

# **MARKETING PLAN AS A TOOL IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

**ALICJA KRZEPICKA**

WOJSKOWA AKADEMIA TECHNICZNA  
WYDZIAŁ CYBERNETYKI

**Summary:** Marketing ought to be perceived as an indispensable company's activity element integrating all the management levels, departments, positions. Every company should seek such a way of creating marketing policy which would take into consideration prospective changes in dynamic and complex surroundings by indicating objectives, means and ways of its realisation. Planning and realizing a company activity, which take into account the marketing system elements independent of the company, is an extremely difficult process. Acting in dynamically changing market surroundings, companies are forced to update plans and proceeding verification in order to neutralize or avoid dangers and to capture opportunities. Planning and creating good competitive strategies is a vital step on the way towards the realization of the mission and the achievement of company targets, which is further followed by reaching success.

**Keywords:** planning, marketing plan, marketing management

## **Introduction**

The marketing management concept constitutes one of many possible forms of company management. Marketing management is a process consisting in a continuous analysis of surroundings and in making appropriate decisions as well as in controlling their realization. Kotler defines marketing management as “analysing, planning, implementing and supervising programmes which drive at creating, rebuilding and maintaining a profitable exchange with target purchasers, and as a result – meeting organization goals” (Kotler et al., 2002, p. 47). Marketing company management's efficiency is determined by the ability of managing the processes directed from inside the company towards external surroundings, as well as the interfacing processes in a the company. The marketing company management is based on the assumption that the key to meet goals is to define market needs and requirements as well as to deliver the desired products in a more favourable way than competitors, to purchasers' satisfaction.

## **1. Marketing planning**

### **1.1. The notion and features of marketing planning**

A marketing plan is a written statement of marketing strategy and the time-related details for carrying out the strategy.

The notion “planning” means a systematically and methodically applied process in order to prepare solutions of future problems. It is characterized by the following features (Düssel, 2009, p. 365):

- It means thinking about the future. It is important to have an influence on future events.
- Since it refers to the future it relies on forecasts. They are not certain, it is only possible to pinpoint the probability of one’s own assumptions with different tools. Planning does not help to predict the future!
- It is rational and requires goal-oriented thinking as well as a methodical and systematic way of proceeding.
- It is a complex and multi-stage process focussed on the future actions. Thus, it is a vital management element.

The notion “planning” means designing (for the future) a way of performing and is the opposite of improvisation. The purpose of planning is to define the most profitable proceeding in a foreseeable future, and particularly chances and dangers on the market where the company operates. Organization activities planning (Baruk et al., 2012, pp. 224-225):

- forces a constant effort, resources mobilisation, activity of different kinds of organizations in different fields, as in planning inaction is impossible
- enables a systematic analysis of company surroundings (internal and external)
- eases setting organization development directions by acquiring information about macro and micro surroundings
- inspires to undertake actions within the realization of a fundamental issue which for every organization is value creation, including profit
- forces managers to efficiently formulate targets and organization functioning policy adequate to the circumstances
- enables coordination and allocation of resources at company’s disposal
- organizes an activity and sets a homogenous action direction for all employees
- enables an immediate reaction to changes in the surroundings through planning discipline and allows to react in possibly shortest time at possibly lowest losses;
- provides an effective assessment and control mechanism through planning activity standards (i.e. the size of expected indicators, parameters, nontangible values).

Marketing planning is a process in which strategies gain a real shape, constitute the basis of making a decision and evaluating its results (Michalski, 2003, p. 467).

*A formalized planning process should end by formulating a marketing plan, which sets closer and further goals as well as strategies and tactics of reaching them at the possibly lowest costs and optimal effects (Rosa, Smalec, 2005, p. 32). The aim of a plan is to decrease uncertainty and risk stemming from future, unknown activity conditions (Musiałkiewicz, 2008, p. 124).*

Every marketing plan should explain deliberate marketing strategies, present actions employees will undertake to meet goals, show mechanisms of measuring progress and should enable to make corrections if the results turn out not to comply with expectations.

Marketing planning helps to improve the market information system, acquire new skills and elaborate the ways of proceeding.

After a marketing plan is developed, a marketing manager knows what needs to be done. Then the manager is concerned with implementation – putting marketing plans into operation.

## 1.2. Planning functions

The main aims of a marketing plan is coordination of all marketing actions undertaken in a company (coordination function). The plan has also a motivation function, that is it makes a company and employees to meet assumed targets. A control function of the plan consists in a current analysis of activity effectiveness and efficiency. Among the planning functions the following are also included (Düssel, 2009, p. 365):

- **Increasing effectiveness.** Deliberate planning and a methodical use of specific actions increases the probability of meeting a goal and reduces the risk of taking wrong decisions (as spontaneous reactions). Planning is based on a strengths and weaknesses as well as chances and risks analysis.
- **Lowering risk.** Systematic preparation to future occurrences and methodical actions enable to avoid spontaneous reactions and to recognize dangers early enough.
- **Increasing flexibility.** Strengths and weaknesses analysis a possibility of company adaptation to its surroundings is analysed. Regularity requires a thorough definition of a freedom margin for planning.
- **Reducing complexity.** Activities are set temporarily. Thus, thanks to clear priorities, a certain daily routine is created.
- **Using a synergy effect.** Particular decisions and actions are coordinated and are subject to planning objectives. Each decision and action that follows influence meeting the target, and consequently, other decisions and actions. With this respect, they are integrated in a general plan in order to be able to control their impact, which will guarantee better effects.
- **Motivating all the people involved in the process.** Everyone is motivated, as they can immediately see progress and know where it is and what they have to do.
- **The basis for control and management.** Complete planning enables a permanent progress control (comparison of required value with the real one) and allows an appropriately early reaction in case of plan deviation.

## 2. Marketing plan structure

Marketing plan is the beginning of activities which are to guarantee market success to a company, which requires transformation of the plan into a set of goal- and intention- oriented actions aiming to acquire purchasers interested in company products and services (Deluga, 2004, p. 211). R. Ackoff enumerates six phases of plan elaboration (Sztucki, 1998, pp. 136-237):

- 1) creating the ground;
- 2) planning goals;
- 3) planning methods;
- 4) planning resources;
- 5) realization project;
- 6) supervision project.

A complete marketing plan should consist of the following element (Pilarczyk, Mruk, 2006, p. 289):

- 1) company mission,
- 2) brief company presentation,
- 3) situation analysis,
- 4) marketing goals,
- 5) marketing strategies,
- 6) tasks (partitive goals),
- 7) action schedule,
- 8) people responsible for partitive goals realization,
- 9) marketing budget,
- 10) marketing control.

**Company mission.** It expresses the sense of company's existence and its activity philosophy. The mission becomes a basis for elaborating goals and formulating organization visions for the strategy purposes. For the mission to have a strategic dimension, it has to meet the following criteria (Olczak, Kołodziejczyk-Olczak, 2006, p. 107):

- setting the direction and concerning the future,
- defining images and aspirations common for all company members,
- its realisation being achievable.

**Brief company presentation.** It is worth presenting in it: company size and age, product range structure, company organizational structure, competencies of people managing a company, market served – market segments, specific market features, etc.

**Situation analysis.** Its purpose is to recognise a current and predicted set of factors influencing decisions concerning company marketing goals and strategies. The starting point of the situation analysis is to determine company market. In a company running a diverse activity, what precedes a holistic situation evaluation is an analysis made on the level of particular strategic business entities or relatively

homogenous activity fields, not abstracted organizationally. The scope of analysis is set by the structure of the surroundings defined with regard to a particular market or/and product. The situation analysis often embraces: market analysis (consumers, competitors, distributors), own marketing instruments analysis (contemporary market offer, distribution network, marketing concept, promotion instruments, company image) as well as company general surroundings analysis (economic, social, political, sociocultural, legal, natural, educational). The main methods applied within the scope of the situation analysis include: SWOT analysis, product lifecycle, portfolio analysis, ABS analysis (Altkorn, Kramer, 1998, p. 22).

**Marketing goals.** They are results a company wants to achieve in a specific length of time. Goals allow company to develop in a desired direction, give the undertaken actions a purpose and are understood by employees. A goal as a marketing plan element answers the question: What does a company want to achieve in a specific future?

**Marketing strategies.** These are concepts (ideas) and methods of applying resources and opportunities to the realization of medium- and long-term marketing goals (Podstawka, 1997, p. 57). An appropriately formed marketing strategy should be (Limański, Śliwińska, 2002, p. 42): purposeful, so it should enable to meet a determined goal (a bundle of goals); doable; theoretically and practically consequent, i.e. internally non-contradictory; operative and communicative, so it may be easily transported onto practical activities; rational, so based on solid knowledge and taking into consideration a satisfying risk level; flexible and complex.

**Tasks (partitive goals).** They are in other words tasks which one should realize on order to meet marketing goals.

**Action schedule.** Defines in time when particular earlier defined tasks should be realized. The planned activities ought to be necessarily set in time so as to immediately determine when and what effort will be necessary to make.

**People responsible for partitive goals realization.** Even the most precisely defined task is worthless, until it is assigned a person responsible for its realization.

**Marketing budget.** This notion covers concrete sums of money which should be guaranteed so that the plan can be realised. The budget can be determined with the use of three methods. They are as follows: task, mechanical or negotiation method.

**Marketing control.** A control is supposed to convey to the management and owners signals about different abnormalities (understood as non-compliance with the assumed goals), and all this in order to make appropriate corrections. The effectiveness of control tasks depends on adopted standards – measurement tools. Indexes applied to marketing activities control should concern both total (i.e. regarded in a complex way), and fragmentary company results (e.g. advertising effect) (Pomykalski, 2005, p. 168).

A marketing plan formal structure depends on its purpose as well as scale and the degree of complexity of the planned market endeavours (Deluga, 2004, p. 209).

There are numerous common marketing plan types. The basic ones are as follows (Nowacka, Nowacki, 2004, p. 225):

- with respect to a time horizon – strategic, tactical and operational plans
- with respect to the geographic area of activities – plans for regional, national, international and global markets
- with respect to the scope of activity – plans for particular products and product range groups.

The procedure of forming a marketing plan depends on a company size, its organization structure, management rules and acquired experience.

The marketing plan is the central instrument for directing and coordinating the marketing effort. The marketing plan operates at two levels: strategic and tactical. The strategic marketing plan lays out the target markets and the value proposition the firm will offer, based on an analysis of the best market opportunities. The tactical marketing plan specifies the marketing tactics, including product features, promotion, merchandising, pricing, sales channels, and service.

### 3. Difference between good and bad marketing plans

A marketing plan is a written document that summarizes what the marketer has learned about the marketplace and indicates how the firm plans to reach its marketing objectives (Kotler, Keller, 2009, p. 56). Differences between good and bad marketing plans are presented in the table 1.

Table 1. Comparison of good and bad marketing plans

Good marketing plans	Bad marketing plans
Brief, concise and precise.	Expatriatory and boring, not to the point.
Contain clear, measurable and term-limited marketing goals.	Contain goals' justification and unverifiable generalities.
Amount of work directed towards a deliberate strengths and weaknesses as well as chances and risks analysis, strategic considerations and formulating specific action programmes.	The most work time is devoted to endless meetings with no specific results and constant processing of a huge amount of data.
Focus on competitive advantage.	Focus on a wide range of formality.
Work over departments' borders.	Ivory tower.
Plans are realized immediately.	Plans are neglected until they become the next file on a shelf.
Strategic and realization-oriented.	Tactic and short-term.
Regular updating.	They are ignored until the next plan appears.
Permanent monitoring.	No monitoring.
Motivating.	Frustrating.
An important work tool.	Rather "presentation polished to a high gloss" with no durability.

Source: Elaborated on the basis of A. Mayer, H. Davidson, 2001, *Offensive Marketing – gewinnen mit POISE*: Haufe, Freiburg

The better the information and predictions of a marketing plan are, the more perfect it is.

Strategic planning for individual businesses entails the following activities: defining the business mission, analyzing external opportunities and threats, analyzing external strengths and weaknesses, formulating goals, formulating strategy, formulating supporting programs, implementing the programs, and gathering feedback and exercising control.

## Conclusion

Planning is an element of a marketing management process. It is composed of analytical and conceptual actions the result of which is a marketing plan treated as a tool for realization of company marketing strategies. It is, by definition, a document which specifies market goals, ways of meeting them, a schedule, responsibility for their realization, a budget and control methods of acquired effects and undertaken actions. A marketing plan constitutes one of an indispensable and at the same time basic marketing instruments that should be followed by companies so that they could achieve expected results. Company success on the market depends on marketing plan quality and consequence which it is implemented with.

## PLAN MARKETINGOWY JAKO NARZĘDZIE W PROCESIE ZARZĄDZANIA MARKETINGIEM

**Streszczenie:** Marketing powinien być postrzegany jako nieodłączny element działalności firmy, integrujący wszystkie szczeble zarządzania, działy, stanowiska. Każda firma powinna dążyć do tego, aby tak kształtować politykę marketingową, żeby uwzględniała ona perspektywiczne zmiany w dynamicznym i złożonym otoczeniu, wskazując cele, środki i sposoby jej realizacji. Planowanie i realizowanie działalności firmy uwzględniające składniki systemu marketingowego niezależne od firmy jest procesem niezwykle trudnym. Działając w dynamicznie zmieniającym się otoczeniu rynkowym, firmy są zmuszone do aktualizacji planów i weryfikacji postępowania w celu neutralizacji lub omijania zagrożeń oraz wychwytywania szans. Zaplanowanie i kształtowanie dobrych, konkurencyjnych strategii to istotny krok na drodze do realizacji misji i osiągnięcia celów przedsiębiorstwa, a co za tym idzie – osiągnięcia sukcesu.

**Słowa kluczowe:** planowanie, plan marketingowy, zarządzanie marketingowe

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] ALTKORN J., KRAMER T., 1998, *Leksykon marketingu*, PWE, Warszawa.
- [2] BARUK I., HYS K., DZIDOWSKI A., 2012, *Marketing dla inżynierów*, PWE, Warszawa.
- [3] DELUGA W., 2004, *Marketing w zarysie*, Politechnika Koszalińska, Koszalin.
- [4] DÜSSEL M., 2009, *Marketing w praktyce*, Wydawnictwo BC.edu, Warszawa.
- [5] KOTLER Ph. et al., 2002, *Marketing. Podręcznik europejski*, PWE, Warszawa.
- [6] KOTLER Ph., KELLER K.L., 2009, *Marketing Management*, 13<sup>th</sup> edition, Prentice-Hall Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.
- [7] MAYER A., DAVIDSON H., 2001, *Offensive Marketing – gewinnen mit POISE: Haufe*, Freiburg.

- [8] MICHAŁSKI E., 2003, *Marketing. Podręcznik akademicki*, PWN, Warszawa.
- [9] MUSIAŁKIEWICZ J., 2008, *Marketing*, Ekonomik s.c., Warszawa.
- [10] NOWACKA A., NOWACKI R., 2004, *Podstawy marketingu*, Difin, Warszawa.
- [11] OLCZAK A., KOŁODZIEJCZYK-OLCZAK I., 2006, *Leksykon zarządzania*, Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Humanistyczno-Ekonomicznej w Łodzi, Łódź.
- [12] PILARCZYK B., MRUK H., 2006, *Kompendium wiedzy o marketingu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa.
- [13] PODSTAWKA K., 1997, *Praktyczny marketing. Kluczowe elementy*, Wydawnictwo PROMAR International, Rzeszów.
- [14] POMYKAŁSKI A., 2005, *Zarządzanie i planowanie marketingowe*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa.
- [15] ROSA G., SMALEC A., 2005, *Zarządzanie i planowanie marketingowe. Wybrane problemy*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin.
- [16] SZTUCKI T., 1998, *Encyklopedia marketingu*, Agencja Wydawnicza PLACET, Warszawa.