

studio market planner

Market Planner

For more than a decade, Marathon has forged a vital partnership with portrait/wedding photographers, helping them to market and manage their businesses through the finest quality promotional printing, Internet marketing, educational resources and workshops, and strategic partnerships with key industry leaders and mentors.

To help you make the most of the many marketing resources that are available to you, we have created this Studio Market Planner. This unique planning guide and marketing calendar takes you step-by-step through the essentials of creating a comprehensive, year-round marketing plan.

Topics include:

- ~ Image marketing (including image-building publications and client information materials)
- ~ Internet marketing
- ~ Seasonal action marketing (including suggested activities for each quarter of the year)
- ~ Year-round marketing activities for children & weddings
- ~ Relationship marketing
- ~ Creating a comprehensive marketing plan

It will be our pleasure to assist you in any or all of your marketing efforts!



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Your Business Concept

Chapters 2 and 3 of *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner* present information that should help you determine the parameters of your market and define your business Mission Statement. You can record this vital information on this worksheet, which will help to define your Business Concept and create the foundation upon which your marketing plan will be built.

Your Business Name: _____

Describe the geographic area you serve or intend to serve, and list the Zip Codes of each:

Describe the characteristics of the clients you wish to attract, including household income level:

Describe how you wish the public to feel about your photography:

About your service:

List product lines (such as weddings, portraits, seniors, etc.) you offer or wish to offer:

Your Business Mission Statement:

Your Business Slogan(s) or Tag Line(s):

Competitive Business Analysis

In Chapter 3 of *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner*, you will find information about how to conduct a Competitive Business Analysis. This analysis will help to refine your own Business Concept, based on competitive products and services available within your market area. This worksheet will help you to compile important information gathered from your analysis. Create a worksheet for each of your major business competitors.

Name and location of competitor: _____

Products Offered	Means of Promotion	Business Strengths	Business Weaknesses

Name and location of competitor: _____

Products Offered	Means of Promotion	Business Strengths	Business Weaknesses

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Your Business Analysis

A self-analysis is a critical part of a Competitive Business Analysis. By presenting your own strengths and weaknesses, compared to those of your competitors, you can focus on your strongest competitive opportunities.

This worksheet will help to compile your self-analysis and more information can be found in Chapter 3 of *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner*.

Your Business Name: _____

The image that potential clients have of our business is . . .

Our strengths are . . .

Our weaknesses are . . .

The markets we are presently serving . . .

Our means of promotion to these markets are . . .

Your Competitive Advantage

To insulate your business from price competition, stress the unique features of your products and services. This worksheet will help to determine these features and ultimately arrive at a "Unique Selling Proposition" for each product line. (See Chapter 3 of *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner* for more information.) Complete a worksheet for each major business product line.

Product Line: _____

The biggest strength of this product line is . . .

The biggest weakness of this product line is . . .

Benefits of this product line to clients are . . .

What makes our approach to this product line unique is . . .

Special service features we can provide with this product line are . . .

Specific products within this product line that we should promote are . . .

Special pricing strategies that can be applied to this product line are . . .

Ways to involve the client in creating this product line are . . .

The "Unique Selling Proposition" of this product line is . . .

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Presenting Your Business Identity

Profit-producing marketing requires repetition and continuity. The design continuity of your promotional cards helps to highlight your marketing message. Likewise, certain “recurring elements,” when used as part of your advertising back copy, can help add important continuity to your marketing message. This worksheet will help to organize and record this vital information, which should appear regularly in all of your printed and/or Internet marketing material. For more information on presenting your business identity, see Chapter 4 of *Marathon’s Marketing Resource and Activity Planner*.

Your Business Name: _____

Studio Information: (studio, name, address, city, state, Zip Code)

Area Code: Phone: Web Address: www.

Slogan(s) and/or Tag Line(s)

_____ Studio Logo _____ PPA Logo _____ PPA Certified Logo _____ Other Logo?

Studio Hours:

_____ Visa _____ Master Card _____ American Express _____ Discover

Satisfaction Guarantee:

Other Information:

Image Marketing Planner

A positive business image is crucial to the success of any studio. It allows the business to be perceived as “successful,” helps to create a demand for its services, and persuades the buyer to pay more for them. This worksheet will help to assess your Imaging Marketing needs. For more information, see Chapter 5 of *Marathon’s Marketing Resource and Activity Planner*.

Image Marketing Product Possibilities	Image Marketing	Materials Needs
<p><i>Your prospective client’s “perceived value” of your photography is closely tied to the image of the business. Numerous image-enhancement tools are available to help market your image to clients and prospects.</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business Logo</p> <p>An appropriate business logo will create a “look” for your business and perhaps even convey something about your business concept, style, and desired position in the market. The design process should take into account how the logo will appear with other informational elements such as a slogan or tag line, Web site address, telephone, and business address information. When properly executed, these elements become critical recognition factors for consumers.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Image Advertising Publications</p> <p>Image advertising is the photographer’s most basic marketing tool. Image marketing materials can include brochures, post cards, or even an “image portfolio” booklet. Their purpose is to promote <u>awareness</u> of the business and <u>comprehension</u> about what it does.</p> <p>When creating an image-marketing piece, remember that it is not the only form of promotion you are likely to do. The purpose of image marketing is to build interest in your business and to create a desire for your work among the clientele you are seeking. Through “action” marketing pieces, used throughout the year, you can further motivate prospects to become clients. But image advertising is vitally important, because it makes all other forms of promotion more effective.</p> <p><u>Businesses that offer various types of photographic services often require an image publication for each product line.</u></p> <p>Client Communication Materials</p> <p>Stationery items used to communicate with clients should incorporate your logo and any other elements that will visually and verbally support your business concept. These include letterhead, envelopes, post cards, and business cards. When their design coordinates with printed marketing pieces, all of your materials will have a “family look” that enhances your marketing identity.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Letterhead <input type="checkbox"/> Envelopes <input type="checkbox"/> Post Cards <input type="checkbox"/> Business Cards</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Presentation Folder</p> <p>A presentation-quality folder to hold client information materials and other studio handouts is especially important to enhancing your business communication image.</p>		

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Internet Marketing Planner

Web sites are the fastest growing advertising medium for photography.
Use this planner to organize your Web site content. For more information on this exciting marketing medium, see Chapter 6 of *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner*.

Your URL: <u>www._____</u>	Page #	Subject Matter
<input type="checkbox"/> Main Page Your introduction to visitors, this page includes a directory for other site content. Include your logo, image(s), and optional introductory copy.		
Information Pages These pages tell the story of what's unique about your business—including copy and images on subjects such as:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Studio Information General information about your business / honors or awards / location / hours of operation / professional organization memberships / map and directions to your studio.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Profiles <input type="checkbox"/> Studio Newsletter <input type="checkbox"/> Image of the Month <input type="checkbox"/> Client Testimonials <input type="checkbox"/> Current Specials		
A Web page version of any Marathon-printed card or brochure can be added to your Marathon-hosted site at no charge.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		
Gallery Pages Choose as many gallery pages as you wish for your various photographic specialties—each featuring up to 16 images.		
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery <input type="checkbox"/> _____ Gallery		
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini-Site Promote to special markets, such a high school seniors, through a multi-page "site within a site."		
<input type="checkbox"/> Preproduced Information Pages Preproduced pages created from Marathon's popular client information publications can be added to your Marathon-hosted site at no additional charge. These pages will help your clients be better prepared for their sessions and understand the value of professional photography.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact Page Collect information about your visitors and receive email messages from them 24 hours a day. Return email address: _____.		
E-Commerce By adding a shopping cart to your site, visitors can view and purchase images, and even gift certificates any time, day or night.		
<input type="checkbox"/> Shopping Cart (1-time setup fee) <input type="checkbox"/> Session Proofing <input type="checkbox"/> Gift Certificate Page using Marathon Gift Certificate # _____ (There is no charge for this page when you host your site with Marathon.)		

Action Marketing

The purpose of Action Marketing is to stimulate business, usually during a specific time frame. Action marketing activities can include seasonal promotions, event advertising, product-line advertising, and specialized promotions.

Some Action Marketing, such as to the niche markets shown below, should go on year-round.

For more information on creating an effective Action Marketing program, see *Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner* Chapters 8, 9, 11, and 12.

Year-Round Niche Marketing

Through Marathon's Marketing Partnership Service you can quickly and easily send monthly promotional mailings that target profit-producing portraits of newborns, children, and families.

Through ground-breaking variable-data printing and Internet technology, you have direct access to niche-specific mailing lists that previously were cost-prohibitive for photographers. For a low initial setup fee, Marathon will design and print three or more marketing post cards, as well as activate your private, personalized Marketing Control site that allows you to communicate your mailing instructions to Marathon.

In as little as five minutes you can provide Marathon with online instructions about your ideal client criteria, desired mailing drop date, and the card or cards you wish to send to advertise your portraits of newborns, children, and/or families. Marathon then takes care of the time-consuming job of list purchase, labeling, sorting, and mailing your cards. You pay a nominal monthly administration fee, plus the actual per-piece postage and processing costs.

This service creates an affordable means of reaching small market groups, allowing you to narrow your focus on those specific Zip Codes that provide the best sales-dollar return on your marketing investment.

Card Setup Fee

Monthly Administration Fee

Postage and Mailing Fee

(per card)

~ Newborn card: _____

~ Children's card: _____

~ Family card: _____

☐ Newborns

Age	Family Income	Card Description	Back Copy Version

☐ Children

Age	Family Income	Card Description	Back Copy Version

☐ Families

Age	Family Income	Card Description	Back Copy Version

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Jan	Possible Promotions	Action Marketing	Actual Promotions	Studio Session Activity
	GET SET FOR BRIDAL FAIRS Target: Engaged Couples	1	1	
	NEW SAMPLES INVITATION LETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	2	2	
	SEND 1ST QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	3	3	
	WHITE SALE PROMOTION Target: Families / Children	4	4	
Feb	Possible Promotions			
	RESTORATION SERVICES Target: Families - Businesses	1	1	
	BUSINESS PORTRAITS Target: Business People	2	2	
	BLACK & WHITE SALE Target: Families / Children	3	3	
	WALLET REMINDER Target: Last Year's H.S. Seniors	4	4	
Mar	Possible Promotions			
	BUNNY SPECIAL Target: Children	1	1	
	FLOWERS & FUN PROMOTION Target: Children	2	2	
	PET SPECIAL Target: Pet Owners	3	3	
	SENIOR AMBASSADOR LETTERS Target: Current H.S. Juniors	4	4	
Apr	Possible Promotions			
	MOTHER'S DAY PROMOTION Target: Families / Children	1	1	
	SEND 2ND QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	2	2	
	CAP & GOWN PROMOTION Target: Last Year's H.S. Seniors	3	3	
	FATHER'S DAY PROMOTION Target: Children	4	4	

May	Possible Promotions	Action Marketing	Actual Promotions	Studio Session Activity
	SPRINGTIME SPECIAL MAILING #1 Target: Families / Children	1	1	
	SPRINGTIME SPECIAL MAILING #2 Target: Families / Children	2	2	
	RESTORATION SERVICES Target: Families - Businesses	3	3	
	SENIOR MAILING #1 Target: H.S. Seniors	4	4	
Jun	Possible Promotions			
	STUDIO BEACH PROMOTION Target: Children	1	1	
	SENIOR MAILING #2 Target: H.S. Seniors	2	2	
	WHEN I GROW UP PROMOTION Target: Children	3	3	
	SENIOR MAILING #3 Target: H.S. Seniors	4	4	
Jul	Possible Promotions			
	SEND 3RD QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	1	1	
	CHRISTMAS IN JULY Target: Families	2	2	
	DOG DAYS OF SUMMER Target: Pet Owners	3	3	
	MY BEST FRIEND PROMOTION Target: Children & Pets	4	4	
Aug	Possible Promotions			
	LAST CALL FOR SENIORS Target: H.S. Seniors	1	1	
	RESTORATION SERVICES Target: Families - Businesses	2	2	
	FAMILY RELATIONSHIP PROMOTION Target: Young Families	3	3	
	FALL SPECIAL MAILING #1 Target: Families	4	4	

Sep	Possible Promotions	Action Marketing	Actual Promotions	Studio Session Activity
	FALL SPECIAL MAILING #2 Target: Families	1	1	
	FALL SPECIAL MAILING #3 Target: Families	2	2	
	LITTLE ANGELS PROMOTION Target: Children	3	3	
	BE A SANTA PROMOTION Target: Children	4	4	
Oct	Possible Promotions			
	SEND 4TH QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	1	1	
	HOLIDAY GIFT MAILING #1 Target: Families / Children	2	2	
	HOLIDAY GIFT MAILING #2 Target: Families / Children	3	3	
	THANKSGIVING MAILING #1 Target: Families	4	4	
Nov	Possible Promotions			
	THANKSGIVING MAILING #2 Target: Families	1	1	
	GIFT CERTIFICATE SALES LETTER Target: "Valued Client" File	2	2	
	RESTORATION SERVICES Target: Families - Businesses	3	3	
	HOME FOR HOLIDAYS MAILING #1 Target: Families	4	4	
Dec	Possible Promotions			
	HOME FOR HOLIDAYS MAILING #2 Target: Families	1	1	
	CLIENT APPRECIATION MAILING Target: "Valued Client" File	2	2	
	PET SPECIAL Target: Pet Owners	3	3	
	SIBLINGS PORTRAIT SALES LETTER Target: Last Year's H.S. Seniors	4	4	

Client Education

Successful professionals know that educating clients about portraiture's exciting creative possibilities and the many elements that go into making a successful portrait adds value to your product. You can learn more about Client Education in Chapter 16 of **Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner**. Marathon has informative publications that can be mailed to clients or presented in a Client Information Folder on these important subjects:

- ❑ **Clothing Advice**—Help your clients look their best through a clothing design brochure. When clients are dressed to enhance the artistic concept, the resulting portrait is more pleasing, and you will make a better sale. (pg. 75)
- ❑ **Wall Decor Possibilities**—Promote decorative design options and realize the profit-producing potential of artistic photography by presenting clients with illustrations of actual room settings in which portraiture is a decorative focal point. (pg. 75)
- ❑ **Children's Portraiture Options**—Educate parents about many aspects of children's photography including: the "7 Ages of Childhood;" creating a portrait history for each child in the family; the beauty and value of children's portraiture as home decor; and clothing suggestions for successful portraits. (pg. 59-61, 75)

Client Information Materials Needs

Quantity	No.	Subject Matter
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Relationship Marketing

Smart marketers know the value of developing long-term relationships with their clients. It's more cost-effective to do business with a former client than it is to attract someone who doesn't know your business, and it is loyal clients who provide valuable referrals. You can learn more about Relationship Marketing in Chapter 16 of **Marathon's Marketing Resource and Activity Planner**. Marathon offers a line of products that shows clients how much you appreciate their business:

- ❑ **Birthday Cards** — Photo birthday cards will bring smiles from the children on your mailing list, while reminding parents that growing children should be photographed often.
- ❑ **Photographic Note Cards** — Personalized photo note cards can be used as a thank-you gift for selected clients with whom you hope to create long-term relations. (pg. 78)
- ❑ **Gift Calendar** — Marathon's versatile calendars can be used to express appreciation during the holiday season or at any time during the year. (pg. 76)
- ❑ **Gift Certificates** — Promoting gift certificates as "the perfect gift" for friends and loved-ones brings valued clients back to your business for their gift-giving needs. (pg. 78)
- ❑ **Newsletters** — Preprinted newsletter shells, along with prewritten articles, make it easy to keep in touch with clients and let them know what's new at your studio.

Relationship Marketing Materials Needs

Quantity	No.	Subject Matter
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