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10-STEP STRATEGIC PLANNING MODEL

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, the reader should be able to:

- 2.1 List and explain the 10 steps to developing a compelling strategic social marketing plan.
- 2.2 Explain why systematic planning is important.
- 2.3 Describe how marketing research fits into the process.

Although most agree that having a formal, detailed plan for a social marketing effort “would be nice,” that practice doesn’t appear to be the norm. Social marketer Heidi Keller is eager for this to become a norm. “I find the social marketing 10-step model has a galvanizing effect on groups and coalitions that come together around a common goal. It is a logical, step-by-step process that makes sense. It provides a clear roadmap for how the project will be conducted, and the idea that their work will involve continuous monitoring reassures the team that their efforts will be measured and refined along the way as needed.”¹

We begin this chapter with an inspiring case that demonstrates the positive potential return on your investment in the planning process.

CASE HIGHLIGHT

WATERSENSE—AN EPA PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM



(2006–2020)?

Background

WaterSense® is a partnership program developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) with a *purpose* to make water saving easy and a *focus* on a label indicating certification as a water-efficient product. Water conservation is a growing concern in the United States, with water managers in at least 40 states expecting local, statewide, or regional water

Source: WaterSense.

shortages to occur over the next few years.³ WaterSense partners with manufacturers, distributors, and utilities to bring WaterSense-labeled products to the market, place, and also works with organizations that certify irrigation professionals to promote water-efficient irrigation practices. The program strategy is similar to EPA's successful ENERGY STAR® program that influences consumers to choose appliances, lightbulbs, computers, and more with the ENERGY STAR® label.

Priority Audiences and Desired Behaviors

The *priority consumer audience* are homeowners, especially those interested in saving money on their water bill, contributing to the environment, and making “green” purchases or behaviors when the choice is easy. The desired *behavior* is to choose water-consuming products for the home or yard that bear the WaterSense label and practice water-saving tips, such as turning off the water when shaving or brushing teeth.

Although the focus of this highlight is on consumers, the program also includes homebuilders, manufacturers, retailers, and distributors, utilities, commercial and institutional facilities, and irrigation professionals.

Audience Insights

Prior to launch, EPA conducted focus groups to help develop the WaterSense brand and further understand water-efficient product issues. This early research explored purchasing behaviors regarding water-using fixtures as well as preferences for water efficiency promotional messages and taglines.⁴ In 2021, the program conducted additional quantitative research to evaluate brand awareness, attitudes toward water efficiency, and experience of consumers that had purchased WaterSense-labeled products. The online survey also identified barriers, benefits, and motivators related to the purchase of water-efficient products.⁵ Findings showed aided brand awareness of 31% and also confirmed the value of having a label to look for when purchasing products. The 2021 research also reaffirmed the need shown in the original research to assure potential buyers that the products would also perform well (e.g., showerheads and faucets would still have adequate water pressure; toilets flush properly).

A pilot test in Atlanta, Georgia, helped verify consumer benefits when American Standard Brands provided WaterSense-labeled toilets, faucets, and showerheads to 21 volunteer households. Using detailed water usage reports, it was determined that participating households experienced an average reduction of 18%–27% in total water use, all without any noticeable difference in water pressure or performance. Families reported strong satisfaction with the fixtures, most commenting they didn't notice a difference in water pressure, and many families commenting they appreciated the attractive styling, greater comfort, and increased functionality of the WaterSense products.⁶

These findings helped to confirm and strengthen the brand's marketing intervention mix strategy going forward.

Marketing Intervention Mix Strategies

Product

Major consumer product categories for certification and labeling include toilets, faucets, showerheads, flushing urinals, spray sprinkler bodies, and irrigation controllers that use weather or soil moisture conditions to control watering, turning the system on and off to

tailor watering schedules to actual conditions. In order for a product to receive certification and display the WaterSense label, they are certified by a third party to ensure that the product conforms to WaterSense criteria for efficiency, performance, and label use. Certifiers also conduct periodic market surveillance.

Price

Strategies emphasize savings on water bills. For example:

- “Bathrooms are the main source of water use in homes, accounting for more than half of residential indoor water consumption.”⁷
- “Consumers can reduce their water and energy bills by as much as 30% by using WaterSense-labeled products.”⁸
- “By replacing old, inefficient toilets with WaterSense-labeled models, the average family can reduce water used for toilets at least 20%—that’s 13,000 gallons of water savings for your home every year! They could also save more than \$170 per year in water and sewer costs, and \$3,400 over the lifetime of the toilets.”⁹
- “The average family spends nearly \$1,100 per year in water costs but can save nearly \$350 from retrofitting with WaterSense-labeled fixtures and ENERGY STAR®-qualified appliances.”¹⁰

Contributions to the environment are made concrete: “Nationally, if all old, inefficient toilets in the United States were replaced with WaterSense-labeled models, we could save 360 billion gallons of water per year across the country or the amount of water that flows over Niagara Falls in about 9 days.”¹¹ A “Rebate Finder” on the WaterSense website provides information on rebate programs for purchases of WaterSense products, helping consumers find programs in their local communities. In 2020, more than 257,000 searches were conducted on the Rebate Finder tool.

Place

All major U.S. manufacturers of bathroom fixtures pursue the WaterSense label for their water-efficient products. This means WaterSense-labeled products are available at all major big box retail and plumbing showrooms nationwide, as well as online, in a wide variety of styles, colors, and price points. WaterSense-labeled products can easily be found nationwide as there are more than 36,000 product models in the marketplace.

Promotion

Key messages, as mentioned in the prior *Price* section, emphasize water and cost savings. There are also key messages assuring that products perform as well or better than their less-efficient counterparts, and that this is determined by an independent, third-party verification.

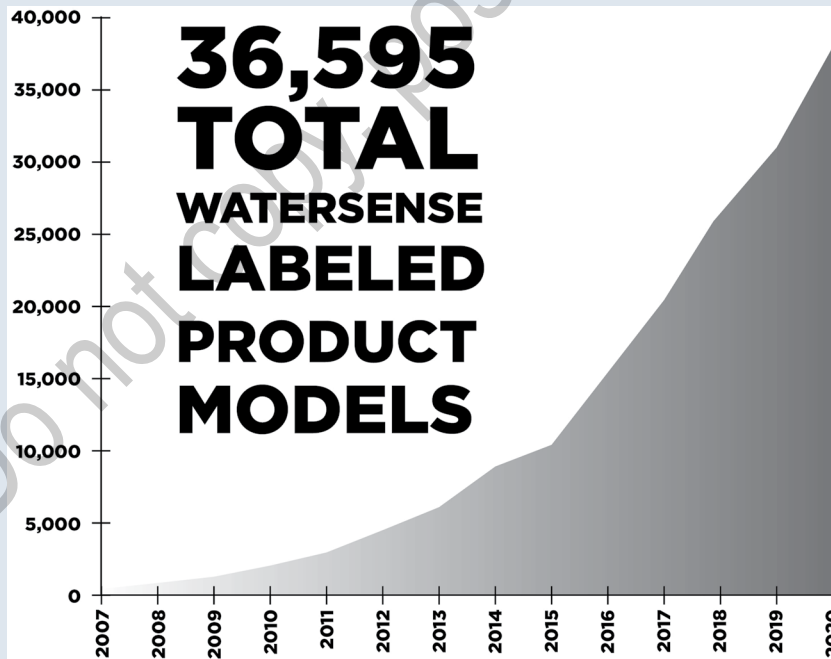
WaterSense benefits from earned media including public service announcements; features on programs such as *CNN*, *Today*, and *Good Morning America*; and articles in newspapers including *USA Today* and magazines including *Newsweek*, *National Geographic*, and *Consumer Reports*. The program owes much of its promotional success to the more than 2,100 utilities, government entities, nonprofit organizations, manufacturers, retailers, and builders who have helped promote the WaterSense label and spread the word about the importance of water efficiency (see Figure 2.1.).

FIGURE 2.1 ■ A Graphic in the WaterSense Toolkit That Can Be Used by Partners Such as a Utility Bill Statement Stuffer



Source: Colehour + Cohen.

FIGURE 2.2 ■ Total WaterSense-Labeled Product Models



Source: EPA WaterSense.

Social media tactics include utilizing Facebook and Twitter, engaging nearly 37,000 fans. In 2012, WaterSense hosted its first annual “Fix a Leak Week” Twitter party. In 2016, the Twitter party garnered more than 2,200 contributors, with 3.5 million impressions. During COVID-19, partners pivoted to promote Fix a Leak Week with additional tactics including online webinars and workshops to show people how to find and fix household leaks.

Results

In terms of *outcomes*, as indicated in Figure 2.2, certifications for WaterSense-labeled products have accelerated steadily over the past four years, reaching more than 36,000 product models labeled in 2020, as all major manufacturers have water-efficient product lines with WaterSense-labeled fixtures.

What about *impact*? A 2020 Accomplishments Report estimates that since the program’s launch in 2006, WaterSense has helped consumers save 5.3 trillion gallons of water and more than \$108 billion in water and energy bills. And use of these products since 2006 has contributed to reductions of 603 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity.¹²

A 10-STEP PLANNING MODEL

Our first of several primers in this book is presented in Table 2.1, outlining the 10 distinct and important steps to developing a strategic social marketing plan. They are described briefly in this chapter, with Chapters 5-16 providing more detailed information on each step. Worksheets are presented in Appendix A (a downloadable version is available at www.socialmarketing-service.com), and sample plans using this model are presented in Appendix B. It is noted that other planning models of interest include: The Logic Model, CDCenergy, PRECEDE-PROCEED, People and Place Model of Social Change, and the Creative Brief.

Although this outline for the most part mirrors marketing plans developed by product managers in for-profit organizations, three aspects of the model stand out:

1. Priority audiences are selected before objectives and goals are established. In social marketing, our objective is to influence the behavior of a priority audience, making it important to identify the priority segment (e.g., seniors) before determining the specific behavior the plan will promote (e.g., joining a walking group).
2. The competition isn’t identified in the situation analysis. Because we haven’t yet decided the specific behavior that will be encouraged, we wait until Step 4, when we conduct audience research related to the desired behavior.
3. Goals are the quantifiable measures of the plan (e.g., number of seniors you want to join a walking group) versus the broader purpose of the plan. In this model, the plan’s purpose statement (e.g., increase physical activity among seniors) is included in Step 1. Certainly, labels for any part of the plan can and probably should be changed to fit the organization’s culture and existing planning models. The important thing is that each step be taken and developed sequentially.

TABLE 2.1 ■ Social Marketing Planning Primer**Executive Summary**

Brief summary highlighting the social issue the plan is intended to impact, and its purpose, focus, priority audience(s), major marketing objectives and goals, desired positioning, marketing mix strategies (4Ps), and evaluation, budget, and implementation plans.

1.0 Social issue, DEI considerations, organization(s), background, purpose, and focus

- 1.1 Social issue plan is intended to impact
- 1.2 Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) considerations relevant to the social issue being addressed
- 1.3 Organization(s) involved in developing and implementing plan
- 1.4 Background information leading to the development of this plan
- 1.5 Purpose of this effort, relative to the social issue
- 1.6 Plan focus, approach that will be used to contribute to the purpose

2.0 Situation analysis (SWOT)

- 2.1 Organizational strengths (e.g., management priority)
- 2.2 Organizational weaknesses (e.g., funding limitations)
- 2.3 External opportunities (e.g., levels of societal concern)
- 2.4 External threats (e.g., advocates for competing issues)
- 2.5 Key learnings from a review of similar prior efforts and additional exploratory market research

3.0 Priority audiences

- 3.1 Descriptions of priority audience(s), including demographics, geographics, readiness to change, relevant behaviors, values and lifestyle, social networks, and community assets relative to the plan's purpose and focus
- 3.2 Additional important audiences that you will need to influence as well

4.0 Behavior objectives and target goals

- 4.1 Behavior objective, one that the priority audience(s) will be influenced to adopt
- 4.2 Knowledge objective, what they need to know in order to be more likely to act
- 4.3 Belief objective, what they need to believe in order to be more likely to act
- 4.4 SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) goals quantifying levels of desired behavior change outcomes as well as changes in knowledge, beliefs, and behavior intent

5.0 Priority audience barriers, benefits, motivators; the competition; and influential others

- 5.1 Perceived barriers and costs associated with adopting the desired behavior
- 5.2 Desired benefits the priority audience wants in exchange for performing the desired behavior
- 5.3 Potential strategies the priority audience identifies that might motivate them to perform the behavior
- 5.4 Competing behaviors/forces/choices
- 5.5 Others who have influence with the priority audience

6.0 Positioning statement

How you want the priority audience to see the targeted behavior, highlighting unique benefits and the value proposition

TABLE 2.1 ■ Social Marketing Planning Primer**Executive Summary****7.0 Marketing intervention mix (4Ps)**

- 7.1 Product:** *Benefits from performing behaviors and features of goods or services offered to assist adoption*
- Core product: Audience-desired benefits promised in exchange for performing the behavior (e.g., native plants require less maintenance, fertilizing, and watering)
- Actual product: Features of any goods or services offered/promoted (e.g., 100 native plants to choose from)
- Augmented product: Additional goods and services to help in performing the behavior or increase appeal (e.g., workshops on how to design a native plant garden)*
- 7.2 Price:** *Costs that will be associated with adopting the behavior and price-related tactics to reduce costs*
- Costs: money, time, physical effort, psychological, lack of pleasure
- Price-related tactics to decrease costs and increase benefits:
- Monetary incentives (e.g., discounts, rebates)
 - Nonmonetary incentives (e.g., pledges, recognition, appreciation)
 - Monetary disincentives (e.g., fines)
 - Nonmonetary disincentives (e.g., negative public visibility)
- 7.3 Place:** *Convenient access*
- Creating convenient opportunities for audience(s) to engage in the desired behaviors and/or access goods and services, including developing partnerships for distribution channels and reinforcing desired behaviors
- 7.4 Promotion:** *Persuasive communications highlighting the offer: product, price, and place strategies*
- Decisions regarding messages, messengers, creative strategies, and communication channels
- Consideration of incorporating prompts for sustainability

8.0 Plan for monitoring and evaluation

- 8.1** Purpose for evaluation
- 8.2** Audience for whom evaluation is being conducted
- 8.3** What will be measured: inputs, outputs, outcomes (from Step 4), and (potentially) impact and return on investment
- 8.4** How measures will be taken
- 8.5** When measurements will be taken
- 8.6** How much evaluation will cost

9.0 Budget

Costs of implementing the marketing plan, including additional research and monitoring/evaluation plan

Any anticipated incremental revenues, cost savings, or partner contributions

10.0 Plan for implementation and sustaining behaviors

Who will do what, when, for how much—including partners and their roles (pilot projects are strongly encouraged prior to full implementation)

Note: This is an iterative, nonlinear process, with numerous feedback loops (e.g., barriers to a behavior may be determined to be so significant that a new behavior is chosen). Marketing research will be needed to develop most steps, especially exploratory research for Steps 1 and 2, formative research for Steps 3 through 6, and pretesting for finalizing Step 7.

Developed by Philip Kotler and Nancy Lee with input from Alan Andreasen, Carol Bryant, Craig Lefebvre, Bob Marshall, Mike Newton-Ward, Michael Rothschild, and Bill Smith in 2008.

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The Importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Considerations in the Social Marketing Planning Process

Before we jump into the details of the steps, it is important that we reflect upon the need to include a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in any social marketing program. Traditional marketing and advertising efforts in the United States are built upon the same structures, institutions, and systems that have perpetuated racism. In order to break this cycle, we need to be sure that we are reflecting upon DEI issues during each stage of the social marketing planning process. A recent open letter by Sonya Grier and Sonja Martin Pool, 2020, published in *Social Marketing Quarterly* challenges social marketers to ask themselves these five questions during the planning process:¹³

1. Are we acknowledging the pervasiveness of racism in our individual psyches, culture, systems, and institutions, and building our expertise in racial equity issues, so we understand how they may influence the design, content, or implementation of a particular social marketing intervention?
2. Are we considering the ways in which Whiteness is centered in our framing of the social problem or how we interpret effectiveness in social marketing interventions?
3. Whose narratives are we using to inform the development of social marketing interventions, research, and evaluations?
4. Are we applying concepts and translating approaches from a wide cross-section of disciplines and community partners to develop social marketing strategy?
5. Are we recognizing the unique ways in which targets and other stakeholders experience privilege and oppression as a result of overlapping social stratification?

Applying this thinking can help ensure that social marketing programs are helping move our society forward in the fight against structural racism.

Steps in the planning process are described briefly in the following sections and illustrated using excerpts from a social marketing plan to reduce litter in Washington state.

Step 1: Describe Social Issue, DEI Considerations, Background, Purpose, and Focus

Begin by noting the social issue the project will be addressing (e.g., carbon emissions) and then summarize factors that have led to the development of the plan. What's the problem? What happened? The problem statement may include epidemiological, scientific, or other research data related to a public health crisis (e.g., increases in obesity), a safety concern (e.g., increases in cell phone use while driving), an environmental threat (e.g., climate change), or need for community involvement (e.g., need for more blood donations). The problem may have been precipitated by an unusual event such as increased wildfires or may simply be fulfilling an organization's mandate or mission (e.g., to promote sustainable seafood).

Next, develop a purpose statement that briefly clarifies the benefit of a successful campaign (e.g., improved water quality). Then, from the vast number of factors that might contribute to this purpose, select one focus (e.g., reducing the use of pesticides).

Litter Plan Excerpt: In the early 2000s, it was estimated that every year in Washington state, over 16 million pounds of “stuff” was tossed and blown onto interstate, state, and county roads. Another six million pounds was tossed into parks and recreation areas. Programs funded through the Department of Ecology (Ecology) spent over \$4 million each year, but staff estimated that only 25%–35% was picked up. Litter creates an eyesore, harms wildlife and their habitats, and is a potential hazard for motorists, who may be struck by anything from a lit cigarette to an empty bottle of beer, or even a bottle of “trucker’s pee.” In 2001, Ecology developed a three-year social marketing plan with the *purpose* of decreasing littering and a *focus* on intentional littering on roadways.

Step 2: Conduct a Situation Analysis

Now, relative to the purpose and focus of the plan, conduct a quick audit of factors and forces in the internal and external environments that are anticipated to have some impact on or relevance in subsequent planning decisions. Often referred to as a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis, this audit recognizes organizational *strengths* to maximize and *weaknesses* to minimize, including factors such as available resources, expertise, management support, current alliances and partners, delivery system capabilities, the agency’s reputation, and priority of issues. Then make a similar list of external forces in the marketplace that represent either *opportunities* your plan should take advantage of or *threats* it should prepare for. These forces are typically not within the marketer’s control but must be taken into account. Major categories include cultural, technological, natural, demographic, economic, political, and legal forces.¹⁴ Time taken at this point to contact colleagues, query listservs, and conduct a literature—even Google—search for similar campaigns will be well spent. Lessons learned from others regarding what worked and what didn’t should help guide plan development, as should reflection on prior similar campaigns conducted by the organization sponsoring this new effort.

Litter Plan Excerpt: The greatest organizational strengths going into the plan development included the state’s existing significant fines for littering, social marketing expertise on the team, management support, and other state agency support, including critical involvement and buy-in from the state patrol and Department of Licensing. Weaknesses to minimize included limited financial resources, competing priorities faced by law enforcement (traffic safety issues such as drinking and driving and use of seatbelts), and lack of adequate litter containers in public areas.

External opportunities to take advantage of included the fact that litterers were not always aware of the significant fines for littering (as indicated by formative research), the strong environmental ethic of many citizens, and many businesses that were “part of the problem” but also potential campaign sponsors (e.g., fast-food establishments, beverage companies, and minimarts). Threats to prepare for included the argument that litter was not a priority issue and that litterers were not motivated by environmental concerns.

Step 3: Select Priority Audiences

In this critical step, select the bull’s-eye for your marketing efforts. Provide a rich description of your priority audience using characteristics such as stage of change (readiness to act), demographics, geographics, related behaviors, psychographics, social networks, community assets, and size of the market. A marketing plan ideally focuses on a priority audience, although additional secondary markets (e.g., strategic partners and opinion leaders) are often identified and strategies included to influence them as well. As you will read further in Chapter 6, arriving at this decision is a three-step process that involves first segmenting the market (population) into similar groups, then evaluating segments based on a set of criteria, and finally choosing one or more as the focal point for determining a specific desired behavior, positioning, and marketing intervention mix strategies.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Surveys indicate that some of us (about 25%) would never consider littering. Some of us (about 25%) litter most of the time. Almost half of us litter occasionally but can be persuaded not to.^{14,15} There were two major audiences for the campaign: litterers and nonlitterers. Priority audiences for littering include the five behavior-related segments creating the majority of intentional litter on roadways: (a) motorists or passengers who toss (1) cigarette butts, (2) alcoholic beverage containers, and (3) food wrappers and other beverage containers out the window, and (b) those who drive pickup trucks and are (1) not properly covering or securing their loads and (2) not cleaning out the backs of their pickup trucks before driving on roadways. Campaign plan strategies were also developed and aimed at nonlitterers traveling on Washington state roadways to influence their reporting of littering.

Step 4: Set Behavior Objectives and Goals

Social marketing plans always include a *behavior* objective—something we want to influence the priority audience to do. It may be something we want them to accept (e.g., start composting food waste), reject (e.g., purchasing a gas blower), modify (e.g., water deeply and less frequently), abandon (e.g., using fertilizers with harmful herbicides), switch (e.g., to cooking oils lower in saturated fat), or continue (e.g., donating blood on an annual basis). Often our research indicates that there may also be something the audience needs to know or believe in order to be motivated to act. *Knowledge objectives* include information or facts we want the market to be aware of (e.g., motor oil poured down the street drain goes directly to the lake)—including information that might make them more willing to perform the desired behavior (e.g., where they can properly dispose of motor oil). *Belief objectives* relate more to feelings and attitudes. Home gardeners may know the pesticide they are using is harmful, and even that it works its way into rivers and streams, but they may believe that using it once or twice a year won’t make “that much difference.”

This is also the point in the marketing plan where we establish quantifiable measures (goals) relative to our objectives. Ideally, goals are established for behavior objectives, as well as any knowledge and belief objectives—ones that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). You should recognize that what you determine here will guide your subsequent decisions regarding marketing intervention strategies. It will also have significant implications for your budgets and will provide a clear direction for evaluation measures later in the planning process.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Campaign strategies were developed to support three separate objectives: (a) a short-term objective to create *awareness* that there were significant fines associated with littering and that there was a (new) toll-free number to report littering, (b) a midterm objective to convince litterers to *believe* that their littering would be noticed and that they could be caught, and (c) a long-term objective to influence litterers to *change their behaviors*: to dispose of litter properly, cover and secure pickup truck loads, and clean out the backs of their trucks before driving on roadways. Telephone surveys were conducted to establish a baseline of public awareness and beliefs about the littering, and field research was done to measure current quantities and types of litter.¹⁶

Step 5: Identify Priority Audience Insights

At this point, you know who you want to influence and what you want them to do. You (theoretically) even know how many, or what percentage, of your priority audience you are hoping to persuade (goal). Before rushing to develop a positioning and marketing intervention mix for this audience, however, take the time, effort, and resources to understand what your priority audience is currently doing or prefers to do (the competition) and what real and/or perceived barriers they have to this proposed behavior, what benefits they want in exchange, and what would motivate them to “buy” it. In other words, what do *they* think of your idea? What are some of the reasons they are not currently doing this or don’t want to (barriers)? What do they come up with when asked “What can you imagine would be in it for you to do this behavior (benefits)?” Do they think any of your potential strategies would work for them, or do they have better ideas (motivators)? Their answers should be treated like gold and considered a gift.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Focus groups with motorists who admitted to littering (yes, they came) indicated several perceived barriers to the desired behaviors of disposing of litter properly, covering pickup loads, and cleaning out backs of trucks: “I don’t want to keep the cigarette butt in the car. It stinks.” “If I get caught with an open container of beer in my car, I’ll get a hefty fine. I’d rather take the chance and toss it.” “I didn’t even know there was stuff in the back of my truck. Someone in the parking lot keeps using it as a garbage can!” “The cords I have found to secure my load are just not that effective.” “What’s the problem, anyway? Doesn’t this give prisoners a way to do community service?”

And what strategies can they imagine and would motivate them? “You’d have to convince me that anyone notices my littering and that I could get caught.” “I had no idea the fine for littering a lit cigarette butt could be close to a thousand dollars! And if I thought I could get fined, I wouldn’t do it.” (Notice their concerns were not about helping keep Washington green!)

Step 6: Develop Positioning Statement

In brief, a positioning statement describes how you want your priority audience to see the behavior you want them to buy relative to competing behaviors. Branding is one strategy to help secure this desired position. Both the positioning statement and brand identity are inspired by your description of your priority audience and its list of competitors, barriers, benefits, and motivators to action. The positioning statement will also guide the development of a strategic marketing intervention mix. This theory was first popularized in the 1980s by advertising executives Al Ries

and Jack Trout, who contended that positioning starts with a product, but not what you do to a product: “Positioning is what you do to the mind of the prospect. That is, you position the product in the mind of the prospect.”¹⁷ We would add, “where you want it to be.”¹⁸

Litter Plan Excerpt: “We want motorists to believe that they will be noticed and caught when littering and that fines are steeper than they thought. In the end, we want them to believe disposing of litter properly is a better, especially cheaper, option.”

Step 7: Develop Strategic Marketing Intervention Mix (4Ps)

This section of the plan describes your product, price, place, and promotional strategies. As noted in Chapter 1, the 4Ps are the intervention tools, those you consider to influence, even help, your priority audience to adopt the desired behavior. Some suggest adding to this list other important components of a social marketing plan that start with a *p* (where each of these components fit in this strategic model is noted in parentheses): pilot (an implementation strategy); partners (potential messengers, funding sources, distribution channels, and/or implementation strategies); prompts (potential services, and promotions); and policymakers (a priority audience or influential others). The Marketing Dialogue at the end of this chapter discusses this in more detail.

It is the blend of these elements that constitutes your marketing intervention mix, also thought of as the determinants (independent variables) used to influence behaviors (the dependent variable). Be sure to develop the marketing intervention mix in the sequence presented, beginning with the product and ending with a promotional strategy. After all, the promotional tool is the one you count on to ensure that priority audiences know about your product, its price, and how to access it. These decisions obviously need to be made before promotional planning.

Product

Describe core, actual, and augmented product levels. The *core product* consists of benefits the priority audience values that they believe they will experience as a result of acting and that you will highlight. Your list of desired benefits and potential motivators and positioning statement are a great resource for developing this component of the product platform. The *actual product* describes, in more detail, features of the desired behavior (e.g., how a pickup load should be secured) and any tangible goods and services that will support the desired behavior. The *augmented product* refers to any additional tangible goods and/or services that you will include in your offer or that will be promoted to the priority audience (e.g., guaranteed anonymity when reporting litterers).

Litter Plan Excerpt: It was determined that a new service, a toll-free number, would be launched for motorists who witnessed people throwing trash from vehicles or losing materials from unsecured loads. When they called the hotline, they would be asked to report the license number, a description of the vehicle, time of day, type of litter, whether it was thrown from the passenger’s or driver’s side of the car, and approximate location. Within a couple of days, the registered owner of the car would receive a letter from the state patrol, alerting the owner, for example, that “a citizen noticed a lit cigarette butt being tossed out the driver’s side of your car at 3 p.m. on Interstate 5, near the University District. This is to inform you that if we had seen you, we would have pulled you over and issued a ticket for \$1,025.” All “Litter and it will hurt” campaign materials, from road signs (see Figure 2.3) to litterbags, stickers, and posters, would feature the campaign slogan and the litter hotline telephone number.

FIGURE 2.3 ■ Road Sign for Reporting Littering



Source: Courtesy of Washington State Department of Ecology.

Price

Mention here any program-related *monetary costs* (fees) the priority audience will pay (e.g., cost of a gun lockbox) and, if offered, any *monetary incentives* such as discount coupons or rebates that you will make available. Also note any *monetary disincentives* that will be emphasized (e.g., fines for not buckling up), *nonmonetary incentives* such as public recognition (e.g., plaques for backyard sanctuaries), and *nonmonetary disincentives* such as negative public visibility (e.g., publication of names of elected officials owing back taxes). As you will read in Chapter 11 on pricing, arriving at these strategies begins with identifying major costs the priority audience associates with adopting the behavior—both monetary (e.g., paying for a commercial car wash vs. doing it at home) and nonmonetary (e.g., the time it takes to drive to the car wash).

Litter Plan Excerpt: Fines for littering would be highlighted in a variety of communication channels, with an emphasis on desired behaviors (lit cigarette butts \$1,025, food or beverage container \$103, unsecured load \$194, and illegal dumping \$1,000–\$5,000 plus jail time), with notes that fines would be subject to change and might vary locally. The image in Figure 2.2 was used on billboards, posters, and litterbags.

Place

In social marketing, place is primarily where and when the priority audience will perform the desired behavior and/or acquire any campaign-related tangible goods (e.g., rain barrels offered by a city utility) or receive any services (e.g., tobacco quitline hours and days of the week) associated with the campaign. Place is also referred to as a delivery system or distribution channel, and you will include here any strategies related to managing these channels. Distribution channels are distinct from communication channels, which are where promotional messages will appear (e.g., billboards, outreach workers, and websites).

Litter Plan Excerpt: The hotline would be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as would a website where littering could be reported (www.litter.wa.gov/c_hotline.html). Litterbags (printed with fines for littering) were to be distributed at a variety of locations,

FIGURE 2.4 ■ Washington State's Litter Campaign Focused on a Hotline and Stiff Fines



Source: Courtesy of Washington State Department of Ecology.

including fast-food restaurant windows, car rental agencies, and vehicle licensing offices. A litterbag was also enclosed with each letter sent in response to a litter hotline report.

Promotion

In this section, describe persuasive communication strategies, covering decisions related to *key messages* (what you want to communicate), *messengers* (any spokespersons, sponsors, partners, actors, or influential others you will use to deliver messages), *creative elements* (any logos, taglines, and graphics), and *communication channels* (where promotional messages will appear). Information and decisions to this point will guide your development of the promotional plan—one that will ensure that your target audiences know about the offer (product, price, and place), believe they will experience the benefits you promise, and are inspired to act.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Communication channels selected to spread the “Litter and it will hurt” message included roadway signs, television, radio, publicity, videos, special events, websites, and messages on state collateral pieces, including litterbags, posters, stickers, and decals. There were even special signs to be placed at truck weigh stations targeting one of the state’s “most disgusting” forms of litter—an estimated 25,000 jugs of urine found on the roadsides each year (see Figure 2.5).

Step 8: Develop Evaluation Plan

Your evaluation plan outlines what measures will be used to evaluate the success of your effort and how and when these measurements will be taken. It is derived after first clarifying the purpose and audience for the evaluation and referring back to goals that have been established for the campaign—the desired levels of changes in behavior, knowledge, and beliefs established in Step 4. This plan is developed before devising a budget plan, ensuring that funds for this activity are included. Measures typically fall into one of four categories: *input* measures (resources contributed to the campaign), *output* measures (campaign activities), *outcome* measures (audience responses and changes in knowledge, beliefs, and behavior), and *impact* measures (contributions to the effort’s purpose, e.g., improved water quality).

FIGURE 2.5 ■ Washington State's Litter Poster at Truck Weigh Stations

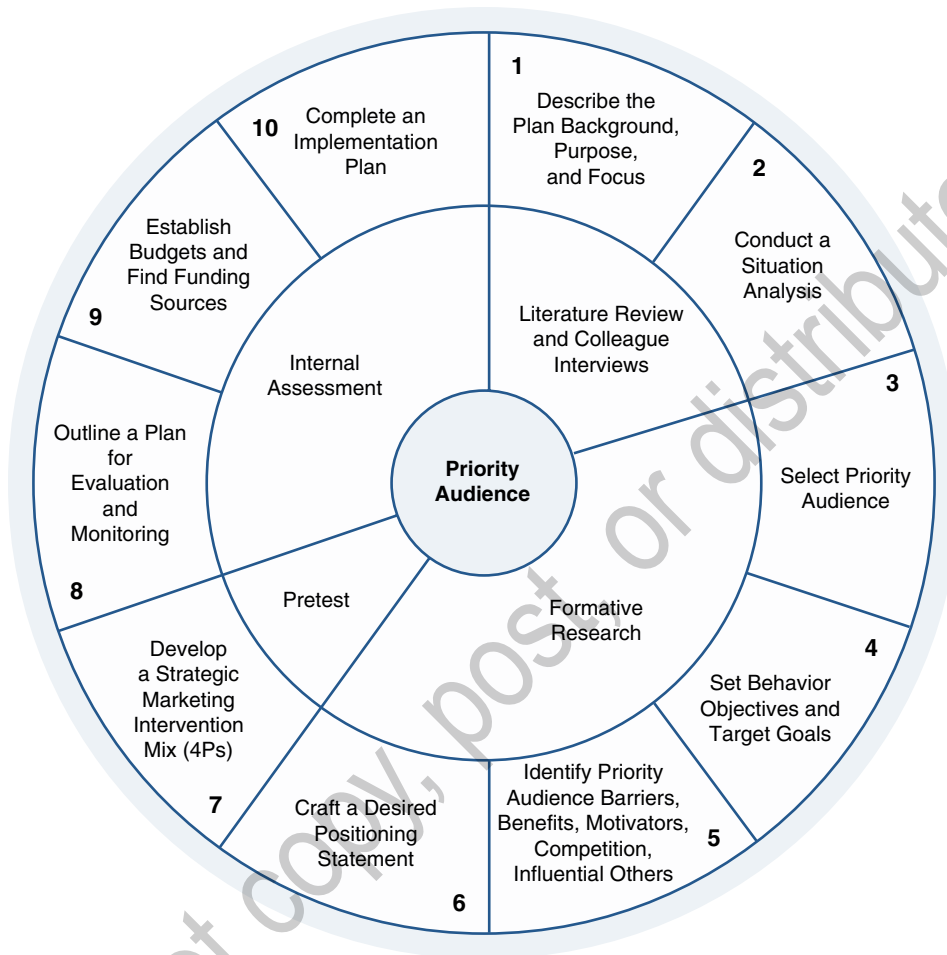
Source: Washington State Department of Ecology.

Litter Plan Excerpt: A baseline survey of Washington state residents was planned to measure and then track (a) awareness of the stiff fines associated with littering and (b) awareness of the toll-free number for reporting littering. Internal records would be used to assess the number of calls to the hotline, and periodic litter composition surveys would be used to measure changes in the targeted categories of roadway litter.

Step 9: Establish Budgets and Funding

On the basis of draft product benefits and features, price incentives, distribution channels, proposed promotions, and the evaluation plan, summarize funding requirements and compare them with available and potential funding sources. Outcomes at this step may necessitate revisions of strategies, the audience prioritized, goals, timeframes, or the need to secure additional funding sources. Only a final budget is presented in this section, delineating secured funding sources and reflecting any contributions from partners.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Major costs would be associated with campaign advertising (television, radio, and billboards). Additional major costs would include road signs, signage at governmental

FIGURE 2.6 ■ Summary of Marketing Planning Steps and Research Input

f02_06

facilities, and operation of the toll-free litter hotline number. Funding for litterbag printing and distribution and retail signage was anticipated to be provided by media partners and corporate sponsors who would augment advertising media buys.

Step 10: Complete Implementation Plan

The plan is wrapped up with a document that specifies *who* will do *what*, *when*, and for *how much*. It transforms the marketing strategies into specific actions. Some consider this section “the real marketing plan,” as it provides a clear picture of marketing activities (outputs), responsibilities, time frames, and budgets. Some even use this as a stand-alone piece that they can then share with important internal groups. Typically, detailed activities are provided for the first year of a campaign along with broader references for subsequent years.

Litter Plan Excerpt: Three phases were identified for this three-year campaign plan. In summary, first-year efforts concentrated on awareness building. Years 2 and 3 would sustain this effort as well as add elements key to belief and behavior change.

A news release from the Department of Ecology in May 2005 regarding the results of Washington state's litter prevention campaign touted the headline "Ounce of Prevention Is Worth 4 Million Pounds of Litter." The results from a litter survey three years into the campaign found a decline from 8,322 tons to 6,315 tons (24%) compared with a baseline survey. This reduction of more than 2,000 tons represented four million pounds less litter on Washington's roadways. And calls to the hotline were averaging 15,000 a year.

WHY IS SYSTEMATIC PLANNING IMPORTANT?

Only through the systematic process of clarifying your plan's *purpose and focus* and *analyzing the marketplace* are you able to select an appropriate priority audience for your efforts? Only through taking the time to *understand your audience* are you able to establish realistic behavior *objectives and goals*? Only through developing an *integrated strategy* will you create real behavior change—an approach that recognizes that such change usually takes more than communications (promotion) and that you need to establish what product benefits you will be promising, what tangible goods and services are needed to support desired behaviors, what pricing incentives and disincentives it will take, and how to make access easy? Only by taking time up front to establish how you will measure your performance will you ensure that this critical step is budgeted for and implemented?

The temptation, and often the practice, is to go straight to advertising or promotional ideas and strategies. This brings up questions such as these:

- How can you know whether ads on the sides of buses (a communication channel) are a good idea if you don't know how long the message needs to be?
- How can you know your slogan (message) if you don't know what you are selling (product)?
- How can you know how to position your product if you don't know what your audience perceives as the benefits and costs of their current behavior compared to the behavior you are promoting?

Although planning is sequential, it might be more accurately described as spiral rather than linear in nature. Each step should be considered a draft, and the planner needs to be flexible, recognizing that there may be a good reason to go back and adjust a prior step before completing the plan. For example:

- Research with priority audiences may reveal that goals are too ambitious, or that the current priority audience should be reconsidered because you may not be able to meet its unique needs or overcome its specific barriers to change with the resources you have.
- What looked like ideal communication channels might turn out to be cost prohibitive or not cost-effective during preparation of the budget.

TABLE 2.2 ■ Aligning Additional and Alternative “Ps” With the 10-Step Planning Model

A. Additional and Alternative “Ps”	B. Aligning With the 4P Intervention Tools Step 7: Strategic Marketing Mix Product, Price, Place, and Promotion	C. Aligning With Other Steps in the 10-STEP Model
Packaging	Product	
Participation		Step 5: Audience insights Step 10: Implementation plan
Partnership		Step 10: Implementation plan
People		Step 3: Priority audience
Perspective		Step 5: Audience insights
Philosophy		Step 5: Audience insights
Physical environment	Place	Step 5: Audience insights
Physical evidence		Step 1: Background, purpose, and focus Step 2: Situation analysis Step 5: Audience insights
Planning		Steps 1–10
Process		Steps 1–10
Proposition	Product, price, place, and promotion	Step 5: Audience insights
Policy		Step 3: Priority audience Step 4: Desired behavior
Positioning		Step 6: Positioning statement
Politics	Promotion (e.g., messengers and messages)	Step 3: Priority audience
Purse strings		Step 9: Budget
Publics		Step 3: Priority audiences Step 5: Audience insights
Public opinion		Step 2: Situation analysis Step 5: Audience insights
Public relations	Promotion	
Press releases	Promotion	

TABLE 2.2 ■ Aligning Additional and Alternative “Ps” With the 10-Step Planning

A. Additional and Alternative “Ps”	B. Aligning With the 4P Intervention Tools Step 7: Strategic Marketing Mix Product, Price, Place, and Promotion	C. Aligning With Other Steps in the 10-STEP Model
Alternatives to 4Ps		
Co-creation		Research and planning approach
Collaboration		Research, planning, and implementation approach
Communication	Promotion	
Creative	Promotion	
Customer benefit	Product (core product)	
Customer-oriented		Step 5: Audience insights

WHERE DOES RESEARCH FIT IN?

You may have questions at this point regarding where marketing research fits into this process, other than at the step noted for conducting research to determine barriers, benefits, motivators, competitors, and influential others. As you will read further in Chapter 3, and as is evident in Figure 2.6, research has a role to play in the development of each step. And properly focused marketing research can make the difference between a brilliant plan and a mediocre one. It is at the core of success at every phase of this planning process, providing critical insights into the priority audience, the marketplace, and organizational realities. For those concerned (already) about the resources available for research, we will discuss in Chapter 3 Alan Andreasen’s book *Marketing Research That Won’t Break the Bank*.¹⁹

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Marketing planning is a systematic process, and a 10-step model is recommended for developing social marketing plans. You begin by identifying the social issue your plan will address and clarifying the purpose and focus of your plan. You should be ready to integrate DEI considerations throughout the process. You then move on to analyzing the current situation and environment; identifying priority audiences; establishing marketing objectives and goals; understanding audience barriers, benefits, and motivators as well as competing alternatives and influential others; determining a desired positioning for the offer; designing a strategic

marketing intervention mix (4Ps); and then developing evaluation, budget, and implementation plans.

Although planning is sequential, the process is more accurately described as spiral rather than linear—a draft the first time around—as you may need to go back and adjust a prior step before completing the plan. Given the customer-centered nature of all great marketing programs, planning efforts will revolve around the priority audience, and research—both external and internal—will be essential to your success.

MARKETING DIALOGUE

The 4Ps—Aren't There More?

Nancy R. Lee

As presented in this chapter, the 4Ps are *intervention tools*, ones considered and then developed to motivate behavior change, based on audience insights (barriers, benefits, motivators, competition, and influencers). As Mike Rothschild once described, they are the independent variables (product, price, place, and promotion) used to influence the dependent variable (the desired behavior). It is important to note, as well, that these 4Ps do not represent all tools (or Ps) available to the social marketer when developing a strategic social marketing plan. There are also tools for conducting research, choosing priority audiences, selecting desired behaviors, developing a brand, and more. Most of these will be discussed in relevant chapters.

Over the past decades, social marketers have frequently expressed views regarding the limitations of the 4Ps presented in this chapter. We have even had “The Big Debate” regarding the 4Ps at one of the World Social Marketing Conferences. To provide content for this Marketing Dialogue, in the Fall of 2017, I posted a message on the Social Marketing Listserve inviting other social marketers to share their thoughts on additional and alternative “Ps.” The list appearing in Table 2.2, Column A, includes ones suggested by Nedra Kline Weinreich, Craig Lefebvre, Stephen Holden, Tom Beall, Jim Mintz, and Ed Maibach. Column B offers a perspective on where the suggestion fits within this 4P framework, and Column C suggests where they are “covered” in the 10-step planning model.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

1. Reflect back on Table 2.1 (Social Marketing Planning Primer). Review the order of the 10 steps and discuss any that are not in a sequence you are familiar with using, or that you question.

2. Similarly, reflect back on the sequence of determining the 4Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. Why is it recommended they be determined in this order?
3. Reflect back on the litter campaign example. Why did they develop the toll-free number for reporting litterers? If the letter that violators get isn't a ticket, why does it appear that it worked to deter littering?
4. Reflect back on the Marketing Dialogue. What additional "P" have you thought about and where might it fit in this 10-step model?

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