



Information from the Desk of Marilyn Dayton, Consultant

To understand **Marketing** and its role in your business, it is important to first take an overall look at business planning, and how marketing fits as a component within that plan.

Every business should have a **Business Plan**, a formal expression in writing of the company's policies, plans, structures, and goals -- who, where, what, how, when, etc. This is a format for management (yes, even in a small business, you are 'management') giving information to employees and the public, about timing and control, and a means of better identifying the business products and services. **Marketing** is that activity in which a company aims all its efforts towards satisfying its customers' needs. Your **Marketing Strategy** blends your **Target Markets** and your **Marketing 'Mix'**. Your **Marketing Plan** is your 'road map', to show you how to get from 'here' to 'there'.

It's a little like building blocks. The base of the block pile is yourself (management) and your skills/talents/experience. Next you add on your products or services. At this point, you need to define your company, whether small or large. So, you produce a **Business Plan**, which defines your company goals, strategies, timelines, financial commitments, target markets for each of your products or services, etc. This **Plan** becomes the base for adding in your **Marketing Plan**, which is the next block, full of your image/brand, PR, literature, even your color palette. The top block, the arrow, shows you the direction you are going in (your growth path) standing at the top of the block pile, a strong foundation to keep your business from falling.

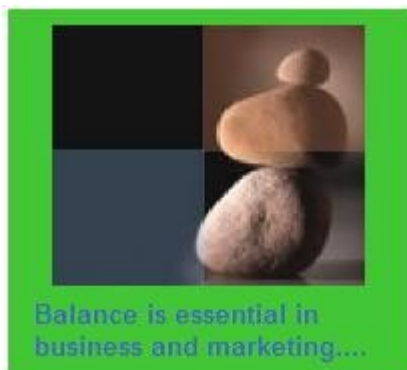
What steps do you need to take to prepare yourself for marketing strategy, planning and collateral to be used in your marketing? Let's take a **look at the basics**:

First, you **gather information**. This involves, basically, the Four P's, your mix of Product (or service), Promotion, Place, Price. To this you add filling in the blanks for 'What is your situation?' This will help you take your strengths and weaknesses and formulate your list of what you Desire to Gain and your Desire to Avoid Loss.

Second, you **take action**. Generate strategies and select the best one. Then, you formulate detailed marketing programs for your business.

Yes, this sounds pretty basic, but if you sit down with pen and paper, you will begin to see a picture emerging....your 'road map' to which you add 'time bars', or time tables.

Call me. And we'll sit down, **gratis for our first meeting**, and hammer out who you are, where you want to go, and what are your options for getting there. At the end of that meeting, you should have a clearer picture of what your **Marketing** 'road map' looks like, and your 'business **Marketing** building blocks' should be more solid.



Marilyn

