

MODULE 4: How do you get your message out to consumers?

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*Getting the word out to consumers

*Marketing local food

A variety of product marketing methods are available to you, but it can be overwhelming to make decisions about which media channels, marketing schemes, product labels, and branding programs are the best for your product and farm. The purpose of this module is to help guide you in making informed choices about your marketing strategies.

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Distinguish effective and ineffective marketing strategies.
2. Incorporate your most effective media channels and marketing strategies into your promotional plan.
3. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of marketing your products and farm through different media channels.
4. Identify existing branding programs available to producers.
5. Summarize the steps to creating a personalized brand.

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Pertinent symbols and behaviors



Activity → This symbol denotes the start of an activity.

Italicized and indented text designates instructor material and does not need to be read as a script.

Materials you will need for this module:

- Easel pad or large white board for split group activity as well as instructor use
- Markers for easel pad or white board
- Tape to post easel pad pages around the room for review
- Pen or pencil for each participant
- Activity worksheets
- Evaluations

Time for module presentation with activities

1 hour and 15 minutes

Begin Module

Slide 1 – Title

Hello. My name is _____. I work with _____ and will be your facilitator for this presentation. Today we will be discussing how to create a brand for your products and farm, as well as identify the best media channel to promote your products. These components will be incorporated into your promotional plan to help convey your desired message to consumers. I believe that this information will prove useful and beneficial as you conduct your business in the future.

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Slide 2 – Review

In our previous session we discussed the concept of branding. We also talked about how to frame a message that would prompt consumers to associate your product with your desired characteristics. Remember that when framing your message, words and images may be perceived differently depending on the audience. They may even hold multiple meanings for a single individual.

We also discussed tips on selecting the best images and words for your message and steps to develop an effective message. Finally, we talked about testing your message with representatives from your target audience.

Slide 3 – Agenda

Let's take a look at today's agenda.

Review housekeeping notes such as restroom location and other general information and instructions.

Today we will continue talking about marketing and branding as we discuss how to get your message out to consumers.

A variety of product marketing methods are available to you but, it can be overwhelming to make decisions about which media channels, marketing schemes, product labels, and branding programs are the best for your products and farm. The purpose of this module is to help guide you in making informed choices about your marketing strategies. We will evaluate marketing strategies to distinguish effective and ineffective plans. We will also discuss how to incorporate media channels and marketing strategies that are effective for your product and farm into your promotional plan.

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Slide 4 – Objectives

At the end of this module, you will be able to:

1. Distinguish effective and ineffective marketing strategies.
2. Incorporate your most effective media channels and marketing strategies into your promotional plan.
3. Identify the advantages and disadvantages of marketing your products and farm through different media channels.
4. Identify existing branding programs available to producers.
5. Summarize the steps to creating a personalized brand.

Slide 5 – Creating a brand

To get started today we are going to discuss branding more in-depth. A great deal must be considered when you are creating your brand. Your brand will include everything about your company. This includes your products, services, and reputation.

Slide 6 – Creating a brand (continued)

Your brand should encompass consistency, customer service, as well as your messages and logos.

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Slide 7 – Exercise A



Refer to Exercise A worksheets found after the module portion of this document for instructions and materials.

The purpose of this exercise is to compare the group's perception of a brand with the company's vision and goals. The exercise should help participants understand how personal perceptions of a company may differ with the brand's messages. A discussion of how these differences might occur will help the audience understand concepts like shared identity and consistency of message. You can reinforce these concepts in the discussion portion of this exercise.

For Exercise A, we will discuss the Chick-fil-A brand. In the space provided below the logo, record a few impressions that you have about the company. Following the completion of your personal list, we will create a group list and compare the goals and philosophies mentioned on the company's website to our input.

After participants have had about 5 minutes to write down their responses, call on individuals to share their responses and write them down on an easel pad or white board for all to see. Compare group impressions to the information below.

Now that we have some knowledge of our collective impression of the business, let's look at some of the goals and philosophies the company has highlighted on its website.

- 1) Provide positive influence: According to the Chick-fil-A website, a portion of their company mission involves having a positive influence on all individuals who contact the company. This includes employees and customers, as well as the community.
- 2) Exceptionally positive treatment of customers: All employees are trained to greet every customer with respect, integrity, and dignity.
- 3) Serve the community: The company encourages service to the community and customers, and has a record of volunteerism and giving back.

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- 4) Support first responders: Chick-fil-A also backs those aiding the community, such as first responders by providing food and support.
- 5) Aid children and families in need: A great deal of the company's philanthropic effort goes to aiding children and supporting families in need.
- 6) Encourage family time: The company also encourages family time with many restaurants having special kids or family nights to promote family members to spend time together through a meal and activities.

The Chick-fil-A website has a feature that allows customers to tell their stories about the company. One story involved a customer who is a self-proclaimed marketing expert reporting a personal opinion on why Chick-fil-A is an extremely strong brand (<http://www.chick-fil-a.com/Story/Detail/5229>). This customer greatly appreciated the fact that Chick-fil-A offered small containers of dry cereal in the condiment section. The cereal, a common and seemingly inconsequential item, displayed the company's concern for their customers. This small amenity could help a stressed-out parent sooth a fussy toddler and make the restaurant environment quieter for all customers. According to this writer, this small touch made a big impact and added significant power to the brand as it showed that the company was concerned for its customers (items 1, 2, and 6). While the customer recognized the effectiveness of the logo and the famous cows from the advertising campaign, this amenity set Chick-fil-A apart from similar restaurants for this writer.

The customer also commented how employees told customers that it was a pleasure to serve them and smiled when receiving orders (items 1 and 2). Finally, the cleanliness of the restaurant and the efforts to support family relationships were noted (items 1, 2, and 6).

Information about Chick-fil-A was found on the company website at <http://www.chick-fil-a.com>.

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Slide 8 – Step 1

Let's review some steps that can help you develop your brand.

In step 1, you must decide who you are and what you do. While this may sound very elementary, when you think about the many actions and philosophies that make up your business you begin to realize the complexity of issues that may affect your brand.

Your brand is more than just the communications you convey. Setting goals or thoroughly understanding those that you already have for your business is essential when making branding decisions.

For instance, if you want to market your products as “green,” you will need goals and actions that support this claim. And remember, you will need more than just the good intentions that sometime come with the start of a new direction. You will need to continue to follow-through on these goals to support your brand.

Slide 9 – Step 2

Step 2 in creating your brand involves building a shared identity. This step refers to the idea that every employee must share a thorough understanding of your brand and company goals. For instance, if your brand includes providing exceptional customer service, a single rude employee manning your booth at the farmer's market could negatively affect the reputation of your brand.

Consider for instance, a brand promising high quality, organic products. How would customers feel if they found out that only 50% of the brand's products were organic? Even if there is a valid reason for only using 50% organic products, the branding was misleading and may discourage customer loyalty.

Not only can employees present challenges in preserving your brand, but consumers may also receive an inconsistent or weak message if your company brand and goals are not understood.

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Slide 10 – Step 3

The third step in creating your brand is to define your audience. First, you must decide who your audience is. As simple as this seems, this can present a significant challenge.

Do you want to focus on an audience based solely on demographics such as age, gender, or educational background? Perhaps you want to target people with specific priorities, such as those wanting organic food or those interested in farming processes that reduce environmental impacts. Whoever you select as an audience, you should be aware that various audiences will have a need for different information or may prefer an alternate media channel.

Additionally, different audiences may view your messages differently. To help you pinpoint how various audiences will view your message, you may want to perform an audience analysis. We discussed this in the last module. You may want to analyze your audience by demographic group, interests, life-style characteristics, or purchasing habits. With some study of the subject, you can perform some audience analysis. However if you feel uncomfortable with your ability or wish to have a very in-depth study, you may want to contact an organization that specializes in this work.

Slide 11 – Step 4

Step 4 involves finding a method that allows your brand to stick out and stand apart. This involves differentiating your products from those of your competitors. Questions like “what can I offer customers that my competitors cannot?” or “What is unique about my product?” may help you zero in on this important part of your message. Remember to consider your product, how you produce it, marketing avenues, and all aspects of your business to help you differentiate your product.

Also, consider related products or services you may provide to make your product stand out. Let’s recall the example about Chick-fil-A offering dry cereal in the condiments area. While this does not improve their menu, it may benefit parents with young children or improve the dining area’s atmosphere by helping to calm a crying child.

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Slide 12 – Step 5

Step 5 involves developing materials to support your brand. These materials should include items such as branding slogans, logos, and messages for consumers. You will also need vision and mission statements to help make your goals and philosophies clear and understandable to employees and consumers.

Slide 13 – Step 6

In step 6 of creating a brand, you will be developing a plan of action. Your action plan will need to include how you plan to implement your actions, how you will prioritize your goals, and how you will increase awareness of your brand. You may wish to consider starting out small by establishing one or two simple messages that you can support fully. You can always revise your goals and plan as your conditions change.

Slide 14 – Step 7

The final step to creating your brand involves testing, implementing, and evaluating your brand.

Prior to utilizing your brand, you'll want to test it with a sample of your targeted audience. Test your messages to ensure they are received in the intended manner.

A proper test will help you prevent costly mistakes as adjustments can be made more easily before materials involving the brand are produced. It is also easier to adjust the message before communication rather than try to change someone's mind.

Slide 15 – Fresh from Florida

In addition to establishing your own brand, you may wish to consider joining an existing branding program.

Currently, the main branding program in Florida is the Fresh from Florida program. This program is administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and allows program members to utilize its logo and other materials. This is an easy way to illustrate that your food is produced in Florida. Special sales in certain grocery stores are also available to members.

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Slide 16 – Fresh from Florida (continued)

Studies on consumer reaction to the Fresh from Florida brand shows that there is increased trust when food with the logo is compared to food simply labeled as “local”.

However, research shows that consumers believe that food containing the Fresh from Florida label comes from large farms, resulting in a slightly less positive attitude.

All in all, research shows that consumer attitude levels for Fresh from Florida and local food were both positive and very similar.

You can learn more about the program or join Fresh from Florida by visiting www.freshfromflorida.com.

While Fresh from Florida is a state-wide brand, some farmers’ markets and other sales venues have their own branding which you may wish to consider. Check the rules and regulations for any brand you might want to consider using.

Gay, K., & Rumble, J. (2013). Consumer perception of local foods. PIE2011/12-19D. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.

Slide 17 – Advantages and disadvantages of media channels

There are many media channels available to market your products in today’s environment. All of these channels provide opportunities to present your message to consumers. Yet, various groups of consumers may prefer specific methods. Some methods also work better for specific messages. We will now discuss three avenues often used in local food markets.

Holt, J. A., & Rumble, J. N. (2014). Media channel impact on Florida consumers’ intention to buy local food. PIE2013/14-3b. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education.

Holt, J. A. (2014). The effect of media channels on consumers’ intentions to buy local food: An explorations of the theory of planned behavior and media channel perceptions [Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Florida. Retrieved from <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/UFE0047364/00001>

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Slide 18 – Advantages and disadvantages of media channels (continued)

Signage, social media, radio, home mailings, and other avenues may present viable opportunities. Signage may be less costly than many other avenues, and can still prove valuable when starting a branding effort. It is important to find a good combination of media channels that work well for your business and brand.

Slide 19 – Print media

The first media channel we will discuss today is print media. This includes many specific types of print, such as newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc.

There are many advantages of print media. For instance a print ad can have a long life span as a magazine or newspaper. It may be placed in a public area for some time and be seen by numerous people.

Additionally, customers are forced to see print ads when reading the newspaper or magazines. They must at least glance at the ad to determine if they wish to spend time with any information or turn the page. Similarly, print media cannot be turned off as other types of advertising may be, such as radio or TV.

Another advantage of a print ad is that it can utilize images to clearly depict a message using very few words. Also, a powerful advantage of print ads is that they can be tailored to specific audiences more easily than some forms of media.

Slide 20 – Print media (continued)

Another advantage of print media is that coupons, recipes, or other information can be easily included in the advertisement, making the ad itself hold value for the consumer. This may enhance the attention the ad receives from potential customers. Perhaps one of the most popular reasons to use print media is cost. Print ads are less costly to produce than many forms of media.

While there are many reasons to consider print media, there are disadvantages. For instance, a print ad may not be seen as personally relevant to the consumer. Many people may simply ignore a print ad, or the advertisement may not be as memorable as a message delivered through other media. Also, while a print ad is less costly to produce, the cost to run the ad can be high.

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Slide 21 – TV

TV advertisements are an often-used means of communicating product messages to consumers. This media channel has significant advantages over some others. For instance, this media can be entertaining. People look forward to the Super Bowl ads so much that voting is conducted for ad popularity.

Numbers are also an advantage of TV ads. A single commercial, aired on a major network, can reach millions of viewers simultaneously.

TV ads also have an advantage, as a commercial can be personally impactful and extremely memorable. Some commercials aired decades ago are fondly remembered today by thousands of viewers.

Slide 22 – TV (continued)

While TV ads have several attractive advantages, there are disadvantages.

For many small businesses, the cost is unaffordable. Additionally, the cost to actually broadcast the ad may be very expensive dependent upon the variables such as broadcast area, time of day, popularity of show surrounding the ad broadcast, and other factors.

Another disadvantage of TV ads involves the difficulty in tailoring a produced ad to different audiences.

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Slide 23 – Website

The final media channel we will discuss today is the website. Websites have many advantages.

One significant advantage is that websites can use images, words, or even video to convey a large amount of information relatively easily.

The website may also be designed in a manner to be interactive where the audience may be engaged in a novel way and individuals can feel in control of the information they received from the site.

Generally, audiences related positively to websites when they can access information in different ways.

An additional advantage of a website is that individuals who use websites may be more invested in pursuing a purchase of your product because they expended the effort to actually search for information.

Slide 24 – Website (continued)

Websites also have disadvantages.

First, for a website to be effective an individual must actively seek out information.

Secondly, a potential customer that is searching for a product you sell may find your competitor's website as well as yours. In fact, your website may be in competition with many other sites depending upon key words used by the searcher, the search engine used, and other factors. Of course, searches for your specific business name or your web address will help the consumer find you more easily.

Another disadvantage of the website is that sites can become too wordy. While websites allow a great deal of information to be made available, this may tend to result in sites where information is overlooked or the site is difficult to navigate.

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Slide 25 – Media channel overview

Now, let's look at some information that may help you determine the right media channel(s) to promote your products.

First, research suggests that print ads are the most preferred mode of advertising, followed by websites and then TV. As you may be able to imagine, the least preferred method of communication was phone calls and text messages. Regardless of the medium, potential customers desire information that is easy to access. Additionally, they want the ability to search for and retrieve information at will.

Slide 26 – Indicators of effective marketing strategies

Once you have developed your brand and are utilizing your chosen media channels to communicate your message, you will want to evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing strategy. The following points provide possible ideas to consider when evaluating the level of your success.

First, a good marketing strategy has a clear target market.

While it may be tempting to suspend marketing when sales are good, a strong strategy generally continues the marketing effort during these periods. This may help stabilize sales during downturns as the brand is well established with a significant clientele.

An effective strategy also has a clear and differentiated brand with adequate resources committed to marketing.

Slide 27 – Indicators of effective marketing strategies (continued)

Another indicator of an effective strategy is an increased number of clientele and improved customer loyalty. Higher margins also point to an effective strategy.

A strategy that engages the targeted audiences rather than simply making consumers aware of the product is generally more effective than other plans.

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Slide 28 – Exercise B



Refer to Exercise B worksheets found after the module portion of this document for instructions and materials.

The purpose of this exercise is for participants to begin to develop a marketing idea appropriate for the three media channels discussed. While completion of a fully developed idea will not be possible due to time constraints, hopefully participants will begin to see that they are capable of utilizing these channels and developing a personalized idea for their company.

Divide all participants into groups of 6 or less people. There must be at least 3 groups but there can be more depending on the amount of people in the training.

Using an easel pad/paper and markers provided, work as a group to develop a basic advertisement using your assigned media channel. Please do not worry about artistic capability or fully developed advertisements. After all groups develop an advertisement, each group will share their plan with all participants who will offer possible additions or alterations.

After 10-15 minutes of group work, allow each group to share their advertisement with everybody. After each group shares, discuss the strengths of their plans and allow for advice from any participants.

Slide 29 – Summary

Today we have discussed several topics.

You should have a basic idea of the advantages and disadvantages of various media channels. This should allow you to select an effective channel for your marketing efforts.

We also discussed existing branding programs and the possibility of using one of these to add to your personal branding efforts.

Additionally, we spent time discussing the steps to creating a personalized brand.

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Slide 30 – End

I hope you have learned something that may help you develop a message for your products. Are there any questions on today's information?

Next pass out the promotional plan worksheet found in overview document and instruct participants to fill out the section corresponding to Module 4.

Please distribute your evaluation at this point and designate a collection point. If you wish for your participants to complete an electronic evaluation they can complete the evaluation at this link https://ufl.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_9FxKGMrP6yzMivH. In the electronic evaluation, the participants will be required to enter the name of their instructor as well as the date that they completed the workshop. You can obtain the results of the electronic evaluation by emailing piecenter@ifas.ufl.edu or calling 352-273-2598. For questions contact Dr. Joy Rumble at jnrumble@ufl.edu or calling 352-273-1663.

End Module

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Exercise A – Instructor Worksheet

Getting Your Message Out to Consumers

Overview: The purpose of this exercise is to compare the group's perception of a brand with the company's vision and goals. The exercise should help participants understand how personal perceptions of a company may differ with the brand's messages. A discussion of how these differences might occur will help the audience understand concepts like shared identity and consistency of message. You can reinforce these concepts in the discussion portion of this exercise.

Materials:

- Copy of participant worksheet for each attendee
- Easel pad or white board
- Markers for instructor (easel pad or white board)

Time: Approximately 5 minutes for participants to record impressions and 10 to 15 minutes for sharing of opinions. Report out time is dependent on the number of participants.

Instructions to Participants

- Please record your impression of the brand on your worksheet in the space provided.
- Feel free to list both positive and negative impressions you hold.
- After your list is complete we will take turns sharing items from your lists.
- Your input will be recorded on a master list.
- We will then compare personal impressions to the company goals.

After recording your report out list of impressions you should review the information on slide 7 from the Chick-fil-A website. This is not a complete list but provides insight into many of the company objectives and strategies.

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Exercise B – Instructor Worksheet

Overview: The purpose of this exercise is for participants to begin to develop a marketing idea appropriate for the three media channels discussed. While completion of a fully developed idea will not be possible due to time constraints, hopefully participants will begin to see that they are capable of utilizing these channels and developing a personalized idea for their company.

Materials:

- Copy of participant’s worksheet for each attendee
- Easel pad or white board for three groups
- Appropriate markers for each group (easel pad or white board)

Time: Approximately 10–15 minutes for group development of an ad for their assigned product and media channel. Approximately 5 minutes for group sharing.

Instructions for Participants

- Participants will be divided into groups of 6 or less. There must be a minimum of 3 groups.
- Each group will develop a basic advertisement using their assigned media channel.
- Following the completion of advertisements, each group will share their plan with the other participants who will offer possible additions or alterations.

Group TV

Using words and pictures develop a message and outline a possible TV ad that will be used to market local tomatoes at a regional farmers market. You can use any technique you wish including a storyboard similar to those of a comic book to help depict your idea for the ad’s story. If possible, add ideas about what type of broadcast you might want to use for your commercial.

Group Print

Using words and pictures develop a message and outline a possible print ad that will be used to market local tomatoes at a regional farmers’ market. Please include some value-added aspect for the consumer to encourage potential customers keep the ad and follow up on its use.

Group Website

Using words and pictures develop a message and outline a possible website that could be used to market local tomatoes at a regional farmers market. You can use any technique you wish to depict the information you wish to make available on the website.

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Evaluation for Module 4

For the following statements, please answer by circling a number where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, and 5=strongly agree.

	Before Workshop					After Workshop						
a. I can describe the advantages of different media channels.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
b. I am aware of pre-existing branding programs.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
c. I know the steps to creating a personalized brand.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
d. I can identify the characteristics of effective marketing strategies.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
e. I can choose the most effective media channel for my message.	1	2	3	4	5	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

What are the three most important things you feel you have learned in this module?

What have you learned from this module that you plan to implement in the next year?

The amount of time spent on this module was: Too Short Just Right Too Long
 (Please circle one)

The amount of material covered in this module was: (Please circle one) Too Little Just Right Too Much

