. Give the customer three coupons or gift certificates - one for themselves and two for two of their friends.

For more effective referral ideas and programs, [send me an email](#).

**Create thank you cards and envelopes.** So when's the last time you received a *handwritten* thank you card? Or just a card from a friend for that matter? This means of connecting to clients and customers is becoming less and less utilized. Which can be good news for you.

When you send a handwritten thank you card, it shows you care and will definitely set you apart from everyone else. Design a blank card with your logo and matching envelope and you can use it for a variety of reasons - as a thank you card, followup card, or simply a 'thinking of you' card.

### Week 5 Checklist

Create referral program including offer(s), discounts, and handout sheets.

Mail to all current clients and deliver with every transaction.

Create and get professionally printed, logod blank cards and envelopes to be used as thank you cards, followup cards and much more

Send out newsletter, e-newsletter or update your blog

Attend networking event

## Week 6 and 7

OK, so now you've got your system going to ensure your exiting and past clients are being contacted by you on a regular basis. Let's go get some new prospects aware of your product or service.

There are numerous ways to reach people and I'm sure a variety of advertising sales reps have tried to tell you their medium will do wonders for your business. I've had to rescue many a business owner who put all their marketing dollars into a particular media (television, radio, newspaper etc) only to find it a complete waste of their money.

You, on the other hand, will not fall to a sales-rep's fairy tale stories of their medium being the golden goose. Because you answered the questions at the beginning of this plan, you know who your target market is and what sets you apart.

So if a television rep says their station is perfect for your business, you'll simply think to yourself, "Does my target audience watch this show? Is this the best way to reach my select group of prospects?" When your REALY know who your target audience is, you'll know what publications they read, where they can be found, what they read, listen to and watch, and then you can make very wise decisions on where to spend your advertising/marketing dollars.

With most medias, you'll find you can reach SOME of your target audience, but you'll also be paying to reach a bunch of people who don't want or need your product or service. Which is why, for me, direct mail and publications my target audience reads, are the most effective way to reach them.

Now some people may not like direct mail, however in my opinion, done correctly, it can be one of the best ways to get noticed to your target audience. With direct mail, you can purchase mailing lists which ONLY reach your target market - saving you a great deal of time and money.

Plus, unlike television or radio, with direct mail, you can send out small quantities (100 - 250 direct mail pieces) to test for effectiveness instead of investing a great deal in production costs and not knowing if it will work.

The biggest problem I see business owners make when creating a direct mail piece, is they talk about themselves, when it should really only be about the prospect. We're all tuned into the WIIFM radio station - What's In It For Me?

A prospect doesn't care about your logo or anything else about you until they know your product or service can fulfill a want or need with them. So, these two weeks are to be spent developing a killer ad or direct mail piece and sending it out to your target audience.

This can take some work, however you'll enjoy a bigger bang for your investment when you take the time to do this properly. Direct mail - for ideas and solutions on how to get your materials open and read (as well as acted upon), [send me an email](#).

### Week 6 and 7 Checklist

- Determine what publication(s) your target audience reads and research them. Request their advertising rates and specifications.
- Develop an outrageous offer or deal to get them to contact you. (Free reports and tip sheets are often very good for the first contact with a prospect. Remember, you are building a relationship with these people so give them a way to 'try' you out.)
- If doing a direct mail piece, contact a mail-list broker to gather the contact information of your target audience.
- Create outrageous offer or deal and put on postcard or sales letter.
- Have piece professionally put together by a graphic designer. Just because you might know a little about PhotoShop or other graphics program, doesn't mean you should try to put this together yourself. This could be the first time a prospect sees your business material, so you want it to look good.
- Get postcard or sales letter PROFESSIONALLY printed. Now is not the time to try and save a few pennies on printing by doing it on your computer. Again, your image is on the line and you want the prospect's first opinion of you to be of a professional establishment - something a professionally printed piece can help do.

In the long run, professionally printed material is MUCH less expensive - and much more effective - than something printed on your printer. Plus, with digital printing available, you can do small print quantities at very affordable

prices. This allows you to send out smaller mailings to determine effectiveness before sending out larger quantities.

Using your mailing list, send out a 'test run'. Depending on the size of your list, you may want to send out 100 or 250 of the mailing to determine your response rate.

Track your responses! You can't know what is working and what isn't if you don't track. So if you send out 100 pieces and get 2 responses, change the headline on the piece, get another 100 printed and send out to the next 100 prospects on your mailing list. If you get a better response, you'll know to use this one for the rest of your mailing list.

Advertising and direct mail pieces are difficult and should be done very carefully. A poorly written ad or direct mail piece can become just as expensive as an ineffective television or radio ad.

If you need help with creating a killer ad, direct mail piece, need more information on mail-list brokers or would like to learn more about this section of your marketing plan, [send me an email](#).

## Week 8

Remember those publications you did research on last week concerning your target audience? **Write an article for publications your target audience reads.** One of the best ways to get known as an expert in your industry, is to write articles. Whether you submit the article to Ezine.com or other article directory, or if you send them to various publications, article writing can quickly and easily get you exposed to large audiences.

Done consistently (there's that word again!) along with Press Releases, article writing is one of the least expensive ways to get noticed. To learn more about article writing, or for ideas and tips on how to write articles, [send me an email](#).

### Week 8 Checklist

- Write article and send to publication(s) your target audience reads
- Submit article to Ezine.com and other article submission websites

- Change Email signature to highlight new promotion or offer
- Change voice mail to highlight new promotion or offer

## Week 9

Alrighty. You've done a lot over the past two months. Now you need to evaluate what's working and where to go from here. So this week's goals are to determine what to improve or change.

By now you've probably received the majority of responses to your survey. What stands out? What areas of your business need improving? Does your staff need additional training in a specific section of your business (ex: phone etiquette, followup, product or service knowledge)? Do your customers need some other product or service from you?

Take some time and really go through the survey and see what jumps out. These are your customers and if you want to keep them, address their concerns and prove to them you listen to them by fulfilling their requests.

How did your direct mail piece or advertisement work? Did you get any responses? Why or why not? Was your offer good enough? Did you give them a reason to contact you? Did you address their concerns - rather than talk all about you and your business?

Are your networking events working for you? Are you following up with people you meet? Has anyone redeemed a referral reward yet?

Are you sending out at least 5 cards a week? These can be thank you cards, followup cards or simply 'thinking of you' cards.

Are people responding your newsletter offers? Have you gotten any response to your article marketing?

Are you gathering testimonials?

Remember, marketing is about communication and relationships, so even if you don't think anything is working now, you are laying the groundwork. Keep the momentum going by continuing to do marketing in all these areas. If you still feel your marketing isn't working, you might need a marketing audit of all your materials. If you would like an assessment of all your marketing materials to determine if your materials are effective, [send me an email](#).

## Week 10

You're now in the right marketing-mode. You just need to keep it up. The next three weeks are going to be doing much of the same things you have just done. This will help to keep your marketing manageable without becoming overwhelming.

By following the next three-weeks tasks, you'll soon develop these as habits and they will become routine for you. And, as it has been said before, consistency is the key to marketing.

### Week 10 Checklist

- Attend networking event
- Send out newsletter, ezine or update blog
- Send Press Release to media (for ideas, suggestions and ways to write effective Press Releases, [send me an email](#)).
- Send out 5 cards to clients, prospects or past clients

### Week 11 Checklist

- Submit article to article directory websites
- Send out 5 cards to clients, prospects or past clients

### Week 12 Checklist

- Send out 5 cards to clients, prospects or past clients
- Send second direct mail piece to target audience (see weeks 6 & 7 for list of tasks to complete.)
- Send out newsletter, ezine or update blog

There you have it! Your first three-months of 2010 marketing plan. See how easy marketing can be when you follow a plan? Once you've done each week's task, you're ready for the next three months' worth of marketing strategies.

To see what these include, be sure to ask the person who gave you this plan to include you on their list and be one of the first to receive the 2010 Month's 4 - 6 Marketing Plan template.

To learn more about marketing, visit my website at <http://www.dancingwithcows.com> and be sure to sign up for my newsletter where you'll learn tips, strategies and other useful ideas to help your business grow.

**Completely committed to getting business owners and entrepreneurs into marketing action.**

Terry Taylor  
The Passionate Marketing Dude  
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### **About Terry Taylor**

Terry Taylor, the Passionate Marketing Dude, shows business owners and entrepreneurs how to take action with their marketing in order to get more results and higher profits.

To learn more about how Terry can you attract more clients, contact him at [terry@dancingwithcows.com](mailto:terry@dancingwithcows.com).

