
MODULE 2 - Marketing Plan

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Your marketing strategy will be your guide on how to find customers, interact with them, sell to them, manage your image, and focus on your direction as a company. This will be your game plan to reference throughout the year when options arise for new ways of advertising.

2.1 Choosing A Company Brandname

Before the world became connected as we know it today, choosing a company name was an easier task. There were fewer companies and company names were for corporations or small shops. Today anyone can not only register a company name themselves without leaving their home, they can now buy the domain name. This has become a major obstacle for new companies, as you'll soon find out if you haven't already, because many domain names are bought and not used.

If you search for a domain name you want and it's already taken, try looking up that name in your browser search. Many names are bought with the intention of reselling them because people think they're a clever name that someone will want to buy from them at some point in the future. So, before getting set on a company name, start making a list and run them through a search on a domain purchasing site, such as bluehost.com or godaddy.com. There are many other sites you can buy domain names from, and any will do (See + **LINKS** from Module 1). When considering a name with the domain name, make sure to be specific on the what you want the Top Level Domain (TLD) to be. This is the tail end of the domain, such as .com, .net, .ca, .info, etc... If you live in Canada, the main TLD is .ca, but you don't have to use it just because you're in Canada. If you have an information only website, sometimes using .info is a better choice as it gives a hint of what your website might consist of.

Be sure to search the other primary TLD's for the domain name you settle on. You might not want to buy ~~xxxxxx~~graffitiremoval.ca as a Canadian company and then find out there's already the same company in a close American city with the same name, but has a TLD .com. This rarely means you're going to be taking customers from them and you could actually be putting marketing dollars into their benefit. You also want to make sure there isn't a close spelling change that is what's making your company different than a competitor. A simple typo by your customer in an online search or direct website look up could cost you a customer.

Once you've settled on a domain and company name, it might be a good idea to secure both .ca and the .com TLD and make one your primary domain. The secondary one can be "pointed" at the primary one. For example, if you choose abcd.ca as your primary domain and also purchased abcd.com as well, you can easily adjust the setting on the abcd.com so that when someone types it in, it will simply redirect them to abcd.ca.

The other aspects of a business name should include being direct with your customers about what you do. For example, if our company name was RMG instead of Remove My Graffiti, you probably wouldn't now what we do. This name would probably also not be approved as an

incorporated company in Canada as it would have no indication of what we do, which is a requirement. How you brand yourself after you have a legal name and domain name can be different, but might not be in your best interest either. If Remove My Graffiti Inc only uses RMG as our brand, we would get lost in the mix of accounting firms, plumbing companies, and a massive list of other companies online that have initials. Being direct is a smart option in order for your marketing plan to take hold.

The other portions of developing a name are to think about how people will view your company by reading or saying the name. What do you think of when you see a company vehicle on the streets or a new business pop up? Do you know what they do? Do you think they would be appealing to their customers? This can be a difficult part of coming up with a company name for some people. Even if it seems like a cool name to you, you might not be who you're trying to sell your services to, which means it could fall flat in the business world. For example, if you're in your 20's, you might have a different vocabulary than what your customers have if they all seem to be over 40 years old. A 60 year old might be more likely to own multiple buildings than a 20 year old, so don't try to build a brand aimed only towards 20 year olds.

If you're thinking about using your own name in the title, think about how easy it is to spell for people who hear it? Is there variations of the spelling of that name that could be confused, which could cost you a customer because of an online search? Or, what if you build up your company and sell it one day? Does a prospective buyer want to buy a company that has a random name on it? Your ongoing personal reputation will also be permanently tied to that company. Sometimes creating words, such as combining them, or inventing them can work well too if they're easy to spell. I'm sure you can think of many brands that are house hold names that have no other meaning than the brand. Maybe you're even reading this right now on your iPhone or iPad.

Be creative with it, but make it easy enough for your customers to spell, remember, and understand what you do.

After you've settled on a name that checks all of the boxes mentioned above, you can register or incorporate the name if that's the path you choose to go down. This can be done either through a lawyer or online. We cannot give you legal advice on whether or not you should incorporate or how you should, but you should research this and make a decision. Talking to an insurance broker, accountant, or researching online and discussing among other entrepreneurs should pave a clear path for whatever you want to do.

Once you get a name approved, confirm the purchase of the domain name (if you haven't done it already) and your name is set!