### SESSION PLAN

**COURSE:** ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses

**ELEMENT:** Element 5 – Creating a digital marketing plan for a small business (Weighting 35%)

## **LEARNING OUTCOME 8**

**Develop a creative digital marketing plan for a small business**

1.1 Summarise the background and analytical steps to developing a digital marketing plan

1.2 Recommend messaging, digital tools and scheduling within a digital marketing plan

1.3 Recommend methods of measuring the effectiveness of the digital marketing plan

**NUMBER OF SESSIONS:** Three - approximately seven hours in total

**SESSION TOPICS:** Session 1: Background and analytical steps to developing a digital marketing plan

Session 2: Messaging, digital tools and scheduling a digital marketing plan

Session 3: Methods of measuring the effective of a digital marketing plan

*Note: tutors may wish to break sessions 1 and 2 into shorter sessions depending on the learners being taught.*

**Note to tutors: This is the recommended session plan for Learning Outcome 8 of Element 5 of the ABE Level 3 Award in Digital Marketing Essentials for Small Businesses. You should follow the plan, using the resources (referenced as ‘slides’ here) and activities provided. It is important to enhance all sessions with local examples and case studies, involving the learners ACTIVELY wherever possible.**

### SESSION 1: Background and analytical steps to developing a digital marketing plan (2-3 hours)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative Assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Learning outcomes 8.1  **RESOURCE Element 5 LO8 - Digital Marketing Plan** | 1-3 |  |  |
| Background and analytics in digital marketing planning | Introduce the need of digital marketing planning from the start to understand:   * What works and what doesn’t in digital marketing * How to use time effectively * What will make a business a success   Explain how a plan will help you make sure:   * Everything is in place from the start * Time is not wasted in repetition or doing the things that don’t contribute to your goals * Predictions are realistic, objectives are set and methodology established | 4-5 | As a class discuss how the focus of a digital marketing plan may differ from a business marketing plan. |  |
| Setting objectives | Explain the purpose of objectives in terms of meeting the business’ digital marketing aims.  Explain the elements of effective objectives as follows:   * Clear * Focused * Quantified | 6 | Learners may be encouraged to reflect on previous learning in relation to SMART objectives and recall: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed |  |
| Outline how objectives may be set for:   * Reach * Engagement * Acquisition * Conversion * Sales * Retention * Loyalty | 7 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 1 Part One | Activity 1 Element 5 LO8 – The digital marketing plan Part One |
| Defining your market | Outline the first step in planning as defining your market and the importance of knowing:   * what you sell or what service you offer * to who * in which space | 8 |  |  |
| Suggest tips for defining a market including:   * Being specific and focused * Looking at competitors and how they describe themselves * Developing a statement that tells people what the business is about | 9 |  |  |
| Outline the factors to consider when defining your target customers such as:   * Age, gender, marital status, location * Occupation * Interests, likes and affiliations * Social platforms they use * Content they consume: TV, newspapers, websites * Shopping, booking and spending habits * Politics and beliefs | 10 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 1 Part Two | Activity 1 Element 5 LO8 – The digital marketing plan Part Two |
| Assigning a budget | Explain that whilst many online activities are free, there are costs that need to be considered when planning digital marketing such as:   * Manpower * Advertising * Design * Tools and platform memberships | 11 | As a class, identify and list some online tools that are freely available to users. |  |
| Explain how the budget must be a balance between:   * How much money you have * How much money is reasonable to achieve your targets | 12 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 1 Part Three | Activity 1 Element 5 LO8 – The digital marketing plan Part Three |
| Review of session and learning outcomes |  |  |  |  |

### SESSION 2: Messaging, digital tools and scheduling and digital marketing plan (2-3 hours)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Learning outcome 8.2  **RESOURCE Element 5 LO8 - Digital Marketing Plan** | 13 |  |  |
| Designing appropriate messaging | Explain how messaging informs all the communications in your digital marketing regardless of the type of communication. It is important therefore that written statements, images, video and audio content all align and:   * represent you, your business and your brand * appeal to your target customers * connect to your marketing objectives | 14 |  |  |
| Outline the key components of messaging as the:   * digital marketing tone of voice: the words and language used * central marketing message: the message that links directly to digital marketing objectives | 15 |  |  |
| The digital tone of voice | Explain how the tone of voice needs to be established at the start as it informs:   * how you phrase your social media posts in words and images * how you write your emails * your longer-form content: written, audio, video * the written content on your website * the words you use on digital sales platforms | 16 |  |  |
| Outline the key questions to be answered when establishing a digital tone of voice:   * Do you use emojis or popular acronyms like ‘Lol’ * Do you use adverbs or other descriptions? * Do you refer to the business as ‘I’, ‘we’ or ‘it? * Do you use exclamation marks? * Do you use complicated words? * Do you use statistics and number or phrases? | 17 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 2 Part One | Activity 2 Element 5 LO8 – Messaging and scheduling Part One |
| The central marketing message | Explain how a central marketing message should describe what you offer, to who and what makes you special. Describe how it is used:   * In an ‘about me’ section on social media or digital sales platforms * in cover photos on social media * in long-form content, to give a hook to the audience * as part of a call-to-action, which drives sales * in email messaging to remind subscribers what the business does * prominently on a website | 18 |  |  |
| Using the figure on slide 19, explain the key components that make a strong central marketing message as follows:   * Simple and clear * Represents the brand uniquely * Helps meet business objectives | 19 |  |  |
| Outline the steps to creating a strong marketing message   1. Research 2. Brainstorm 3. Refine 4. Test | 20 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 2 Part Two | Activity 2 Element 5 LO8 – Messaging and scheduling Part Two |
| Implementing a digital marketing plan | Explain how implementation is likely to involve a combination of a number of online and digital tools. Emphasis that the tools should be appropriate for the niche market and local area. | 21 |  |  |
| Referring back to the online sales funnel explored in element 4, identify suitable online tools to:   * Identify potential customers and introduce your business * Capture and engage potential customers * Campaign and sell | 22 | Referring to the image of the online sales funnel, divide learners into 3 groups and assign one of the following to each group.   1. Identify and introduce 2. Capture and engage 3. Campaign and sell   In groups, learners should identify examples of online tools that are appropriate for their assigned purpose. Share finding with whole class. |  |
| Creating a schedule and content plan | Outline the structure of a schedule that is broken down into daily, weekly and monthly tasks depending on the business objectives, the market and the target market’s online behaviour.  Explain the benefits of a schedule in:   * Enabling the use of time effectively * Providing ready-made to-do lists to aid organisation   Explain how a content plan may be used to schedule the creation and publication of necessary content in a timely fashion to meet business objectives. | 23 | Learners should research some free downloadable templates for digital marketing planning such as:  <https://www.smartsheet.com/free-marketing-plan-templates-excel>  <http://www.smartinsights.com/guides/digital-marketing-plan-template/> |  |
| Referring to the table on slide 24, indicate the suggested frequency of content creation and publication although this may vary depending on the nature of the business and target market. | 24 | In pairs or small groups, learners complete Activity 2 Part Three | Activity 2 Element 5 LO8 – Messaging and scheduling Part Three |
| Review of session and learning outcomes |  |  |  |  |

### SESSION 3: Methods of measuring the effectiveness of the digital marketing plan (1 hour)

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| **Topic** | **Tutor Activity** | **Slides** | **Learner Activity** | **Formative assessment** |
| Introduction to session and learning outcomes | Learning outcome 8.3  **RESOURCE Element 5 LO8 - Digital Marketing Plan** | 25 |  |  |
| Measuring effectiveness | Explain the importance of tracking progress from the start so that time and attention can be focused on activities that are more likely to achieve your objectives. | 26 |  |  |
| Outline the key principle of monitoring digital marketing:   * Test * Learn * Adapt   Explain how a simple spreadsheet (Google Sheet or Excel) can be used to monitor progress towards targets. | 27 |  |  |
| Using analytics | Explain how some online tools have built-in analytics which automatically track progress however it is important to check whether:   * you need to set up tracking of specific goals in advance such as in Google Analytics * you look retrospectively like on most social platforms * the analytic tool measures the exact metrics you are looking for in relation to your objectives | 28 | Divide learners into 5 groups and assign one of the analytic tools listed below to each group. In groups, learners should research the digital tools and summarise its uses and purpose. Share findings with whole class. Suggested tools include:   1. Hubspot 2. Google analytics 3. Hootsuite 4. Mixpanel 5. Megalytic |  |
| Measuring success | Explain how tracking progress enables a business to benchmark against its own success.  Indicate how success may be measure broadly in the **first six months**:   * Are you improving month-on-month in each metric you are measuring? * Are you learning new things each month that help you adapt your plan?   And then more specifically and numerically **after six months:**   * Based on the numbers you recorded each month from the start, what reasonable targets can you look to reach in 6 months’ time? | 29 | As individuals or in pairs, learners complete Activity 3 Part One | Activity 3 Element 5 LO8 – Measuring performance Part One |
| Key performance indicators | Indicate how key performance indicators that are attainable but challenging are used to show success in a specific area of the business.  Explain that KPIs should:   * Be based on changing performance over a period of time * Drive you to achieve maximum rather than staying static   For example: Grow 50 followers per week | 30 | As individuals or in pairs, learners complete Activity 3 Part Two | Activity 3 Element 5 LO8 – Measuring performance Part One |
| Review of session and learning outcomes |  |  |  |  |