



How **Successful** Schools Market Themselves

School Marketing Roadmap to Success

Template to create a simplified school marketing plan.

Determine Your Goals

To get started on the right path, gather a team and hold a brainstorming session to determine your goals. Use these questions to guide your brainstorm:

- What matters most at this time?
- Why is this important?
- What are we truly trying to accomplish? Or what outcomes are we trying to achieve?
- What will success look like?
- Will this goal support our mission?

GOAL

Identify Your Audience

Identify the people involved in or affected by the goals you have set. These people have stake in your actions; therefore, they are your key stakeholders. Ask your team:

- To whom is our communication targeted?
- Why are these stakeholders important to this goal?
- How does our goal benefit our audience?
- What matters to these stakeholders? What are their interests, values, motivations, prejudices?
- How do our stakeholders prefer communication (channel and frequency)?
- Are there any constraints on communication (language, culture, technology, etc.) that we need to consider?

AUDIENCE



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If you aren't able to determine your audience, you may need to take a detour off of the fast road and do some of that nitty-gritty research about your stakeholders. Here are a few fast and effective forms of research:

- Focus groups with a few stakeholders
- Curbside surveys
- Social media or website-based surveys

Define Your Key Messages

Define the overall message you wish to communicate. Be honest, be clear, and be sure to back up what you say. Here are a few questions to guide you:

- What are three to five points we want our target audiences to retain?
- What matters most to our stakeholders that will help these messages resonate?
- How do we want our stakeholders to feel, think, or act as a result of our communications?
- Is this message memorable?
- Why will our stakeholders invest in this message?
- Do these messages support our school brand (mission, vision, and values)?
- Are these messages clear and concise?
- Will there be disagreement, argument, or opposing opinions to our messages? If so, what is the opposition? What can we communicate proactively to counter the negative messages?
- Are there points in our messages that we need to communicate to only some of our stakeholders?

KEY MESSAGES



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Set Tasks

Your strategies are the main tasks—the big picture ideas—that you want to execute to reach your goals. Your main tasks can include things like newsletters, feature stories, marketing videos, social media campaigns, etc. Here are several questions to help your team set tasks:

- What can we do to reach our audience?
- What stories, illustrations, analogies, or anecdotes will make our messages memorable?
- What communication channels do we have available, and how can we best use them?

TASK	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	DUE DATE

Celebrate Your Successes

As you carry out your marketing plan, celebrate your successes along the way. Tracking successes will help you evaluate your campaign when you reach the end.