

A marketing plan is your organisation's roadmap to achieving its goals. It outlines how you'll engage your target audience over time while staying true to your core values and showcasing what makes your organisation unique. With a clear marketing plan, you can build stronger connections, attract new members and volunteers and deliver meaningful experiences to your community.

To make this process simple, the *Sport HQ Marketing plan worksheet* guides you step by step in developing a tailored plan for your organisation, while this guide provides helpful hints and practical advice for completing the worksheet.

Summary

The summary enables anyone working on your marketing activities to be able to align content and design elements to your organisation's core principles.

Consider the below questions to help you complete a quick summary of your organisation. This content is great to include on your website to provide prospective members with insights into your organisation. You can also use it for your strategic plan, grant applications and media releases to keep your messaging clear and consistent.

- **What is your organisation's history?** This can be one or two short paragraphs that detail when your organisation was established, key achievements and milestones and any major changes over the years.
- **What is your organisation's mission statement?** This should match your organisation's strategic plan. If the organisation does not have a mission statement, you can refer to the *Sport HQ Purpose Worksheet* to help develop one.
- **What are your organisation's values?** These should also match your strategic plan. If the organisation does not have established values, you can refer to the *Sport HQ Purpose Worksheet* to help develop them.

EXAMPLE

History

Our organisation was established in 1976, built on a passion for the game and a commitment to fostering community spirit. Over the past 50 years, we've grown from a small grassroots club to a thriving organisation with a strong presence in our local community.

We secured sponsorship for our premier team in 2010, marking a significant milestone in our competitive journey. We have been successful in hosting the regional championship tournament earning recognition as a leader in our sport within the region for more than 5 years. Our focus on inclusivity and development has made us a cornerstone of local sport, with generations of players, families and supporters proudly calling our club home.

Marketing objectives

Marketing objectives help ensure all promotional activities are aligned with your organisation's overarching strategic goals, such as increasing membership, building volunteering, boosting sponsorship revenue or enhancing female participation.

Write down several marketing objectives (goals) that you wish to achieve within the timeframe of your marketing plan. These objectives should be specific, relevant and achievable, with deadlines enabling you to measure your success.

EXAMPLE

Objectives

- To increase membership by 20% by [date]
- To secure 150 registrations for the 2025 Club Fun Day
- To build volunteering by 10% by the beginning of the season



Branding and identity tips

The “look and feel” of your organisation is the visual and emotional representation of its identity. It goes beyond just a logo or colours—it’s about creating a cohesive and recognisable presence that resonates with your members, volunteers, fans and the broader community.

A strong look and feel:

Builds recognition

- A consistent visual identity helps people instantly recognise your organisation across various platforms and materials

Reflects values

- It communicates your organisation’s values, history and culture, fostering a sense of pride and belonging

Attracts support

- A professional and appealing brand can attract new members, volunteers, sponsors and fans.

Strengthens credibility

- A polished and unified look conveys professionalism and reliability, making your organisation more appealing to stakeholders

When creating a strong and consistent look and feel consider:

- Your organisation’s identity
- The core visual elements including logo, colours, typography and imagery
- A tagline or slogan that captures your organisation’s essence
- Involving and gathering feedback from members, volunteers, players and fans
- Developing a style guide to communicate the rules and keep your branding consistent and strong

A logo should be simple, memorable and reflective of your organisation’s identity. Also consider colours that evoke the right emotions.



Target audience

Identifying your target audience is essential, as this shapes and directs your marketing efforts. By understanding who you’re trying to reach, you can focus your resources effectively, saving your organisation valuable time and money while ensuring your activities have the greatest impact.

It can be challenging to define your organisation’s target audience, especially if marketing isn’t your specialty. A common mistake is trying to appeal to everyone, which often results in a diluted message and lower engagement. Instead, by focusing on specific groups, your marketing efforts will be more effective, and as your organisation grows, you can expand your reach to new audiences over time.

That said, targeting a particular group doesn’t mean excluding others. Your organisation should remain welcoming and accessible to anyone interested in joining. When defining target audiences, it’s also important to consider diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure your organisation remains an open and supportive environment for all.

You may have multiple target audiences, but it’s important to prioritise the groups most aligned with your organisation’s strategic objectives. Target audiences are not just broad groups of people who might have a general interest in your organisation—they are the specific communities you should actively market to for the best results.

To help identify your target audience, ask yourself the following questions:

- What age group are we PRIMARILY trying to attract?
- Who is the PRIMARY decision maker of this age group? For example, this could be the parent/carer or the individual themselves.
- Where do these individuals/families reside? For example, what radius from your organisation are they PRIMARILY located in?
- Why would this target audience want to be involved with your organisation? This is their main purpose for joining and staying a member - it could be for socialising, keeping fit, improving skills or participating in high-level competitions.
- What social media platform is PRIMARILY used by the decision maker?

EXAMPLE TARGET AUDIENCE

- Age group: Children aged 8–16 years
- Decision maker: Parents or carers
- Location: Within a 10–15 km radius of the organisation, including nearby suburbs such as...
- Purpose: To make friends and develop skills in a fun, supportive environment
- Marketing platform: Parents and carers of children are most active on Facebook

Market analysis

Researching and staying at the forefront of what is happening in your sporting sector and your community will assist your organisation to adapt as required and reach your set objectives. Understanding market trends helps an organisation spot opportunities for growth, such as increasing participation in certain demographics, tapping into new funding streams or introducing innovative programs.

Consider the following questions to help you define the current market:

- What are the main sporting sector trends in your region and nationwide? Also, consider if there are other community sports or activities that could affect your organisation in regards to a decrease in membership or reduced community participation.
- Are the demographics of your community shifting? Changes in typical age groups, household structures or income may impact your organisation positively or negatively.
- What opportunities for your organisation can you identify from these trends?

Researching your market is also a great exercise for your strategic plan and can be used to support grant applications. You can start researching sporting trends by:

- Talking to your members! They're the best source of information for local trends.
- Reviewing national reports like AusPlay for participation data and trends.
- Consulting the strategic plans of your national and state peak bodies.

You can find demographic information by:

- Using the ABS census data and local council profiles to track shifts in age, income and household structures.
- Analysing your own membership data over the years to see if there are any trends.

You may also choose to conduct a SWOT analysis to further explore your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Refer to the *Sport HQ SWOT analysis worksheet*.

EXAMPLE MARKET ANALYSIS

Sport trends

- Increased interest in flexible, social sports formats
- A focus on inclusivity, with programs designed for women, children and people with disabilities
- An increased desire for covered courts to protect athletes from the sun

Demographic trends

- A growing proportion of retirees (55+) in the area
- More dual-income families are looking for after-school and weekend activities for children that require minimal parental involvement
- Declining median household income in the area

Opportunities

- Develop inclusive, flexible programs to attract women, retirees and people with disabilities, aligning with national trends
- Introduce school partnerships or after-school programs to capture the interest of young families moving into the area
- Offer social sports leagues or shorter competition formats to attract time-poor players
- Promote affordability and value-for-money offerings to appeal to households affected by income pressures
- Promote the organisation's covered court as a sun-safe, all-weather playing option



Marketing positioning

Your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) will help to promote your organisation's distinctive value to current and prospective members, volunteers and sponsors. By answering the questions below, your organisation can identify qualities that make it stand out:

- What makes our organisation unique compared to others in the area?
- What do our members value most about being part of our organisation?
- What positive feedback do we consistently receive from members?
- What specialised training programs do we offer members that other local organisations don't?
- How do we support player development that exceeds what other organisations offer?
- What facilities or equipment do we provide that enhance the player or spectator experience?

EXAMPLE MARKETING POSITIONING

Inclusive and family-friendly environment - Our club fosters a welcoming and inclusive community, creating a strong sense of belonging for players of all ages and backgrounds.



Social media tips

Post regularly

- Maintain consistency to keep your audience engaged
- Post several times a week and schedule posts to become live at set times when you know your target audience are more likely to be using social media

Showcase your community

- Highlight players, coaches and volunteers to create a personal connection
- Use original (approved) photos and videos of your members for greater feed visibility on social media

Promote events and matches:

- Share schedules, reminders and results to boost attendance and engagement
- Set up Events in Facebook to gain greater traction

Use eye-catching photos and videos

- Post engaging original photos and videos to capture attention

Engage with your audience:

- Respond to comments and messages promptly to build relationships and trust

Celebrate achievements

- Acknowledge milestones, wins and individual accomplishments

Leverage hashtags

- Use local and sport-specific hashtags to increase visibility

Collaborate with sponsors

- Tag and promote your sponsors to build partnerships and increase the chance that they will share your content on their social media platforms

Share educational content

- Post training tips, fitness advice and sport tips to add value and keep interest levels high

Include your contact information

- Make it easy for your target audience to find you - include your website and preferred contact details

Use online tools

- Free or low-cost online design tools are easy to use and can help make your marketing content clearer and more engaging (e.g. Canva)

Use AI tools responsibly

- Use AI to help save time by generating ideas and content
- Always review and edit AI-generated content to ensure accuracy, appropriateness and alignment with your organisation's voice and values
- Avoid using AI to cut corners. Your members and community will value thoughtful, human-centred communication

Marketing channels

Marketing channels are the different methods or platforms an organisation uses to reach and connect with target audiences. Your promotional activities through these channels are designed to increase awareness about your organisation and help you reach your marketing objectives.

When considering your channel-specific strategies and approaches, answer the questions below:

- What channels are your target audience likely to use?
- What types of graphics, messaging and offers will you implement to connect with current members and attract new members?
- What will the 'call to action' be in your promotional activities?

A call to action is a clear instruction that encourages your target audience to take a specific step, such as signing up for your newsletter, visiting your website or registering for an event.

- When will you run these promotional activities so they are most effective?
- Does your marketing budget allow for expenditure in these channels? What will you spend on each promotional activity?

EXAMPLE MARKETING CHANNELS

- Website—your central hub for important and up-to-date information
- Social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Email newsletter to your database
- Attendance at community events to promote your organisation
- Online advertising such as Google Ads
- Local newspaper advertising and editorials
- Posters on community noticeboards
- Letterbox drop to local residents

Although often seen as traditional marketing tactics, newsletters, community noticeboards and letterbox drops can still be effective marketing tools in many communities.

Implementation plan

A marketing implementation plan helps your club stay organised and on track to achieve its goals by breaking down tasks, assigning responsibilities and monitoring progress. Use the table in the *ClubIQ Marketing Plan Worksheet* to ensure each marketing activity is clearly defined, achievable and regularly reviewed. Fill in each column, including:

Marketing activity

- Specify the exact task to be completed, such as creating social media content for an upcoming event

Responsibility

- Assign the person or team responsible for completing the activity, ensuring accountability

Deadline

- Set a realistic date by which the activity must be completed to maintain momentum

Notes

- Include any important details, such as resources needed, target audience or specific instructions

Progress update

- Regularly update this column with the status of the task, e.g. 'In Progress' or 'Awaiting Feedback'
- Completion date: Record the date the activity was completed to track milestones and celebrate achievements

Monitoring and evaluation

Your marketing plan will only work if you put it into action, check in on it regularly and make updates when needed. Set specific dates to review your plan and to make sure you're staying on track. Keep an eye on how you're progressing towards your marketing objectives and write down your outcomes to see what's working and what might need changing.

Scheduling quarterly reviews of your marketing plan and sharing updates with your management committee will help keep your club on track.

