Growing Independent Organisations

Planning Ahead

The Difference Between Marketing Strategy & Marketing Plan

VCS organisations tend to have minimal or no budget for marketing and promoting their work. Some argue that marketing is not necessary or important to the sector. However if there is internal and external confusion around what you do or who you are, then its will certainly raise alarm bells with current /potential funders and other stake holders. It will have a knock on affect on your credibility and perceived ability to deliver to you audience.

Therefore it is important make sufficient marketing allocation in your annual and forward planning budgets. Marketing activities should not be ad hock or simply reacting to a crisis situation. It is advisable that they are thoroughly planned through a marketing strategy and a marketing plan. The difference between these are as follows.

Marketing Strategy:- (This involves What and How)

- A marketing strategy is long term and identifies your marketing goals.
- It defines objectives and describes the way you're going To satisfy your customers.
- It involves choosing realistic, and measurable goals that your business can achieve on a sustainable basis.
- The best strategy is one that will set your business apart from competitors.
- You need to have a marketing strategy before you can

write a marketing plan.

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Marketing Plan:- **(This is the Implementation)**

- A clear marketing plan is a blueprint that lays out the steps a company must take in order to achieve its marketing goals.
- A marketing plan details what you will do to make the strategy happen.
- It usually goes further than the strategy, including detail such as budgets and a timetable for implementation.
- Your marketing strategy may serve you well for a number of years but the details, such as budgets for marketing activities, of the marketing plan may need to be updated every year.

Your Marketing Strategy must :-

- Define your customer needs
- Define the services you offer
- Establish the size of your market
- Establish your position in the market in relation to your competitors
- Set objectives and realistic time scales
- Identify how these objectives will be achieved