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## *Sales and Marketing*

A well-developed Marketing Plan is essential to any business operation. Many sources of information are available to assist in writing a Marketing Plan. The key elements of a marketing plan include:

- 🍷 Target Market Identification
- 🍷 Product Strategy
- 🍷 Pricing
- 🍷 Distribution
- 🍷 Promotion
- 🍷 Tasting Room Planning
- 🍷 Public Relations
- 🍷 Budgeting



An integrated communications plan connects these elements so that the image of the winery is consistently communicated by signage, tasting sheets, brochures, public relations efforts, print advertising and web site messages. While the start-up winery may not be able to include all these promotional elements at the outset, a solid integrated platform of promotional materials will allow expansion as the business grows.

### ***Target Market Identification***

Who are your customers? Where do they live? How old are they? What leisure activities do they enjoy? What other businesses in your area do they frequent? What publications do they read? Do they use the Internet to learn about wine? The more you know about your customer base, the better able you are to make good decisions about how to attract more of these kinds of customers and increase your sales to these customers.

### ***Product Strategy***

A description of the product line and branding strategies, including affiliated enterprises – include some of the philosophies of the winery operation

### ***Pricing***

Pricing goals for retail, distributor and wholesale sales, including a projection of the percentage of wine expected to be sold through each channel

### ***Distribution***

How the product will find its way to market — through distributors, direct sales to consumers, direct to restaurants and retailers — all are possible in Michigan

### ***Promotion***

Include plans for consumer and trade promotional activities, advertising, special events and festivals, and personal selling (winemaker dinners, calling on key accounts, distributor contact)

### ***Tasting Room Planning***

Identifying the tasting room as an affiliated business to the winery with its own Marketing Plan, or as an element of the promotion plan, are options for managing this part of the business. Due to the high costs of operating tasting rooms, it is important to capture financial information about this cost center separately to assist in decision making for effective marketing activity.

### ***Public Relations***

Messages about the winery will be disseminated informally through the surrounding community and to loyal consumers who follow the industry. It's the winery's choice whether to manage this process productively or suffer the whims of the rumor mill and local media representatives.



### ***Budgeting***

An annual budget for sales and marketing activities is an important business tool, to avoid the distractions of frequent requests to allocate funds to new opportunities. Cooperative marketing activities with neighboring wineries or other agricultural or tourism businesses that share your target market may be one cost-effective way to market your products and service.

Trade publications such as *Vineyard and Winery Management*, *Practical Winery and Vineyard*, *Wines and Vines*, *Wine Business Monthly* and numerous online winery newsletters offer regular articles on sales and marketing. Annual trade shows such as Unified Symposium (Sacramento, CA) and Wineries Unlimited (Lancaster, PA) offer additional opportunities for professional development in this area.