

## Marketing Communications Planning Model

There are many models used in both marketing education and business. This model; attributed to the author Paul Smith works well for both Marketing Strategy and Marketing Communications. It neatly gathers information together into easy to recognise areas.

### S.O.S.T. 4M

This translates to the following;

#### **S – Situation**

This is all the background information on the business – market research, competitors, where you are now, financials and SWOT (strength, weaknesses – the internal elements and Opportunities and Threats, the external elements.

#### **O – Objectives**

A business should set three or four key business objectives that should be SMART – Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely – For example – To increase sales from “x” to “y” by December 2009. These can apply to a business as a whole or to a product line / service area.

#### **S – Strategy**

More for the corporate clients this one, but it still applies to small companies and it comes down to market entry or development methods, differentiation of a product or service, market penetration being more market share, cost leadership, Innovation through New Product Launches, Niche players and Market Segmentation .

#### **T – Tactics**

This is the nitty-gritty stuff – the actual marketing tools you’re going to use and who you are going to target with them. You’ll need to segment you market place, for example by customer types, product sales, geography etc.

#### **M – Men**

Not literally but more meaning People and Resources – who’s going to do what.

#### **M- Money**

This is your marketing budget and cash flow. Remember you can achieve a great deal for FREE and you don’t need to spend the earth when it comes to marketing or PR materials.

#### **M – Measurement**

What methods are in place to measure what you do – which tools work, which give the best return etc. Some say if you can’t measure it don’t do it, but some elements have an effect on performance but the tangibility is harder to directly attribute to sales. This is where the mix of Tools or Tactics used comes into play.

#### **M – Minutes**

This is the time plan – what is going to be done and when.