

300 Words onSM ... The Mini Marketing Plan

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»» The smart way to plan your company's marketing today

Three years ago, a regional company hired me to create a marketing plan ... paying good money for me to spend time with each of their group heads to figure out what those individuals wanted to do and then put together a plan that would make those things happen.

Maybe you can see where this is going. After lots of high-level sit-downs, a plan was developed that the group heads loved. For the first time in (apparently) a long time, they felt top management was listening and that some long-discussed ideas were actually going to get a chance.

In the end, senior management was too busy to approve the suggested ideas. Not one even bothered to read the plan. Time, money, hope, energy and enthusiasm – all were basically completely wasted.

After that experience, I started thinking about how marketing planning for even complicated initiatives could be done differently. As a result, most of the "plans" we work on today with clients fit on a 3x5" index card. None take up more than one side of an 8½ x 11" piece of paper, and that's with fairly large type!

Instead of spending time writing mega-plans, we now work with clients to figure out what needs to be done and then break those tasks down into a series of SMART projects – specific, measurable, actions to take, realistic and with a defined time frame. **Planning with this kind of focus (and a bias toward immediate things-to-do) gets results!**

The Take-Away: Action – even if sometimes in the wrong direction – is always better than over-planning.

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