

## 5 Step Strategic Marketing Process

Strategic marketing is a planning process that seeks to establish a clear direction and unified purpose for all marketing efforts. Its conclusions are documented in a marketing plan that is regularly updated. The five steps in strategic marketing are: identifying a mission; analyzing the situation; setting objectives; developing a marketing strategy; and planning for evaluation.

### Mission

The first step in strategic marketing is to articulate the reason why the enterprise exists and how it can benefit target consumers over the long term. In particular, this mission statement is intended to anticipate the future and describe an ongoing role for the organization's product, service or expertise. For example, the mission of an airline might be to provide continuing innovation in global transportation. A hospital could state a mission to take the lead in improving public health and education.

### Situation Analysis

Organizations conduct a situation analysis, also known as a SWOT, to evaluate and prioritize their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This second step in the strategic marketing process helps managers understand the resources they can build on and the challenges they face. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors, under the firm's control. For example, a good image in the fashion press would be a key strength for a dress manufacturer, while a poor relationship with clothing retailers would be a weakness. Opportunities and threats arise from the external environment, like a strong economy or new payroll tax.

### Objectives

The third step in strategic marketing is to set marketing objectives. These are clear, measurable goals that give decisionmakers a basis for making choices and assessing progress. Objectives are typically expressed in terms of one or more quantitative targets like revenue, profit, sales or market share. Importantly, each objective must be achievable within a fixed period of time. For example, aiming for a five-percent increase in profits might be realistic within a year, but probably not within one quarter.

### Strategy and Evaluation

The fourth step in strategic marketing is strategy development. This involves selecting a target market, a distinct group of consumers who are highly likely to buy the firm's product. Planners must also choose implementation tactics, specifically, effective ways to use the marketing mix tools of product, promotion, price and distribution to reach and influence prospective buyers. The fifth step, evaluation, means specifying how, when and by whom these tactics are to be monitored and assessed over time.

Source: Amy Handlin