

DROUGHTMASTER MARKETING

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Volume 9

Checklist for Establishing a Marketing Plan

1. Evaluate your customers. Decide what kind of customers you can serve best. Talk to your customers about what they want of you.
2. Evaluate your herd. What are its strengths and weaknesses? Do your cattle fit your customers needs? If not do you need to change your cattle or your customers?
3. Write a positioning statement.
4. Map out you primary market area.
5. Write a slogan that sums up that position.
6. Draw up a sales map of the last three years.
7. Find out the following information:
 - How many commercial cows in your district/region?
 - When do they calve and join?
 - How many bulls are sold per year?
 - Who is your competition? Your breed, other breeds you can target.
8. Determine when you will sell your cattle and how (auction, private treaty, etc.).
9. Establish a budget for your calendar or fiscal year.
10. Evaluate all the media available to you to reach potential customers, and the cost of each. Don't overlook media like direct mail, telephone calls, herd visits, sponsoring tours or field days.
11. Make a schedule. Write down where you will advertise and when, and the publishing or broadcast deadlines. Schedule all other events, including sales calls, consignment deadlines etc.
12. Follow the schedule.
13. Evaluate the program at the end of the year, make changes and improvements and incorporate them in your marketing plan for the coming year.

Some questions to ask of your marketing plan.....

- Why do your current customers buy your product?
- Why don't your potential customers buy your product?
- Do you need to change your product or your marketing (or both) to gain more customers?
- What sets your product apart from that of your competitors? i.e. How will you differentiate your product?
- Why should customers choose your product when other competitors in the industry have more-or-less similar offerings? i.e. What is your "competitive advantage"?
- How do you intend to communicate your "competitive advantage" to your customers?
- What can you do to add customer value to your product?
- How do you plan to obtain feedback from your customers on their level of satisfaction with your product?
- How do you plan to monitor changes in the needs of your customers?
- Should you focus on a particular customer group & serve them better than anyone else?
- How do you intend to stay ahead of your competition?

