

# Principles of Marketing

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## Module 8: Promotion + Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) + Campaign Planning

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### Welcome

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Promotion is how you communicate value—not just by being loud, but by being clear, consistent, and relevant to the people you're trying to reach. If product, price, and place are what you offer and how customers get it, promotion is how customers understand it and decide whether it's worth their attention.

But promotion isn't "post everywhere and hope." Most customers are busy, distracted, and overloaded with messages. That means promotional success depends on two things:

1. **The message makes sense quickly.** People should be able to answer in seconds: What is this? Who is it for? Why should I care? What should I do next?
2. **The message shows up in the right places.** Even a great message fails if your target market never sees it—or sees it at the wrong time, in the wrong format, or in a channel they don't use.

That's why promotion is strategic: it's about aligning your communication with how your target customer actually behaves.

### What "promotion" really includes

Promotion is bigger than advertising. It includes all the ways an organization communicates and builds relationships with customers, such as:

- **Advertising** (paid messages: social ads, streaming ads, campus posters)
- **Sales promotion** (discounts, limited-time offers, bundles, contests)

- **Public relations (PR)** (earned media, community partnerships, reputation building)
- **Personal selling** (direct conversations, demos, outreach)
- **Direct and digital marketing** (email, texts, social content, websites, influencer partnerships)

## Learning Objectives

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By the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. **Explain promotion's role in the marketing mix.** You'll understand how promotion fits with product, price, and place to communicate value.
2. **Identify key IMC tools.** You will distinguish between advertising, PR, sales promotion, direct marketing, and digital/social strategies.
3. **Create a simple campaign plan.** You will learn to draft a clear goal, core message, and channel strategy.
4. **Match channels to audience behavior.** You'll select the right medium based on where your audience spends their time and attention.
5. **Define basic metrics to evaluate success.** You will be able to set targets for reach, engagement, and conversion.

## Key Terms

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- **Promotion:** Communication by marketers that informs, persuades, and reminds potential buyers of a product in order to influence an opinion or elicit a response.
- **Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC):** The careful coordination of all promotional messages to ensure the consistency of messages at every contact point at which a company meets the consumer.
- **Call to Action (CTA):** An instruction to the audience designed to provoke an immediate response (e.g., "Call now," "Click here").
- **Metrics:** Standards of measurement by which efficiency, performance, progress, or quality of a plan, process, or product can be assessed (e.g., Reach, Engagement, Conversion).

Promotion is how you communicate what you offer, who it's for, why it matters, and what to do next. A common mistake is focusing on attention without clarity. You can have a viral post and still not increase sales if people don't understand the value or next step.

**Story: *The campus event that got attention but no turnout***

*A student group creates a flashy Instagram reel for a campus event. It gets lots of likes. But turnout is low. Why?*

- The post didn't include clear details.
- It didn't show what students would experience.
- It didn't include a strong call to action.
- It reached people outside the intended audience.

*Attention without clarity = weak results.*

**Module 8 Reading — Part B: IMC: One Clear Message Across Multiple Channels**

Estimated time: 15–20 minutes

**Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)** means your message stays consistent across touchpoints. Instead of posters saying one thing, Instagram saying another, and the website saying something else, IMC makes everything reinforce the same idea. This builds trust because consistent messages feel more reliable.

**Story Example: *Campus Tutoring IMC***

It's week six, and the tutoring center has a problem: students need help but fear looking "dumb" or think scheduling is a hassle. The center builds an IMC campaign around one simple promise:

**Core message: "Quick, judgment-free help—book in 2 minutes."**

This message appears across 5 specific touchpoints:

1. **Poster with QR code:** Placed outside the library for visibility. "Quick, judgment-free help." Scan to book.
2. **Easy booking page:** The landing page matches the poster exactly. Same wording, same tone. No surprises.
3. **Social Proof (Instagram):** A 12-second clip of a student saying, "I literally booked in two minutes and it wasn't awkward at all."

4. **Email reminder:** Sent right before exams. Subject: "Exam week? Book in 2 minutes."
5. **Instructor announcement slide:** A slide shown in class adds credibility and permission ("This is normal").

*Result: Same message. Multiple places. Less confusion. More trust.*

## Module 8 Reading — Part C: Building a Simple Campaign Plan

Estimated time: 15–20 minutes

A basic campaign plan isn't about guessing. It requires structure. Here are the 7 essentials:

1. **Goal:** What specific outcome do you want? (e.g., Increase attendance by 20%)
2. **Target Audience:** Who specifically are you trying to move?
3. **Core Message:** One clear promise (Value + Proof).
4. **Offer:** What makes action easier or more attractive? (e.g., Discount, Bundle).
5. **Channels:** Where will they see it? (e.g., Social, Posters, Email).
6. **Call to Action (CTA):** What should they do right now?
7. **Metrics:** How will you measure success?

### **Story: The Movie Night Campaign That Worked**

A campus organization had weak turnout for movie nights. They realized their marketing was generic ("Come watch a movie!"). They rebuilt the campaign with specifics:

- **Goal:** Increase attendance by 30% (from 120 to 156 students).
- **Target:** First-year and sophomore residential students (living nearby).
- **Message:** "Free movie + snacks + raffle — 90 minutes of fun with friends."
- **Offer:** First 150 students get free popcorn + a raffle ticket (Creates urgency).
- **CTA:** "Scan to RSVP."

*They tracked success not just by attendance, but by "leading KPIs" like RSVPs and QR scans to see if the campaign was working before the event started.*

# Metrics, Goals, and KPIs

In the story above, the team didn't just hope for the best. They tracked specific metrics:

- **Primary KPI (Outcome):** Total check-ins at the event.
- **Leading KPIs (Early Warning):** RSVPs (predict demand) and QR scans (measure attention).
- **Operational KPIs:** Snack redemptions (measured engagement/activation).

## KPI Summary Example

**Goal:** +30% attendance (120 → 156)

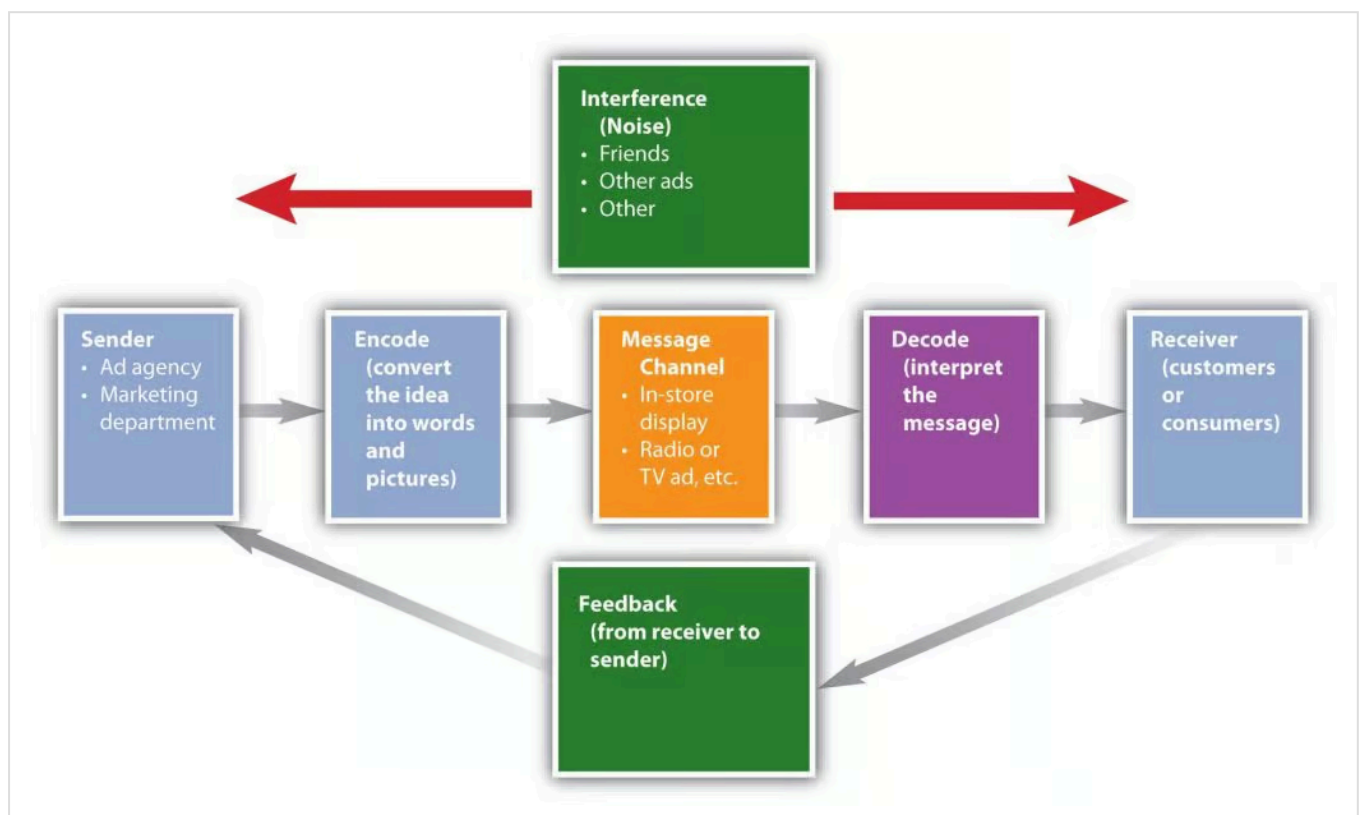
**Primary KPI:** Event attendance (check-ins)

**Leading KPIs:** QR scans, RSVPs, RSVP conversion rate

**Engagement KPI:** Snack/raffle redemptions (first 150)

## Real-World Case Studies

### Case Study 1: Starbucks IMC Strategy



**Background:** Starbucks is a global coffeehouse chain that has mastered the art of integrated marketing communications. Rather than relying heavily on traditional advertising, Starbucks built its brand through a carefully orchestrated mix of touchpoints that all reinforce the same core message: "Third Place Between Home and Work."

### IMC Elements Used:

- **Store Experience:** Every Starbucks location is designed with comfortable seating, ambient music, and consistent branding to create the "third place" atmosphere.
- **Digital Integration:** The Starbucks mobile app integrates ordering, payment, and loyalty rewards—making the customer experience seamless.
- **Social Media:** Instagram and Twitter campaigns encourage user-generated content (#StarbucksMoments), turning customers into brand ambassadors.
- **Product Innovation:** Seasonal drinks like the Pumpkin Spice Latte create buzz and anticipation, promoted across all channels simultaneously.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (PR):** Initiatives like ethical sourcing and environmental commitments reinforce brand values consistently.

***Key Lesson:** Starbucks doesn't just advertise coffee—every touchpoint (from cup design to playlist to app interface) communicates the same brand promise. This is IMC in action: consistent messaging across every customer interaction.*

### Results:

- 40+ million active loyalty program members
- Mobile ordering accounts for 25%+ of U.S. transactions
- Brand valued at over \$13 billion (2023)
- Low traditional advertising spend compared to competitors, yet high brand recognition

## Case Study 2: Dove's "Real Beauty" Campaign

# ELEMENTS OF A PROMOTIONAL MIX

YOUNG  
URBAN  
PROJECT



[youngurbanproject.com](http://youngurbanproject.com)

**Background:** In 2004, Dove launched one of the most successful IMC campaigns in marketing history. The "Real Beauty" campaign challenged beauty industry stereotypes by featuring real women of diverse ages, sizes, and ethnicities instead of professional models.

## Campaign Components:

- **Advertising:** Billboard and print ads featuring real women, asking viewers to vote on beauty standards (e.g., "Wrinkled? Or Wonderful?").

- **Digital/Social Media:** The viral video "Evolution" showed the transformation process in advertising, exposing unrealistic beauty standards. It garnered over 12 million views organically.
- **Public Relations:** Media coverage discussing the campaign's social impact generated billions in earned media value.
- **Educational Initiatives:** Dove Self-Esteem Project workshops in schools addressing body confidence.
- **Product Packaging:** Even product packaging featured real women and authentic messaging.

***Key Lesson:** Dove's campaign succeeded because every channel—paid ads, earned media, social content, packaging, and community programs—told the same authentic story. The message wasn't just an ad; it became a movement.*

### **Measurable Impact:**

- Sales increased from \$2.5 billion to \$4 billion in the campaign's first 10 years
- Global brand awareness jumped from 37% to 71%
- "Evolution" video: 12+ million organic views (minimal paid promotion)
- Billions of dollars in earned media value
- Campaign still referenced as a marketing case study 20 years later

## **Case Study 3: Red Bull's Multi-Channel Activation Strategy**

**Background:** Red Bull doesn't just sell energy drinks—it sells an extreme lifestyle. The company invests heavily in content marketing and experiential events rather than traditional advertising.

### **Integrated Approach:**

- **Event Sponsorships:** Extreme sports events (cliff diving, Formula 1 racing, air racing) align with brand positioning.
- **Content Creation:** Red Bull Media House produces professional-quality content (videos, magazines, documentaries).
- **Social Media:** Instagram and YouTube channels showcase extreme stunts and athlete partnerships.

- **Experiential Marketing:** Red Bull Stratos (Felix Baumgartner's space jump) was watched by 8+ million people live.
- **Product Sampling:** Free samples distributed at gyms, colleges, and sporting events.
- **Branded Merchandise:** Apparel and accessories extend brand presence.

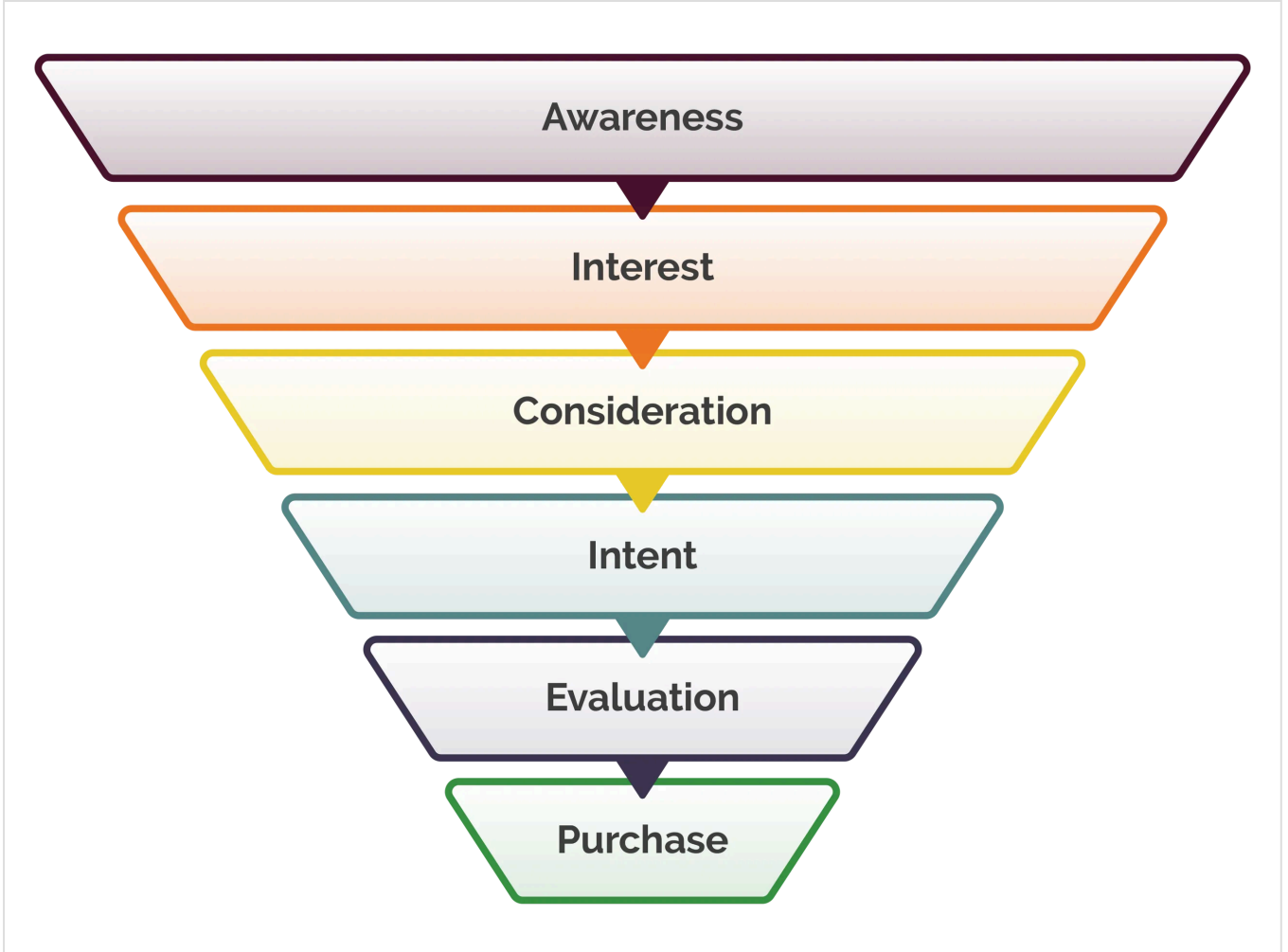
*Key Lesson: Red Bull's IMC strategy isn't about telling people the drink gives you energy—it's about showing what's possible when you have that energy. Every channel demonstrates action, adventure, and pushing limits.*

### **Business Results:**

- Market leader in energy drinks with 43% global market share
- Annual revenue exceeds \$9 billion
- Felix Baumgartner's space jump: 8 million live viewers, billions of media impressions
- Red Bull content generates more engagement than many traditional media companies

## **Understanding the Customer Journey: The Marketing Funnel**

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The marketing funnel is a model that shows the customer journey from first awareness to final purchase (and beyond). Understanding where your target audience sits in the funnel helps you choose the right promotional tools and messages.

## Funnel Stages and Promotional Tactics

Funnel Stage	Customer Mindset	Promotional Tools	Key Metrics
<b>Awareness</b>	"I have a problem or need"	Social media ads, content marketing, PR, influencer partnerships, posters/flyers	Reach, impressions, brand recall
<b>Interest</b>	"I want to learn more about solutions"	Website content, blog posts, email newsletters, educational videos, webinars	Website visits, time on page, content engagement
<b>Consideration</b>	"I'm comparing options"	Product demos, testimonials, case studies, comparison guides, retargeting ads	Demo requests, downloads, email sign-ups

Funnel Stage	Customer Mindset	Promotional Tools	Key Metrics
<b>Conversion</b>	"I'm ready to buy"	Sales promotions, limited-time offers, free trials, easy checkout, personal selling	Conversion rate, sales, average order value
<b>Loyalty</b>	"I want to buy again or recommend"	Email campaigns, loyalty programs, referral incentives, exclusive offers	Repeat purchase rate, customer lifetime value, referrals

**Practical Application:** A campus fitness studio targeting students:

**Awareness:** Instagram ads + posters in dorms = "New fitness studio near campus!"

**Interest:** Free class schedule + testimonial videos = "See what we offer"

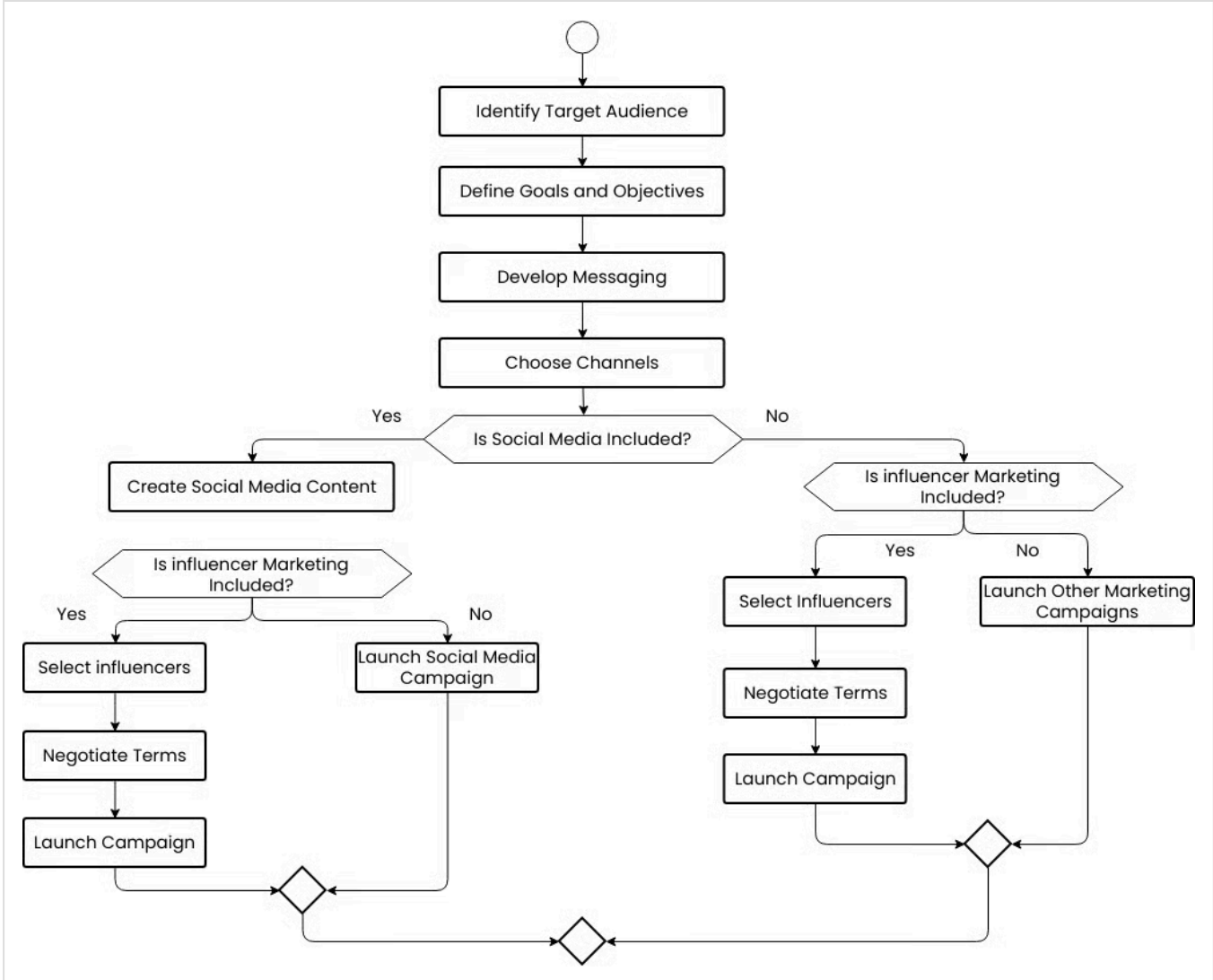
**Consideration:** Free trial class + student discount info = "Try before you commit"

**Conversion:** Limited-time 20% off first month + easy online sign-up = "Join now!"

**Loyalty:** Referral program (bring a friend, both get free class) + member-only events = "Stay and grow with us"

## Step-by-Step Campaign Planning Framework

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## Detailed Campaign Planning Template

### Campaign Planning Worksheet

#### 1. Situation Analysis

- What's the current situation? (e.g., Low awareness, declining sales, new competition)
- What barriers exist? (e.g., Price perception, lack of convenience, stigma)
- What opportunities exist? (e.g., Upcoming events, seasonal timing, partnerships)

#### 2. Campaign Objective (SMART Goal)

- **Specific:** What exactly do you want to achieve?
- **Measurable:** What number defines success?
- **Achievable:** Is this realistic given resources?
- **Relevant:** Does this align with business goals?
- **Time-bound:** By when?

*Example: Increase food truck sales by 25% (from \$800/day to \$1,000/day) within 4 weeks through targeted campus promotion.*

### **3. Target Audience Definition**

- Who specifically are you trying to reach?
- What do they care about?
- Where do they spend time (physically and digitally)?
- What objections might they have?

### **4. Core Message & Value Proposition**

- What's the one main benefit?
- Why should they believe you?
- What makes you different from alternatives?

*Formula: [Target Audience] can [achieve benefit] through [your solution] because [proof/differentiator].*

*Example: "Busy students can get a healthy, filling lunch in under 5 minutes with our pre-made bowls—no compromise on taste or nutrition."*

### **5. Channel Selection**

- Which channels will reach your target audience effectively?
- How will each channel support the campaign goal?
- What's the budget allocation across channels?

### **6. Call to Action (CTA)**

- What specific action do you want people to take?
- Is it clear and easy?
- Does it appear consistently across all channels?

### **7. Success Metrics & Tracking**

- What are your leading indicators (early signals)?
- What are your lagging indicators (final results)?

- How will you collect data?
- When will you evaluate and adjust?

## Case Study 4: Campus Food Truck Turnaround

**Situation:** A food truck near campus was struggling with inconsistent sales. Some days were busy, but weekdays were slow. The owner had a good product but weak marketing.

### Campaign Plan Built:

**Goal:** Increase weekday lunch sales by 30% (\$700/day → \$910/day) in 4 weeks

**Target Audience:** College students and staff looking for quick, affordable lunch between classes (11:30 AM - 1:30 PM)

**Barrier Identified:** Students didn't know the food truck's location or daily menu, so they defaulted to dining halls

**Core Message:** "Fresh lunch in under 5 minutes—see today's menu and order ahead"

### Channels Used:

- **Instagram Stories:** Daily menu posted at 9 AM (visual, timely)
- **Campus GroupMe/Discord:** Partnered with student groups to share location + special of the day
- **QR Code on Posters:** "Order ahead, skip the line" → linked to ordering form
- **Loyalty Punch Card:** Physical card: Buy 5 lunches, get 1 free (encourages repeat visits)

**CTA:** "Order by 11 AM, pick up at 12:15—no wait"

### Metrics Tracked:

- **Leading:** Instagram story views, advance orders, QR scans
- **Lagging:** Daily revenue, average transaction value, repeat customers

### Results After 4 Weeks:

- ✓ Weekday sales increased 35% (beat goal)

- ✓ Advance orders accounted for 40% of lunch sales (reduced wait time, increased efficiency)
- ✓ 120+ students joined loyalty program
- ✓ Instagram following grew from 200 to 850
- ✓ Cost per new customer: under \$2 (highly efficient)

***Key Success Factors:***

- Solved a real problem (students wanted to know menu/location in advance)
- Made action easy (order ahead via QR code)
- Built in repeat business mechanism (loyalty card)
- Measured early indicators to adjust quickly

## **The IMC Planning Process**

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# INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

## Integrated Marketing Strategy



This visual shows how all promotional tools work together in an integrated system. Notice how every element connects back to the core brand message and customer experience. The outer ring represents different touchpoints, but they all reinforce the same central strategy.

## Common Promotional Mistakes to Avoid

Mistake	Why It Fails	Better Approach
<b>Promoting everywhere</b>	Dilutes budget, reaches wrong people, inconsistent messaging	Focus on 2-3 channels where your target audience actually spends time
<b>Vague messaging</b>	People don't understand the benefit or what to do next	State one clear benefit + one clear action in every message
<b>No tracking</b>	Can't tell what's working, so you keep spending on ineffective tactics	Set 2-3 measurable KPIs before launching; check weekly

Mistake	Why It Fails	Better Approach
<b>Inconsistent voice</b>	Confuses customers, weakens brand recognition	Create a simple brand guideline: same tone, key phrases, visual style
<b>Ignoring timing</b>	Promote too early (forgotten) or too late (no time to act)	Map when your audience makes decisions; promote 1-2 weeks before
<b>Feature dumping</b>	Listing features without connecting to customer needs	Lead with the problem you solve; features are proof, not the message

## Quick Self-Check

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**Before moving on, ensure you can:**

- **Explain why promotion is broader than advertising:** Ads are just paid placements. Promotion includes PR, sales promos, personal selling, and digital connections.
- **Define IMC:** It is the strategy of ensuring all messages across all channels speak with "one voice" to build trust and clarity.
- **Identify the difference between a Goal and a Metric:** A goal is the desired outcome (e.g., "Increase sales"), while a metric is the number used to track it (e.g., "Daily revenue").
- **List the stages of the marketing funnel:** Awareness → Interest → Consideration → Conversion → Loyalty
- **Apply the campaign planning framework:** Situation → Goal → Audience → Message → Channels → CTA → Metrics
- **Recognize effective IMC:** When all touchpoints reinforce the same core message and brand promise