Marketing Strategy

2020

Version 1

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary sits at the start of your document and really does set out very clearly the purpose of your school marketing plan, presenting the main objectives and recommendations. It also serves to remind those responsible for its implementation of the original aims and objectives, preventing "mission creep" and providing a useful way to reflect and record success, or otherwise.

Our strategy will specifically work towards these core objectives:

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Situational Analysis

The situational analysis, or environmental scanning, part of the plan is designed to help identify your strengths and challenges. The idea is to analyse, understand and define current and future environments that the organisation will be operating within.

There are a number of analytic tools to help articulate this but essentially you're trying to gain intelligence on the external environment and your capability to thrive within that environment.

SWOT Analysis

A simple **_SWOT Analysis_** can help provide a critical and honest review of the current status of your school, considering both internal and external factors which offer opportunity and threat to future developments. Of course you'll be looking to convert those weaknesses to strengths and threats to opportunities. Often a simple SWOT can help identify issues which can be worked on at a later date if they're not critical to the immediate success of your core objectives.

| Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities	**Threats**

Gap Analysis

A Gap Analysis can be used to determine what steps need to be taken in order to move from the current state to a future, more desirable state, within a given timeframe. A useful tool to help visualise actions over a given timeframe.

Our current position:

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Our desired position:

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Gap Analysis

GAP

Key factors for change

Current State

Desired State

Action Plan
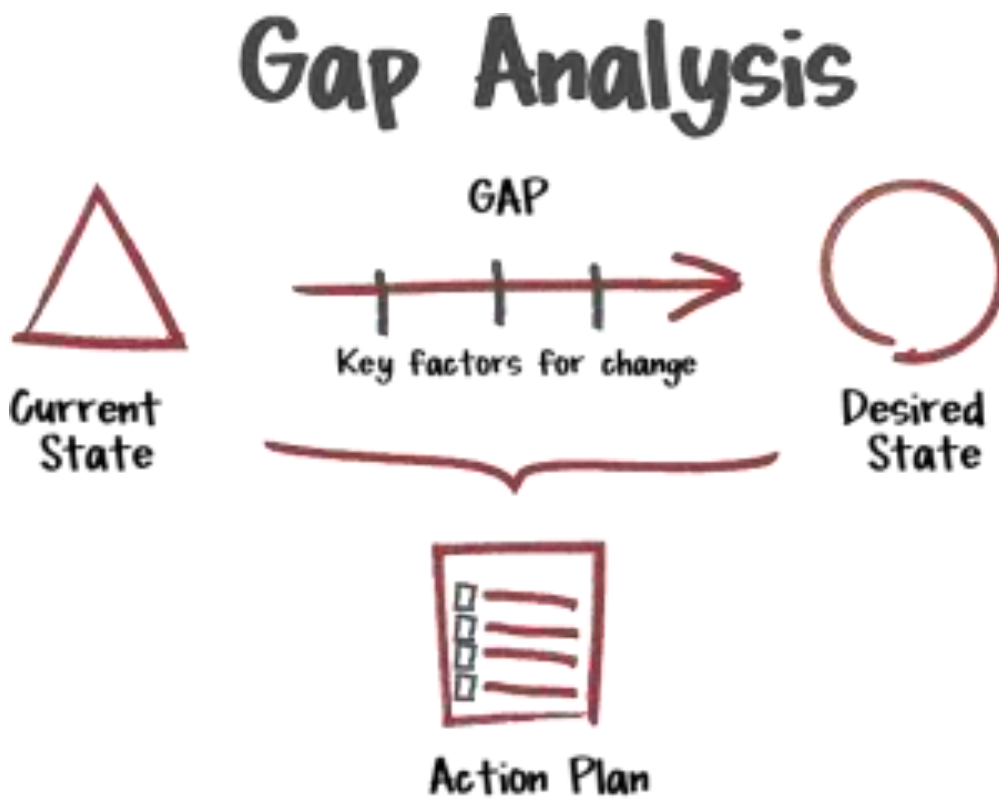
PESTLE – its foundations may lie in the business world, but a PESTLE analysis is useful for framing the wider context your school may operate within, and this is especially pertinent today with political and financial pressures like never before.

PESTLE analysis is an exploration of factors potentially impacting on the school, categorised in the table below. There will be many factors pertaining to all schools, such as the new funding formula, but others that will be seen to have less immediate relevance, such as Brexit for example. Either way, if you can give consideration to these factors you're more likely to successfully navigate around them.

Trends and factors	Significance in school	Action required
Political		
Economic		
Socio-cultural		
Technological		
Legal		
Environmental		

Implications

To reach the vision of becoming a world class education provider we need to have a full understanding of the world beyond the campus – the threats and opportunities presented by the wider environment and the needs of our students and parents (current and future). Adopting a proactive and strategic approach enables school leaders to be ahead of the game, adapting as necessary to ensure the very best provision for our young people.

Following our SWOT and PESTLE analysis, these are the primary focus areas:

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Internal Assessment

Here we identify and understand cultures and values. Kawasaki (95) talks of organisations creating a *strategic cause,* which in an educational setting could be viewed as follows:

Cause embodies a vision – articulate a <u>clear sense of purpose</u>, establishing hopes and aspirations.

Cause seizes high ground – embodies a <u>clear set of shared values</u> aimed at significantly improving student experiences.

Cause redefines experiences – <u>seeks new ways of doing things</u>, creating an attractive future.

Cause catalyses strong feelings – <u>makes people want to belong</u> and buy into the vision. Parents, students and staff are proud to be part of the school.

Small things combine to provide a powerful message about our school:

- Visual identify & brand image
- Consistent message & look
- Our culture & values
- Aspirations

Value Mapping

Here we start to identify, understand and articulate our culture and values. You'll need to sharpen the vision for your school so it is crystal clear and simple to disseminate to others.

You'll almost certainly have multiple objectives for your marketing plan, and the plan should also sit alongside any fundraising strategy you have in place. As such the purpose of the marketing strategy may be, in part at least, to attract business partners and commercial sponsors so it is critical they understand and share your culture and ethos.

Defining **core values** can be a cathartic and transformational process and it needn't be a complicated and drawn-out affair. You may find a mission statement is sufficient but a more visual and effective value mapping exercise can bring in the input key stakeholders involved in your offering.

Keep it simple – ask small focus groups (students and staff) to jot down their gut feelings about your school based around four themes; relationships, functional, beliefs and emotional. Don't allow your focus groups to dwell too long on their answers – this is all about gut feeling and reactions.

You're keying into some aspects of your school which make it unique. You're asking people how they feel about:

Their relationships with one another (staff, pupils and wider stakeholder groups (relationships),
the facilities available (functional),
skills and knowledge (functional),
key cultural drivers of your school (belief)

RELATIONSHIP	FUNCTIONAL
BELIEF	**EMOTIONAL**

The next step is to select those common words, phrases or themes that keep cropping up. You may find that certain words keep appearing on the exercise sheets once they've been collected in. These words can form the basis of your core values. And you know they really do reflect the culture of your school because your students and staff have identified them as part of this exercise.

You can then develop these individual words/phrases further so they become sentences or statements. You may agree on 4 or 5 core values and these can then be introduced throughout your marketing literature, on your website, social media feeds and in school (perhaps as acrylic signs on corridor walls).

Branding and Identity

It is very important to develop an identity….a brand. Visually this reveals itself as a logo/design and colour scheme which others will identify you with. In reality your brand goes deeper than that – it typifies who you are and how you react to those you interact with.

However, to begin with it is important to give thought to what makes your school different, unique – your unique selling point. We can also term these as "key messages" – try to think carefully about your key messages and how you wish your school to be regarded by others:

Key Message/USP #1

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Key Message/USP #2

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Key Message/USP #3

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Strategic Planning

Here we begin to think about the high level aims of our marketing plan and when we feel these can be achieved.

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Operational Planning (shorter term view = Year 1)

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Business Planning (medium term view = Year 2-3)

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Strategic Planning (longer term view = Year 4-5)

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Programme

Focus- Operational & Business Planning 2020- 2021

Main Theme	Individual Action Points	Delivery Date

Agreed Priority Focus- 2020-2021

Main Theme	Individual Action Points	Timescales	Impact

Budget

Item	Budgeted Amount (£)	Time Scale	Difference (+/-£)

Resources

Support – Marketing shouldn't be done in isolation – it's a team sport! As such one of the key aspects of any marketing plan is <u>resources</u> – identifying those with the skills, appetite and desire to get involved.

Name	Current role	Support Offered

Monitoring and evaluation

Reflection – this document will evolve over time, it is important to reflect on processes and activities which worked and those which didn't meet your expectations. The difference between what an organisation believes is possible in the approval of the strategy, and what actually happens a few months in to its implementation are important to track and feed into future revisions of the strategy and its implementation. It is important that the whole organisation learns from this process so that your marketing activities are effective now and in the future.

Successes – what worked and why:

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Challenges – what didn't work and why:

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