

Free Agent Marketing Tips

November | December 2004

Tracking Your Marketing Plan

By Doug Florzak

In the last two issues, I talked about creating a 7-step guerrilla marketing plan. For those that may have missed it, here's a quick review:

1. **Goals.** This is where you describe what you want to accomplish with your marketing plan. List Sensible, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound (SMART) goals. Notice that making your goals "Measurable" is one of the key factors to writing a good Goals statement.
2. **Benefits.** Describe what the customer gets from your products or services. In other words, what are they really buying.
3. **Target Audience.** Describe who wants what you have to offer. What itch are they trying to scratch? Are they a specific age? Do they work in a specific field?
4. **Niche.** Describe how you will stand out from the crowd. If you are the calking that fills the gaps, describe what gap you are filling.
5. **Identity.** Your identity defines what your business is really about. It's similar to a mission or vision statement. So, what does your business stand for? Comfort? Confidence? Spell it out here.

6. **Budget.** How many hard dollars will you commit to your marketing campaign? Designate 5% to 15% of your projected gross sales.
7. **Marketing Weapons.** In the last issue I listed over 100 marketing weapons you can use, taken from my book "The Free Agent Marketing Guide." These are only

suggestions. The number of marketing weapons you can use is only limited by your imagination.

Once you complete your 7-part guerrilla marketing plan, the fun is only just beginning. The most important part of any marketing plan is tracking the results. There are many fancy ways to track your marketing campaign, but the

easiest method I know is to create a Marketing Calendar.

A marketing calendar is a simple table that lists the weapons you chose matched against the goals for each weapon and the actual results. To create this table, open your favorite spreadsheet program or word processor. I suggest you track your marketing plan by the month, so create one table per page and title each page at the top with the month that you are tracking.

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Marketing tips for
Free Agents,
Independent Consultants,
Freelancers,
and Small Business

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When you create your monthly calendar, put the following column headings at the top (see example on next page):

Weapon

Describe the weapons you chose in step seven of your plan.

Monthly Cost

Many weapons are free, but if the weapon has a cost, list how much you have to spend per month to implement it. For example, if you run regular ads in print media, you would list your monthly charge for the ads here.

Goal

Quantify your monthly goals for this weapon. For example, if your weapon is your free newsletter, your goal may be to get 25 new people to subscribe each month.

Results

Quantify your results. For example, how many people actually signed up for that newsletter?

Grade

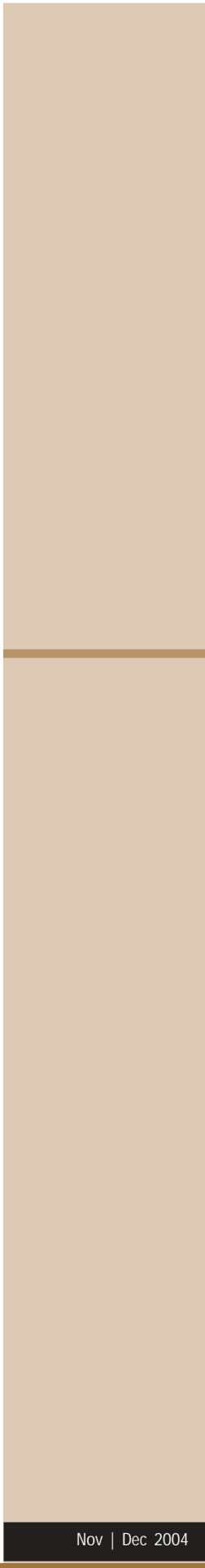
At the end of each month, give each weapon a grade. You can use a number grade (1 to 10) or a letter grade (A to F). Some weapons are easy to measure objectively against your Return On Investment (ROI) and other are more naturally subjective. It's important to grade the results of each weapon because this is how you will decide if you will keep it or not.

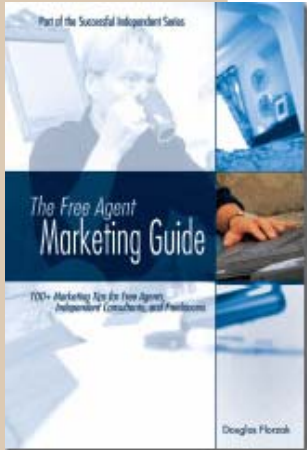
How long should you keep using a weapon? As a general rule of thumb, try a weapon for at least three months. Others will require more time. The reason you want to give a sufficient amount of time before pulling the plug is that it often takes more than one attempt for a weapon to work. For example, several studies indicate that it often takes seven contacts with a customer before they feel comfortable enough to give you their money.

After a sufficient amount of time, you'll know what weapons work and which ones don't. There's no point in wasting time with those that don't work, so pull the dogs and substitute another weapon you've been itching to try.

With discipline over time, as you refine this process, you will inevitably see an increase in your profits. ■

Weapon	Monthly Cost	Goal	Results	Grade





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Get a jumpstart on your marketing plan!

Take advantage of my 6 Week Guerrilla Marketing Springboard package. This is a highly focused 6-week coaching program in which we create a one-page marketing plan, create a marketing calendar, work on your presentation skills, find fusion marketing partners, and examine online marketing.

Working together, we will build your marketing plan and get your marketing attack started. In each session I will coach you on how each marketing principle applies to your business. Since our goal is to create results, I will assign you homework each week. You will also have time each week to address your individual needs for the week.

The program is only \$799 and includes a copy of the Guerrilla Marketing Toolkit. I offer a money-back guarantee: if after the first session, you don't think coaching is right for you, I'll refund your money.

As a bonus, if you sign up in the next 30 days, I'll include a copy of both my books: "Successful Independent Consulting: Turn Your Career Experience Into a Consulting Business" and "The Free Agent Marketing Guide."

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