

# A Comprehensive Guide: Building An Impactful Home Builder Marketing Plan in 2024



## A Marketing Plan: Your Blueprint for Impactful Results

As we head into the fourth quarter, new home sales and marketing leaders face market challenges and are determined to achieve their year-end targets. The [forecast](#) doesn't show signs of easing up, which has many striving to balance between the efforts required for sales success and the time to craft a strategic plan for 2024.

## Effective Marketing Plans for Builders in a Dynamic Market

At DO&Be Agency, our team is determined to help our building industry partners excel in this competitive and constantly evolving market. We recognize the significance of a strategic, proactive, and adaptable marketing plan to stay ahead of the game.

Developing an effective marketing plan is a complex process that goes beyond mere numbers on a spreadsheet. Marketing leaders must address five crucial questions before embarking on the journey of creating a prosperous marketing strategy for new home sales.

“The DO&Be Agency was established to provide the kind of support that I always wanted while working in-house for home builders. In this blog, we offer solutions and answers to the questions that I often faced when developing my annual strategic plan as a marketing director. Our insights and perspectives come from my experience as an in-house marketing leader, as well as from consulting with a variety of organizations in the building industry.”

—**Melissa Galland, Founder of DO&Be Agency**

While every business has its unique requirements, this blog can provide valuable guidance to building industry professionals seeking to formulate a marketing plan for 2024. Please keep reading to discover our suggestions for a successful home builder marketing strategy in a dynamic and ever-changing market.

## **Marketing Planning Top 5 List**

### **Questions For Home Builder Marketing Leaders**



The answers to these questions will provide you with all the necessary information to develop your marketing plan for the upcoming year. For more details, you can click on the question that interests you the most or proceed directly to our section on [creating the plan](#) or our [goal estimator](#).

1. [Have you identified sales and operations goals?](#)
2. [Have you defined your core customer and their needs?](#)
3. [Which marketing trends will you implement?](#)
4. [Have you reviewed your marketing KPIs?](#)
5. [Have you created a comprehensive marketing budget?](#)

## **#1—Align Your Goals Cross-Departmentally**

It all starts with marketing, and we build our goals based on the pipelines and capacity of all the other departments. To get started, we encourage our marketing leaders to sit down with leaders across the company to understand the organizational goals.

### **A Marketing Plan That Supports New Home Sales**

As marketers, first and foremost, our mission is to drive enough lead volume to support the goals of the sales department. Whether you are a community builder basing your plans on the land development pipeline or an on-your-lot custom home builder driving sales that support your teams and company growth, many marketing goals will work backward from the sales goals.

### **Strategy Requires the Whole Team**

It's about more than just sales; we also want to consider what is happening within the other departments as we craft our marketing strategy for the upcoming year. Insights from operations to finance will aid in forecasting potential marketing expenses.

As marketers, we have a unique perspective as we analyze data that affects the entire organization. Our interdepartmental discussions not only shape our marketing budget and objectives but also enable us to share our insights and actively impact processes, technology, and product development.

### **Team Member Must-Have Details**

For your marketing goals to support revenue growth, align with the company-wide needs, and ensure you are a better partner to your peers, your meetings should result in answers for many of the areas detailed below.



- Establish the desired monthly sales and revenue goals
- Larger relevant goals for the company
- The pipeline of construction starts
- Projected number of financial closings
- An understanding of all the numbers required to develop the pro forma for the projects expected to GTM within the next six to twelve months
- Relevant details on product types (critical to refining effective marketing strategies)

## **#2—Customer-Centric Considerations**

Even with that clarity on goals and numbers, you aren't ready to build your 2024 marketing plan yet.

The marketplace is constantly evolving, and customer behaviors and expectations are one driver of these changes. Companies must center their marketing strategies around the **whole brand experience** to stimulate sustainable growth. An impactful experience strategy extends beyond traditional customer service and the "welcome home gift" but will ultimately improve customer satisfaction and decrease acquisition costs.

### **Develop Your Customer Persona**

You may have gone through the exercise of creating your customer personas when you opened your company, but as time goes on, so do your customer profiles. We recommend updating your customer personas every 1-3 years to align with your target customers' changing behaviors and expectations. Additionally, update them more often during changes or when launching new products. When done correctly, updating your brand positioning and customer personas is a data-driven process, not a feeling.

There are several methods to gain a deeper understanding of your customers, each with unique advantages and limitations, so we recommend a combination of techniques rather than one alone.

- **Customer Surveys:** Surveys can effectively collect direct customer feedback, enabling you to understand their needs and preferences better. However, surveys can suffer from low response rates and surveyor bias.
- **Internal Customer Data:** Analyze the data collected from the sales, leads, and inquiries you've received. Not only are successful sales important to analyze, but unsuccessful sales can also offer valuable insights as to where your processes may have failed or could use additional support.
- **OSC Feedback:** Your OSCs directly interact with customers; their insights can provide valuable information on customer expectations and pain points.
- **Online Reputation Management:** Monitoring what people say about your brand online is crucial for success. Engaging with your audience on social media can lead to more followers and sales. Interacting and responding to consumers is key.
- **Analyze Industry Trends:** Referencing industry reports like the [Zillow New Construction Consumer Housing Trends Report 2023](#) can provide a broader perspective on market dynamics and emerging trends.

**>>[Read our summary of the report from a presentation by Laura](#)  
[Register here.](#)**

### Breaking Down the Zillow Consumer Housing Trends Report

*Understanding demographic and economic trends is essential in adapting your offerings and marketing strategies. The Zillow CHTR reveals some noteworthy trends:*

1. **Customization Matters:** *The report indicates that 56% of customers looking for new construction homes value customization—suggesting builders should consider offering customizable options where feasible.*
2. **Demand for Existing Developments:** *Projects in existing developments are experiencing increased demand due to less risk of delays, quicker completion times, the desire for established communities, and customers' preference for working with known agents and brokers.*
3. **Mortgage Rates and Home Selling:** *Many new home buyers are existing homeowners, meaning new mortgage rates could be double their current ones. Offering rate buy-downs can ease the sticker shock, and contract contingencies for selling their current home can provide these customers with added security.*

*\*There are many resources with data on consumer trends. Please [follow us on social media](#) as well—we will always do our best to share the best insights available.*

## **#3—Top Marketing Trends**

We don't need to say much about marketing trends — you get it. However, when developing your annual marketing plan, it's essential to consider which trends you want to pursue and allocate both time and money towards exploring them.

Before delving into our marketing trend highlights or technology reviews, keep in mind that while exploring new marketing avenues, it is vital to maintain your lead generation efforts. We strongly suggest budgeting for outside assistance if necessary to avoid falling behind.

### **DO&Be Overview: Trending Marketing Trends**

Marketing, like the building industry, is an ever-evolving field, and while some techniques and strategies stay consistent over time, other things change and evolve, and the internet and social media have only increased the pace of these evolutions. As a result, it's essential to stay updated with new trends and techniques as they evolve and learn how they apply to your organization and the best way to leverage them for your audience. Of particular relevance to the new home builder industry is the prominence of video marketing, especially short-form video marketing. Other trends that should be considered are:

- Social Media
- Social Media for CX
- Maximizing SEO
- Mobile Optimization
- Social Responsibility
- Sales & Marketing Alignment
- Inbound Marketing

Additionally, the real estate and home builder industry should keep an eye on the horizon for the development of VR/AR marketing and the emergence of influencer marketing as it grows more in these specific niches. HubSpot, a leader in marketing tools and education, has a great article detailing these different trends [here](#).

When exploring marketing trends, it's not just about adding new tactics but also when to stop.

"Awaken your inner Marie Kondo, and ask, does it spark results? If it does not, it does not deserve a budget line item."

*—Melissa Galland, Founder of DO&Be Agency*

## **#4—The Role of KPIs in Strategic Planning**

Now that you have the company-wide goals in mind, it's time to create a roadmap to achieve them. But where do you start? Using KPIs and working backward is an essential data-driven approach to attain your objectives. A solid understanding of your key performance indicators is vital to your ability to adapt your strategies when the market deviates.

Have you tracked the percentage of website visitors that turn into leads and sales for your business? Don't stress— it's never too late to start. Analyzing three to six months of data can help you spot early trends. You can turn to industry trends for guidance if you don't have your data.

- Website Traffic
- Leads (web/community traffic)
- Inbound Calls (per campaign/community)
- OSC Appointments
- Total Sales

The team at DO&Be Agency created this [estimator tool](#) to assist you in planning goals such as the amount of website traffic and new leads necessary to meet your sales target. This tool allows you to input your sales objectives and known metrics to refine your strategy accordingly.

## [DO&Be Agency Marketing Goal Estimator](#)

### **[#5](#)—A Marketing Budget That Supports New Home Sales**

Once you have gathered all the required information, establishing a marketing budget is the next step in crafting your success roadmap. Recording your budget tracking accurately is crucial, but please note what accurate looks like can vary based on your organizational needs.

If you're unsure where to begin, you can start with one of these [generic spreadsheet templates](#) or connect with us for a version tailored to the building industry. A comprehensive budget will assist you in obtaining financial approval from senior leadership and monitoring your funds throughout the year.

### **Recommendations for Marketing Budget Line Items**

As a company, it's not enough to just keep track of your expenses. To stay profitable, you need to manage your budget effectively. By doing so, you'll be able to identify which expenses are tied to each lead and sale and work towards improving your processes.

Organizing your budget into categories is crucial to understanding your marketing ROI over time. Comparing your ROI to your ROAS will also help you differentiate between big expenses that have a long-term impact and smaller advertising costs that generate immediate leads. To

get an accurate picture of your marketing ROI, break down your budget into specific categories and line items. Prioritize the items that are easiest to track, as some will have a more immediate impact than others.

### Monthly Expenses (may include):

#### Digital Advertising

- Paid Digital Ads
- SEO & SEM
- Listing Sites
- Traditional Advertising
  - Radio
  - Television
  - Print Ads
  - Billboards
  - Direct Mail
- Marketing Assets
  - Photography/Video
  - Floor Plans & Renderings
  - Copywriting & Graphic Design
  - Online Interactive Tools
  - Customer Journey Map\*
  - Customer Persona\*
  - Rebranding \*
  - Website Redesign\*
- Sales/Design Centers
  - Print Collateral\*
  - Community Signage\*
  - Sales Events\*
  - Model Home Design\*
  - Spec Home Staging\*

#### Customer Experience

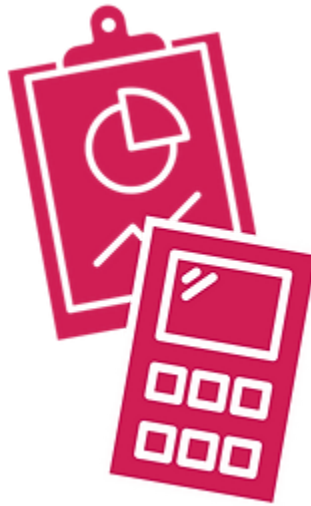
- Customer Incentives\*
- House Cleanings
- Customer Surveys
- Closing Gifts
- Marketing Stack
  - Email Marketing
  - CRM
  - Live Chat
  - Misc Tools
- Innovation
  - Sales Enablement Tools\*
  - Marketing Technology
- Community
  - Associations & Memberships\*
  - Networking\*
  - Community Events\*
  - Philanthropy\*
- Marketing Operations
  - Consulting Services\*
  - Professional Development\*
  - Team Appreciation\*
  - Trade Partner Appreciation\*
  - Marketing Salaries
  - Sales Salaries
  - Commissions\*
  - Realtor Fees\*



- Design Center Displays\*

*\*Items that are often not regularly recurring or may be applied to budgets outside of the marketing department.*

## Transforming Expenses Into Your Marketing Budget



While there is an element of brand awareness marketing efforts that should run continuously, your monthly expenses will vary. When finalizing your marketing budget, consider when and where you will allocate the available funds, such as grand openings or market seasonality.

- New community or design center
- Promoting new product offerings
- Seasonality or available inventory
- Implementation of new technology

## Bring It Home To Build Your 2024 Marketing Plan

Whew! You made it! You collected all the details you need to craft your marketing plan and annual budget. Now, you must bring it together—combine your budget with a presentation you can share with your senior leadership for final approval.

We call it final approval, but when it comes to your marketing plan, it's important to constantly review and refine it, just like any other strategy. It's a good idea to get your team's input to

ensure you haven't overlooked any important details; even small ones can make a big difference in your success.

Make sure to double-check your assumptions, confirm your numbers, and assess the feasibility of your goals. Remember, the value of your plan is in its usability - it needs to be actionable and practical.

## **Finalize and Share Your Plan**

Once you have reviewed your work, it's time to finalize your marketing plan. The final document should be easy to understand and cover your goals, strategies, and tactics. However, finalizing the plan is just the beginning. Share the plan (or a simplified version of the plan) with all departments to align goals and encourage feedback.

In particular, sales and marketing should work together closely. The purchasing and construction teams can also provide valuable insights. When informed about marketing strategies, sales teams can better inform customers and build trust.

Other departments, such as purchasing, construction, building operations, customer service, and billing, need to know about upcoming campaigns to provide the support that will drive success. You will also want to keep everyone updated throughout the year, with periodic reviews to track progress and make adjustments. This approach fosters a sense of unity, keeps your team motivated and engaged, and leads to better results overall.

## **Adapt Your Marketing Plan As Needed**

External factors can fluctuate rapidly and impact your strategies, particularly in an industry like housing, where trends are constantly changing due to economic shifts, regulations, and consumer preferences.

To ensure success, it's essential to review and update your marketing plan regularly. Some companies opt to do this every quarter, but the frequency depends on your unique circumstances and market volatility.

During these reviews, evaluate how your strategies have performed against your goals. Use data from your marketing analytics to guide your adjustments and make informed choices. If a strategy isn't working, don't hesitate to revise it or attempt something new. While your marketing plan serves as a guide to success, remember that it's not set in stone. The market is dynamic, and changes in external factors may require adjustments to your strategies.

## **We Are Better Together**

Remember, the ultimate goal of your marketing plan is to drive growth and profitability for your business. Regular reviews ensure your plan stays aligned with this goal and adapts to meet the evolving needs of your customers and the market. Lean on our team to devise a plan uniquely tailored to your goals. [Click here to schedule a consultation with our team.](#)

<https://www.doandbe.agency/post/a-comprehensive-guide-building-an-impactful-home-builder-marketing-plan-in-2024>

[Note: I coded and am still hosting the quiz for this blog]