



# SETTING MARKETING GOALS



Goal setting is the foundation of effective marketing. While it's easy to jump straight to tactics, goals provide clarity and focus, enabling you to approach your marketing holistically and meaningfully. For example, if your business posts images to Instagram without determining **WHY** you're posting, **WHO** you hope to reach, and **TO WHAT END**, it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of these posts, and to illustrate the return on your investment in the platform.

So, how do you set goals, build your strategy, determine your objectives, and then tackle tactics?

## STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCE

### Ask Yourself

- Who is your most loyal or most frequent customer?
- What customer would be an advocate to others for your business?
- What is a customer group that you would like to attract?
- What is one customer that would supplement your current business?

### Then, Develop a Customer Persona

- Where do they get their news & information?
- What is their level of digital savviness?
- What do they want to see from their favourite travel brands?
- What do they want when they travel?
- What do they need when they travel?
- What channels do they share their experiences on?

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## STEP 2: THINK ABOUT THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The customer journey includes all the experiences your customers go through when interacting with your business. The journey is not linear; customers may spend more time in one or two phases, and phases may overlap.



The **DREAM** phase is when someone is just beginning to think about taking a vacation. Maybe all they know is that they have some vacation days to use up over the summer for example — they know they want to get away but they may not be sure where. This is when people are looking to be inspired about a particular destination.

**PLAN** is when the details start to take shape. Building on the example above, our traveller knows she wants to spend five days in Whistler. She knows she wants to stay at a small boutique hotel rather than a larger chain. She's seen reviews of a certain restaurant and she knows she wants to eat there.

**BOOK** is the conversion point. She's done her research and she's ready to commit to a destination, an activity, or an experience. The customer journey doesn't end here, though.

The **VISIT** phase of a trip offers plenty of opportunities to reach your target audience. Our traveller might be looking for a place to grab breakfast near her hotel, or a guide to a nearby landmark. During the trip, there may be a day of bad weather and she needs to find nearby, indoor kid-friendly activities in a hurry.

The **SHARE** phase occurs both during and after the trip. Our traveller posts photos and videos on Instagram of her ski lessons and her delicious dinner, and once she's home, she shares a review on Tripadvisor about her hotel stay. She notices a question on a forum about facilities at the ski hill and chimes in about her experience. She tells her friends, family, and colleagues about her experiences.

*As you think about goals, consider which phase of the journey you might focus on.*

## STEP 3: ALIGN GOALS WITH THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

Your goals will vary depending on your business and destination. One may want to sell tickets to a new tour or event, while another might be focused on extending the shoulder season or driving recruitment efforts for new staff. At a high-level, we think about things like inspiring visitors and increasing awareness, increasing website visits, social media engagement and positive reviews, and driving sales and bookings. Consider also what makes your business or destination unique, and what you offer that puts you at a competitive advantage.

Think about it this way:

GOAL	CUSTOMER JOURNEY STAGE
Increase Awareness	Dream
Drive Bookings	Plan, Book
Increase Positive Ratings and Reviews	Share

Here are some examples from a local BC business:

GOAL	CUSTOMER JOURNEY STAGE
Travellers are inspired to visit our destination	Dream
Travellers book their tour with us	Book
More people share stories and images of their experience with us	Share

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## STEP 4: PICK A TIME HORIZON

Define start and end points to your goal (e.g. 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months). Goals with deadlines or schedules for completion are more likely to be achieved than those without.

## STEP 5: IDENTIFY MEASURES OF SUCCESS FOR YOUR GOALS

To determine the success of your efforts, you will need to establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that align with your goals.

Here are some examples:

GOAL	CUSTOMER JOURNEY STAGE	HOW TO MEASURE
Increase Awareness	Dream	Content Consumption (e.g. video views, length of view, scroll depth, time on site, pageviews per visit).
Drive Bookings	Plan, Book	Number of new bookings
Increase Positive Ratings and Reviews	Share	Social media metrics (e.g. engagements, shares, hashtag uses)

By understanding what you're working toward and how you'll measure the success of your efforts, your marketing efforts can be more focused and effective and are also easier to measure and tell if they were achieved.

Use the grid below to track your own goals and measurements:

GOAL	CUSTOMER JOURNEY STAGE	KPIS