



Farmers Market Marketing Plan

Turning Research Into a Marketing Strategy





Marketing Plan Design

- Research – What is it? How to do it? What does it mean?
 - dictionary.com: market research is, “the action or activity of gathering information about consumers' needs and preferences”.
- Application of research to your market & community
- Marketing Strategies



But first.....

Let's Gather Your Market Specific Data....



Let's Set the Stage....

- The first section of your plan should include the following:
 - Market Name
 - Market Location
 - Have you ever moved locations?
 - Types of Products
 - Region Served
 - Customers
 - Vendors

Market Name: _____

Market Location: _____

Number of Years in that Location: _____

Were you at a location previously? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, where: _____

What geographic area do you serve?

My customers typically travel from (county, region, state(s)):

My vendors typically come from (county, region, state(s)):

My market carries these types of products:

Now let's talk about your competition...

- Who is your competition?





But....are they really your competition?

- Do you share similar types of farmers?
- Do you share similar product selections?
- Are your pricing structures similar?
- Do you both appeal to similar shopping needs and preferences?
- Do they have institutional knowledge, meaning they have been around longer?
- Do they have a stronger marketing campaign?
- Other pieces to consider might be:
- What are their weekly customer/traffic counts?
- What are their weekly purchases at the farmers market?
- Do they have paid staff or dedicated volunteers to help manage any programs or marketing campaigns?

	Types of Vendors	Types of Products	Customer/Traffic Counts	Typical Customer Type(s)	Longevity of the market	Pricing Structure at the location	Paid Staff/Dedicated Volunteers	Days/Hours of Operation	Marketing Methods Used
Farmers Market XYZ	Diversified Products & Production Methods	Diversified Products & Production Methods	1000-2000/market day	Ages 45-64, Middle Income, SNAP recipients	20+ years		Dedicated Volunteers	Saturdays, 9am-1pm	Social media, brochures, fliers
Competition #1 – Local CSA	Organic only	Organic only	125 members	Young Professionals	2 years	\$500/season	Just the farmer	On-farm & farmers market pick-up	brochures
Competition #2 – Local Farmstand	Only veggies	Only veggies	25-40 customers/day	Families	5 years	Typical items are \$.50-\$3/ea	Just the farmer	Seven days a week, 9am-6pm	word of mouth
Competition #3 – Other market	Diversified Products & Production Methods	Diversified Products & Production Methods	Unknown	Vacationers	1 yr		Unpaid manager who is also a vendor	Sundays, 10am-2pm	fliers
Competition #4 – Grocery Store	Diversified Products & Production Methods	Diversified Products & Production Methods	10,000/day	Everyone	50+ years		Paid staff & marketing department	All day/every day	everything

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Who are your current & potential customers?

A) Foodies/Locavores/Food Enthusiasts

These are people who are adventurous and in search of the new, different, and novel such as ox tail or gourmet or heirloom vegetables. While these things may not be new to YOU, they are to the foodie. They are also seeking an authentic experience, and are the least price sensitive of the three groups. They want to interact with you and your farm, and hear your story. Foodies are also highly active online and in their communities, and they like to “brag” about farms and foods they love (which is like free advertising for you!). They're often busy, and may not have the time to always come and pick up a CSA or come out and spend an afternoon at a U-Pick.

B) The Socially Motivated Consumer

This type of customer “votes with their dollar,” meaning they go out of their way to purchase products that align with a cause they support. Their social causes may run the gamut to include food safety, sustainability, eco-conscious practices, personal health, and humane treatment of livestock. Those who follow religious guidelines – such as Kosher or Halal – are included in this customer group. Like foodies, they want to know the story behind their purchase. The socially motivated consumer's income ranges from low to moderate, and sometimes high. They may have tough questions for you to ensure that your product meets their cause standards. Sometimes, they are misinformed.



Who are your current & potential customers?

C) Traditional Buyers

These can be your toughest – but also your most loyal customers. They hold traditional beliefs that since you have “cut out the middleman” through direct marketing, that you should sell your product at a lower price. They are price sensitive and value-driven. However, they love to buy in bulk, so you may be able to offer higher volumes at a lower price i.e. an entire cow or bushels of tomatoes. They are experienced in the kitchen and often can and freeze.



How Do Customers View Your Market?





Who are your vendors?

- What types of vendors participate in your market (and where are the gaps)?
- What are their reasons for participation in the market?
- What is their incentive?
- What value(s) do they find?
- What does it mean for them, their farm and their family to participate?



Example Farmers Market Vendor Survey:

- How long have you vended at this market?
- What does your participation mean for your farm? For your family?
- Would you recommend this market as a good potential market opportunity for other farmers? Why or Why not?
- Would you recommend this market to your friends to come as shoppers? Why or Why not?



Community Surveys

How, Why & What Do They Mean?



<https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/about/>

Download socioeconomic reports of communities, counties, & states, including aggregations and comparisons. The Economic Profile System (EPS) uses federal data sources, including the Bureaus of Economic Analysis, Census, & others. EPS is also known as the Human Dimensions Toolkit by the Forest Service.

GET EMAIL UPDATES ✓

About the Economic Profile System

This tool evolved from the Economic Profile System-Human Dimensions Toolkit (EPS-HDT) Excel Add-In.

EPS is free and easy to use. Quickly create and download reports of current and historical socioeconomic data in convenient formats.

VIEW SAMPLES »

CREATE PROFILES »

Benefits

- **Free and easy to use.**
- **Available nation-wide** — any state, county, custom combination of geographies, and for the Demographics report, also sub-county.
- **Updated continuously** with the latest data.
- **Uses reliable, published government data.**
- **Downloadable in Excel or PDF formats.**

Data Sources



SEE DETAILS

Economic Profile System funders and collaborators

What is the age and gender distribution of the population?

This page describes the change in age and gender distribution over time, and the change in age distribution, with age categories separated into five age groups.

Age & Gender Distribution and Change, 2000-2015*

	2000	2015*
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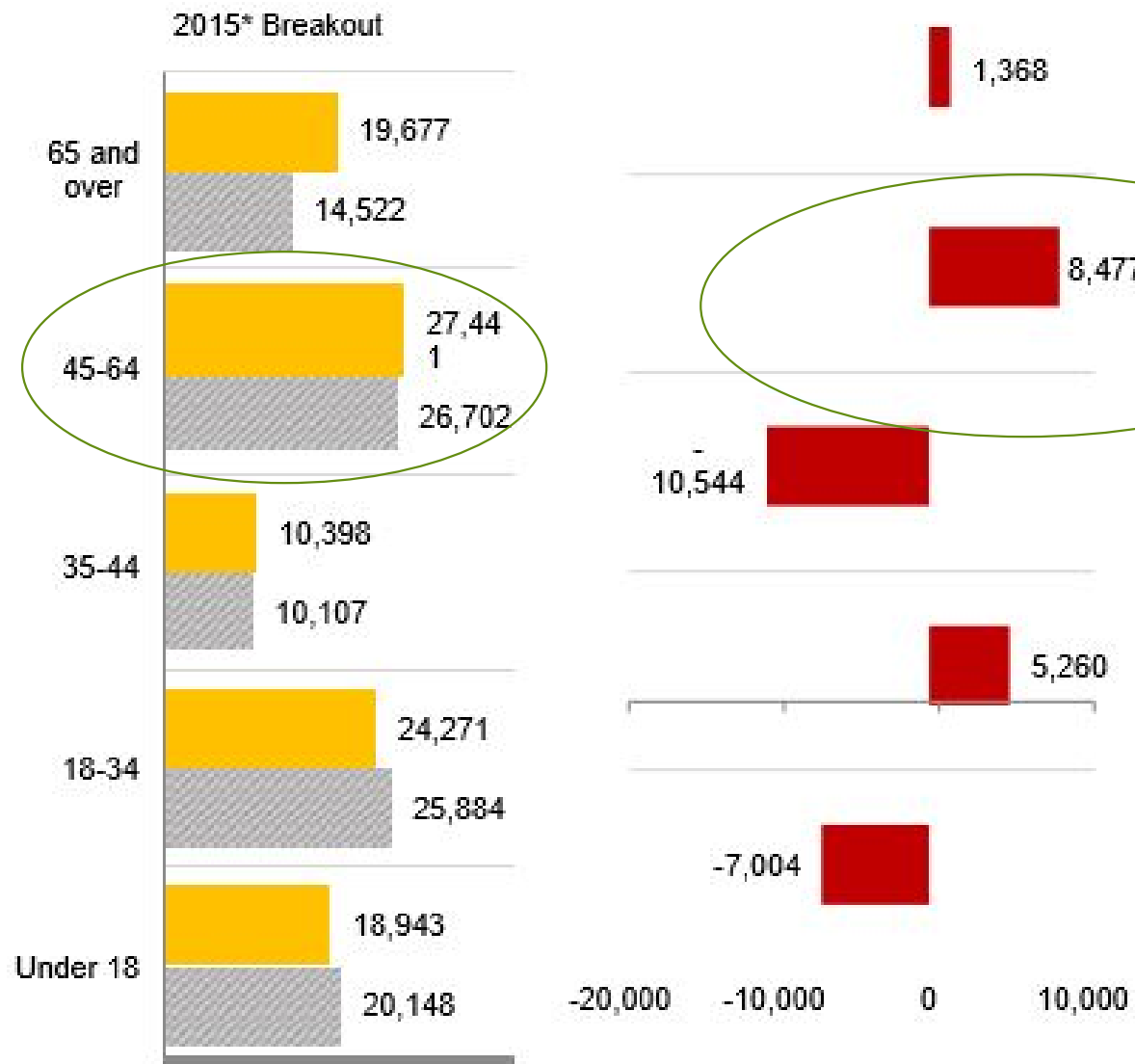
Total Population	200,536	198,093
Under 18	46,095	39,091
18-34	44,895	50,155
35-44	31,049	20,505
45-64	45,666	54,143
65 and over	32,831	34,199

Percent of Total

Under 18	23.0%	19.7%
18-34	22.4%	25.3%
35-44	15.5%	10.4%
45-64	22.8%	27.3%
65 and over	16.4%	17.3%

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

- In the 2011-2015 period, the age category with the highest estimate for number of women was 45-64 (27,441), and the age category with the highest estimate for number of men was 45-64 (26,702).
- From 2000 to the 2011-2015 period, the age category with the largest estimated increase was 45-64 (8,477), and the age category with the largest estimated decrease was 35-44 (-10,544).



Data Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce. 2016. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, Washington, D.C.; U.S. Department of Commerce. 2000. Census Bureau, Systems Support Division, Washington, D.C.

How is income distributed?

This page describes the distribution of household income.

Household Income Distribution, 2015*

	Broome County, NY	U.S.
Per Capita Income (2015 \$s)	\$25,105	\$28,930
Median Household Income^ (2015 \$s)	\$46,261	\$53,889
Total Households	79,132	116,926,305
Less than \$10,000	6,891	8,421,482
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5,014	6,161,477
\$15,000 to \$24,999	10,137	12,367,168
\$25,000 to \$34,999	8,629	11,803,974
\$35,000 to \$49,999	11,359	15,672,431
\$50,000 to \$74,999	14,298	20,827,239
\$75,000 to \$99,999	8,927	14,166,538
\$100,000 to \$149,999	9,232	15,356,540
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2,721	6,010,418
\$200,000 or more	1,924	6,139,038

Broome County, NY

What are the components of household earnings?

This page describes household earnings by income source and mean household earnings by source.

Number of Households Receiving Earnings, by Source, 2015*

	Broome County, NY	U.S.
Total households:	79,132	116,926,305
Labor earnings	56,694	90,916,552
Social Security (SS)	27,841	34,821,835
Retirement income	20,442	21,124,035
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	5,627	6,269,127
Cash public assistance income	3,794	3,223,786
Food Stamp/SNAP	12,537	15,399,651

Percent of Total^

Labor earnings	71.6%	77.8%
Social Security (SS)	35.2%	29.8%
Retirement income	25.8%	18.1%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	7.1%	5.4%
Cash public assistance income	4.8%	2.8%
Food Stamp/SNAP	15.8%	13.2%

^ Total may add to more than 100% due to households receiving more than 1 source of income.

* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2011-2015 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.



My community:	
Total Population	
Average Age	
Average household size	
Average Income	
Average Education level	
Population below the poverty line	
Population on SNAP	
Religious base: list each in your community and ID percent of population	
Ethnicity: list each ethnicity in your community and ID percent of population	

- Visit: <https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/#demographics-report-section> and click on “Build a Report”
 - Choose a region based on your answers on Worksheet 1

First, take a look at the statistics on the income distribution in your community. What does the distribution tell you in terms of the types of customers that potentially shop at your market?

Next, take a look at the breakdown of those who are utilizing any type of benefit. How can you use this in understanding how to increase your SNAP/EBT sales? (For example, in Broome County, NY 16% of the population is on food stamps/SNAP. Is this a large enough percentage to dedicate a large scale effort towards? If the farmers market is located on a bus line and/or in the urban core, then we would argue yes!)

Finally, take a look at the ethnicity breakdown? What does this tell you in terms of the types of products/produce they may be looking to purchase at your farmers market? (For example, in Monroe County, 8% of their population is Hispanic/Latino, so markets in that region may want to consider specific types of products and/or translation of market outreach into Spanish).



Step Two: Customer Surveys

- You will want to survey your consumers, and those in the community, to better learn what they are looking for from your farmers market, or one in general.
 - To include, but not limited to:
 - Days & hours of operation
 - Location
 - Benefits accepted, inc cash/credit/incentives
 - Types of production methods
 - Product Diversity
 - Product Packaging
 - Etc...



Survey Examples

Existing Market Shoppers Survey:

- 1) How long have you been shopping at this farmers market?
- 2) What are your favorite parts of the market?
- 3) Do you tell friends and family about our farmers market?
- 4) If yes, what do you tell them?
- 5) What products do you wish we have that we don't?

General Community Member Survey:

- 1) Have you shopped at our farmers market in the past year?
- 2) If yes, what was your favorite part?
- 3) If not, why?
- 4) What have you heard about our farmers market that we should know about?



Marketing Strategies

What Are Your Goals?





Setting Goals Will Help Ensure Success

- What role does marketing currently play in the success of your farmers market?
- Who is currently responsible?
- Do you have dedicated funds for marketing?

The blend of types of marketing and marketing strategies will ensure that you are reaching all types of customers in your community.



What Should Your Marketing Goals Be?

- 1) What customers are you currently reaching with your marketing efforts?
- 2) Who have you identified as a consumer base missing from your market?
- 3) What action do you want those consumers you reach to take?
- 4) What messages will reach this audience and cause them to take the desired action?
- 5) Why do you want them to respond to your call for action?
- 6) Our goal for our marketing campaign is ...
 - *i.e. reach SNAP consumers and encourage them to shop at our farmers market.*



What customers are you currently reaching with your marketing efforts → *i.e. currently the market has a large percent of senior citizens*

Who have you identified as a consumer base missing from your market? → *i.e. we would like to reach more low income consumers*

What action do you want those consumers you reach to take? → *i.e. we want SNAP customers to spend their benefits on healthy, local food*

What messages will reach this audience and cause them to take the desired action? → *i.e. healthy locally grown food is abundant and available at the market and vendors accept SNAP benefits for their food. Learn how to eat healthier by shopping the farmers market with your SNAP benefits*

Why do you want them to respond to your call for action? → *i.e. we can increase our customer base and help build sales for our farmers.*



Some market examples...



End Goal

reach SNAP consumers and encourage them to shop at our farmers market.





Next Steps

Sign up (if you haven't already) for our next webinar in the series:

Part 2: Branding and Promotional Tactics to Reach Your Goals January 31

Consider joining our Shark Tank Business Planning Competition



Shark Tank Competition