



## on: MARKETING STRATEGY

Before the first headline is written, or the first ad is designed, **marketing strategy** is developed. Every good advertising campaign starts with the marketing strategy. It provides the rationale for every element of the advertising — everything from who you are trying to reach to when they watch television and what graphics will best get their attention. Campaigns launched without considering all these elements typically result in inconsistent messages that only serve to confuse the consumer, or in messages that are irrelevant to the consumer. The marketing strategy serves as a plan to keep efforts cohesive and provides confidence in the success of your campaign.

Determining your **overall goal** is the first step we take in creating the marketing strategy. This goal should be quantified in terms of revenue, number of sales, or some other measure. Ask yourself what you want to achieve with the campaign. Whether it's to generate \$1 million in annual revenue or to increase product sales by 20%, setting a valued goal will help begin to give direction to all your marketing efforts.

Your **marketing objective** lays out the best method of reaching the goal you've set for the plan. If the product or service is not well known, increasing awareness may be your objective. If the product or service is familiar to the market, increasing trial use would be a good objective to set. The marketing objective helps us to determine what the overall message needs to do.

Your **target audience** is one of the most important facets of the marketing strategy. It is critical that we know

who your consumers are and what their lifestyles are like. By knowing your audience in great detail, we are better able to determine how to reach them with the advertising message, when to reach them, and how to present the message to them so it gets the appropriate response.

**Positioning** your product or service is another critical element to the success of your advertising campaign. Positioning defines the “who” and “why” of your campaign. It explains the audience you are trying to reach and why you are targeting this audience. Positioning helps us to define the advertising message to be conveyed throughout the campaign.

Determining the **main benefit** of your product or service will help to define what we ad folks call a unique selling proposition (USP). This benefit is what sets you apart from your competition in the eyes of the consumer. The USP should be the main point of your advertising message to be clearly communicated to your audience.

By investing some time in putting together a well-planned marketing strategy, you can assure the success of your campaign. Many campaigns lack this component and, therefore, tend to be nothing more than another frivolous source of entertainment. While we do believe in the value of entertainment to dramatize your product and its benefit (the consumer does spend his or her entire life avoiding unsolicited advertising), entertainment alone leaves the consumer remembering the marketing style and execution, not the product and its message.

*“Creative without strategy is called art. Creative with strategy is called advertising.”*

