**Marketing Plan for Walking the Sahel (WTS)**

**Objective** To position Walking the Sahel (WTS) as the premier B2B marketplace and logistics platform in Africa, driving adoption among SMEs, large enterprises, and fleet operators while enabling regional trade under AfCFTA.

**Target Audience**

1. **Suppliers**: Small-scale miners, farmers, and manufacturers.
2. **Buyers**: Exporters, manufacturers, and distributors seeking reliable sourcing.
3. **Fleet Operators**: Logistics firms and independent drivers.
4. **SMEs**: Businesses aiming to scale through regional trade.

**Core Strategies**

**1. Digital Marketing Campaigns**

* **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)**:
  + Optimize the WTS platform and content for keywords related to African trade, logistics, and marketplaces.
  + Publish blogs, case studies, and whitepapers on trade efficiency under AfCFTA.
* **Social Media Marketing**:
  + Launch campaigns on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter targeting business owners and fleet operators.
  + Use success stories and customer testimonials to build trust.
* **Pay-Per-Click (PPC) Advertising**:
  + Google Ads campaigns targeting users in Africa’s major trade hubs.
  + Retarget users who visit the platform but do not sign up.

**2. Referral Programs**

* Incentivize current users to refer new suppliers, buyers, and fleet operators.
* Offer rewards such as reduced subscription fees or logistics discounts.

**3. Partnerships and Alliances**

* Collaborate with regional trade organizations, chambers of commerce, and Afreximbank for co-branded marketing.
* Leverage partnerships with NCX for joint events and promotions.

**4. Industry Events and Conferences**

* Sponsor and participate in trade expos, logistics summits, and AfCFTA-related events.
* Host workshops and panel discussions on optimizing African trade through WTS.

**5. Educational Campaigns**

* Develop guides and webinars on cross-border trade, logistics optimization, and leveraging AfCFTA benefits.
* Partner with financial institutions to educate SMEs on financing options available through WTS.

**6. Regional Awareness Campaigns**

* Conduct targeted campaigns in pilot countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya) highlighting local success stories.
* Use multilingual advertisements (English, French, Swahili) to reach diverse audiences.

**Channels**

1. **Digital**:
   * Website and blog.
   * Social media platforms.
   * Email newsletters.
2. **Physical**:
   * Roadshows in regional trade hubs.
   * Training workshops for SMEs and drivers.
3. **Partnership Networks**:
   * Trade associations.
   * Logistics operators and financial institutions.
4. **Media**:
   * Press releases in African business publications.
   * Interviews with WTS leadership on trade and logistics podcasts.

**Key Metrics**

1. **Platform Engagement**:
   * Monthly active users.
   * Time spent on platform.
2. **User Acquisition**:
   * Number of suppliers, buyers, and fleet operators onboarded.
   * Referral program participation rates.
3. **Revenue Growth**:
   * Transaction volumes.
   * Subscription conversions.
4. **Brand Visibility**:
   * Social media followers and engagement.
   * Media mentions and press coverage.

**Budget Allocation (Year 1)**

1. Digital Campaigns: 40%.
2. Events and Partnerships: 25%.
3. Educational Content: 20%.
4. Traditional Media and PR: 15%.

**Conclusion** This marketing plan aligns WTS’s goals with a focused strategy to attract, engage, and retain its target audience. By leveraging digital campaigns, partnerships, and regional awareness, WTS aims to build a robust user base and establish itself as Africa’s leading trade and logistics platform.