

Marketing Guide

Introduction

[Social marketing](#) was originally born out of commercial marketing, but has since developed hugely as an approach in its own right. It is the systematic application of marketing, alongside other concepts and techniques, to achieve specific behavioural goals, for a social good. It's more of a technique than a field of study and will use any approach available to get the job done. It's all about making sport fun, easy and popular rather than boring, difficult and lonely, and most importantly [it works](#).

This guide outlines what steps you need to take when planning a social marketing campaign. It's not got all the answers, but it has got the questions. The four most important ones are:

- Where are we?
- Where do we want to go?
- How will we get there?
- How will we keep on track?

This guide is based on standard marketing guidelines, but also on lessons learned from Sport England's own sports marketing work, the sports marketing work of others from all around the world, and other social marketing work (e.g. stopping smoking, eating more fruit and vegetables).

Hopefully none of this will be revolutionary and new, rather it is a way of bringing all the marketing and social marketing theory together and making them relevant to sport.

In order to help bring it to life we have used the Go Play Rugby campaign as an example throughout. This is a classic example of how to use marketing principles in sport in order to increase participation. But don't forget to check out other [campaigns that have worked well](#).



Where are we?

It's hard to get to where you want to be without having figured out where you are now. There are two main aspects of this to look at:

Microenvironment Factors

These are factors within your immediate environment that you can often influence and they include:

- Resources including level of funding, staffing and expertise
- A look at past performances and the success and failures of campaigns including the image and reputation
- The service quality you could deliver, and your ability to influence and respond to target audiences
- The extent to which a campaign will have the attention and support of management
- The priorities of key stakeholders
- Partnerships which exist with corporations and task forces who are addressing the social issue

Macroenvironment Factors

Although these external factors are more than likely to be outside of your influence, they must be taken into account. Look at the following key areas:

- The cultural forces including trends and events that are affecting societies basic values, perceptions and behaviours
- New technology or products that are being introduced
- Trends in population size, gender, ethnicity, occupation and location
- Current or developing environmental trends
- Trends affecting buying power and spending
- Laws and legislation that could affect campaign efforts
- Groups outside your organisation who have a actual or potential impact on your campaign

SWOT

Take the factors you have identified from the Micro and Macro environment and conduct an analysis of your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The strengths and weaknesses focus on internal or microenvironment and the opportunities and threats focus on external or macroenvironment factors.

Now match up your Strengths and Weaknesses with relevant Opportunities and Threats and look for how you can change your marketing to match them. Ideas for changes are:

Strengths with Opportunities	look for how you can maximise on these
Strengths with Threats	look at how you can use your strengths to minimise these threats
Weaknesses with Opportunities	think of outsourcing these areas to people who have strengths in this area
Weaknesses with Threats	think about outsourcing or whether you really need to be providing this service or offering

This SWOT work will inform the next stage of your marketing plan.

Where do we want to go?

Select and assess Target Audience

We can't afford to communicate with each person as an individual, and communicating with everybody as one group doesn't work. Segmentation is a very useful halfway house as it groups people together into segments which have similar attitudes and behaviour with regards to sport. This is by no means perfect, but is the best approach in many situations.

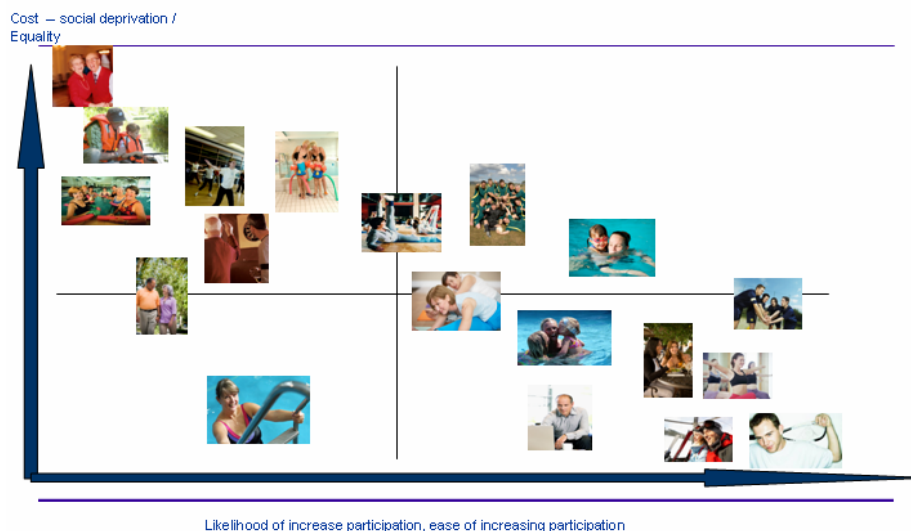
Decide on your target audience by deciding which of the [19 sporting segments](#) you will focus on. These segments are the result of more than £6 million of research and are one of the best and most thorough segmentation projects available in the public sector. So make use of them.

Within the segments you choose you should nearly always target those who are already intending to change. You will get the biggest results from this group, and it works long term too. The technical name for this approach is the [stages of change model](#).

In sport we're very fortunate because about 40% of some segments who aren't doing sport 3 times a week would like to do more. We need to show these groups how sport can be fun, easy and popular, rather than boring, difficult and lonely.

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) knew that the people who were most likely to play rugby were 16-30 year old men who had played rugby before and enjoyed it. They therefore chose this as a target audience

Who do we target?



Set objectives and goals

Communication and marketing objectives should be designed to support existing sports development objectives. You can't get people playing more sport through communication alone, but it can be an important link in the chain.

The RFU were already doing work with clubs to ensure that people were given a warm welcome and were therefore likely to stay with a club once they'd played once.

To complement this though they still needed to get people to turn up and play once.

The first thing to do is to clarify the Purpose of the Campaign. This is a broad statement describing the ultimate impact of a successful campaign (e.g. to significantly increase the number of solo mothers participating in day time sport).

The RFU set up the Go Play Rugby campaign to get 16-30 year olds who'd played rugby before to play at least once at their local club.

Next define your campaign objectives and goals, remember they need to be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely).

The Go Play Rugby targets were to get 4000 16-30 year olds who'd played rugby before to play at least one rugby game at their local club.

How will we get there?

Develop social marketing strategy

Marketing isn't just about promotional work. It is about making sport appeal more to the audience, and promotion is just one way to do this.

Product

In social marketing, your product is what you're asking people to do.

- a) The desired behaviour change you want the target audience to adopt.
- b) The associated benefits of the behaviour change whether it is improved fitness and health, or increased membership and viability of clubs.
- c) The tangible object and services that have been developed to support and facilitate the target audience's behaviour change. This could include fact sheets, marketing material, better facilities at leisure centres, or additional training for volunteers and coaches.

Go Play Rugby wanted young males who had drifted away from game, to join a rugby club and start playing again,

Price

How much is it going to cost the target audience to adopt the new behaviour? This includes not only the amount of money they will spend on the activity, but also the time, effort and potential embarrassment and fear they will experience performing the behaviour.

Develop strategies to counteract these perceived costs. Offer discounts and coupons for costs and try and embed activities into peoples daily lives to balance the non-monetary costs.

Money was not seen as a huge barrier for the target audience, but time and convenience were. People didn't know where their local club was and didn't want the time and hassle of finding that out.

Place

Where will the target audience play sport or do activity. We live in a convenience-oriented world where time is precious. People will evaluate the convenience of your offering against competing offerings.

Develop strategies, which enable your target audience to conveniently perform the desired behaviour. Increase the number of locations, frequency and opening hours, or make the physical location more appealing and inviting to the target audience.

Promotion

Develop key messages

This depends on the group you're trying to reach, but the three things to focus on are how you can make sport fun, easy and popular (the technical terms are [increasing perceived benefits, assisting self-efficacy and normalising behaviour](#)). These are proven to be the most effective ways to get people to change.

It is essential that all messages sent out are supportive of the work going on at the coalface. If you promote rugby but people don't know where the rugby club is, or if there aren't enough places to play, then little will change.

Do remember that 3x30 is a target we have been set by government – it is not a message for the public. Even 5x30 is only a part of a message, as it has been proven that people do not change their behaviour just because they are told that they *should*. Objectives should be based around how to use communication to encourage someone to take up a sport.

Remember three key things when setting your key messages; that sport can be fun, easy and popular.

Go Play Rugby identified the love of the game, the camaraderie and making it really easy for people to find their local clubs as the key messages

Select media channels

You will want to decide on what marketing mix is appropriate to your target audience. This information is available from the [segmentation communications plans](#).

- [Advertising](#)
- [PR](#)

there are some fantastic deals to be had with local papers. We have seen how [Shape up Notts](#) and [Get Active Northumberland](#) managed to get an enormous amount of free coverage.

- [Direct marketing](#)
- [Online](#)
- In person
- Sales promotions

And don't forget to make sure that everything is [written in plain English](#)!

How will we keep on track?

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation allows you to [build evidence](#) of what works so you can do more of it, and what doesn't work so well so you don't waste your time doing it.

First, define what indicators you want to measure:

- What will be measured
- How will it be measured
- When will it be measured
- How the results will be reported and used

Typically there are two types of measures – outcomes and process. Outcome measures focus on specific results to do with changes in behaviour, awareness or beliefs (e.g. a 5% increase in sports club membership). Process measures relate to the execution elements of the campaign. This could include changes in policy as a result of the campaign or an assessment of the implementation elements.

Next, decide what techniques you will use to measure the indicators chosen. Consider whether qualitative (focus groups, anecdotal comments), quantitative (phone, mail surveys), or observational techniques are appropriate. Also make sure you have a suitable database to store and extract the information captured.

It is considered good practice to measure prior to, during and post the campaign being run.

Further reading

If you want to know more about social marketing and how it can help you get more people playing sport and doing activity I would recommend the following reading:

- Social Marketing – Why should the devil have all the best tunes? (Gerard Hastings)
- Social Marketing – Improving the quality of life (Philip Kotler, Ned Roberto and Nancy Lee)
- Promoting Sport toolkit research section –
<http://promotingsport.sportengland.org/Research/Forms/AllItems.aspx>