

Promotion & Marketing for CTC

This section is Milestone #4 of the Development Action Plan. The timeframe for completing this section is two weeks.

At the end of this section you will complete the:

- ▶ Marketing Strategy
- ▶ Method of Recruitment
- ▶ Advertising & Promotion

Before you begin . . .

At this point in the planning process, you have thought about your CTC and its structure, your competition, the IT Training sector, your operations and the equipment you will need to be successful. All of those decisions are invaluable to the outcome of your sustainable success.

The next piece of the puzzle is to create a plan to make sure participants know what services you are offering and how they can find you.

There is a big difference between the terms “marketing” and “advertising.” Marketing really encompasses a broad range of networking opportunities, including advertising, publicity and other promotions but it also includes:

- ▶ Networking with others to help them understand what the Mission of your CTC is and how participants can benefit from your services
- ▶ Branding your CTC to make it distinctive or unique in the marketplace
- ▶ Creating a plan to reach the target audience you want to attract

In completing this section you will need to consider:

- ▶ How will our CTC be branded?
- ▶ How can I maintain visibility and awareness with potential participants?
- ▶ What are the best strategies (given budget and personnel limitations) that we can take to effectively attract participants to our CTC?
- ▶ What are ways we can create the best experiences for the participants we serve so that they will either want to continue coming back or will refer us to others?

⇒ *Let's Begin*

Marketing Strategy

When considering a strategy for marketing activities, the first step is to realize the importance of being consistent with both your “look” and your “messages.” The “look” is what is known as branding. When you brand your CTC, you create a consistent graphic message so that people reading your literature or seeing your name immediately connect with your CTC and the services you provide.

Understand that your CTC can build its brand on a local level that is strong and easily identifiable. As you begin to build a brand, consider a logo that speaks directly about your CTC services. Think about colors you will use and then use them consistently. Are there specific graphics that you can use to help people instantly connect to your CTC?

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate branding elements for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	What is the message you want your CTC logo to present? Does it include words, graphics or a combination of both?
2.	Are there particular colors that will reflect your image and help you build a brand?
3.	If yes, what are the colors and why have you chosen them?
4.	Will the logo you are discussing be expensive or difficult to reproduce, or will it print easily in a variety of mediums. For example, will it look good if you print it in black and white, in newspapers, magazines, on pens or other promotional items, etc.?
5.	How will you insure that the brand remains consistent when people in the organization and outside the organization are using it?

The second important aspect to a marketing strategy is to understand that not all strategies work for all entities. For example, a restaurant might not be in business too long if it opened down a dark alley, away from the main street. It might do better if it opened in a visible location where customers felt safe. Some organizations, like professional service firms, often get most of their business from referrals. Understanding which strategies will work best for your CTC is critical for success.

In addition to this, consider what forms of marketing activities make the most sense for your CTC. For example, if you believe advertising will work well, what form of advertising will create the most return for the dollars you spend? Will it be print ads, television or radio ads? Another way to advertise that is generally free is publicity. Publicity consists of press releases, written stories, interviews, etc.

Many organizations use promotions as a way to increase awareness of their services. Many times promotional activities don't cost a lot, but can create interest in trying your services. Promotional activities can include networking events, trade shows, telemarketing, demonstrations, etc. Which strategies do you think will work for your CTC?

Analyze the Issues

✓	To assist you in determining appropriate marketing strategy for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	Does location play a big factor in the success of your CTC? If yes, what kind of location do you think will attract the most participants?
2.	Will the look and feel of the CTC play a role in its overall success? If yes, what can you do to enhance the physical presence of your CTC?
3.	Do you think that most participants will find your CTC through referrals from others or through other means of advertising and promotions?
4.	<p>If you need to advertise, what methods will work best for your CTC and connect with the most potential participants? (Remember that your CTC budget plays a significant role in what you can afford to do with advertising, but there are a lot of ways to get publicity that are free.)</p> <p>What forms of advertising will you use?</p> <p>What forms of publicity will you use?</p> <p>What forms of promotion will you use?</p>

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the strategies you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Marketing Strategy** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about your brand by describing it or even including the logo and look in the plan. Also, determine what strategies you think will assist you the most in attracting participants to your CTC. If you are going to advertise, include the costs involved and how you will accommodate those costs with your CTC budget.

Also, include a timeline and plan for how you will roll out your marketing strategies. For instance, maybe you come up with a strategy that combines some advertising, some publicity and some promotional activities. What will these be and when will you act upon them? What is the combination of activities that you will attempt?

Be as detailed as possible with this strategy and remember that once you begin you may find that some parts of it will need to be adjusted or abandoned all together. That's fine. Make the adjustments and try something else until you find the combination of activities that work best for your CTC, your budget and your target market.

Method of Recruitment

In this section, you will need to consider how you attract participants to your CTC and what kind of experience you want to provide them once they decide to use your services.

Your participants need to know they are valued and appreciated. Think about how you will get participants in the door and then think about how you will keep them coming back and referring others.

Methods of recruitment obviously go hand in hand with marketing activities, but they must be considered carefully for your location, and your target audience. Do potential participants read newspapers? Do they get their information from flyers? Will broadcast media be best? Are there other organizations in your area that would be willing to disseminate your message? Are there schools and universities that could assist in the recruiting process?

Ultimately you want to provide a participant experience that is so good participants voluntarily refer your CTC to others and even return themselves for additional services.

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate methods of recruitment for your CTC, answer the following questions:
1.	What strategies will you use to get participants to try the services offered through your CTC?
2.	Who in the CTC will be responsible for recruitment activities?
3.	What measurements will you use to know you are successful with the activities you try?
4.	How will you create an excellent experience for participants when they use your CTC services?

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the method of recruitment you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Methods of Recruitment** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about how you will measure success of the activities you choose so that if your recruitment activities are not generating enough activity you can evaluate your plan and adjust your activities.

Advertising & Promotion

Previously you looked at a variety of mediums from which to build your marketing campaign. You identified what combination of activities you would employ to attract and keep participants interested in your CTC services. If advertising and promotion were a part of your strategic plans, then use this time to provide more detail for what types of advertising you will do, what mediums you will choose, what costs will be associated with your choices, etc.

You may even want to think about a campaign. A campaign is a series of events or activities that consistently provide a message or messages that are unique to your offerings and move people to act.

Organizations often invent slogans or tag lines that go with their campaign.

Think about a critical message you want people to associate with your CTC. What would make people feel good about your organization and its services and what might move them to come to your CTC to participate in your program?

Analyze the Issues

√	To assist you in determining appropriate advertising and promotional activities or a campaign, answer the following questions:
1.	Is there an overall message or tag line you want to use with your CTC logo?
2.	Is there a specific campaign you want to run for a period of time? For example if you are just getting started, what type of advertising and promotional activities would best introduce your CTC to the market?
3.	How will you measure the success or lack of success of the campaign?

4.	If the campaign is successful, how many participants will you be able to accommodate at one time? If it is a limited number, how will you time the advertising and promotional activities so your CTC is not overwhelmed with participants?
5.	What is the timeline you will use for your advertising and marketing strategies?



BullsEye

Make a timeline that includes details of each activity. By showing how they overlap, you can better coordinate the activities to make the biggest impact.

If your budget is limited, a timeline can assist your CTC in balancing its marketing activities so they do not create financial burdens.

Move to Action

Once you have answered these questions and analyzed the strategies you think will work best, turn to your Business Plan Template and write the **Advertising & Promotions** portion of your plan. Be sure to include significant detail about your timeline and the specific mediums you will use to target your messages.