

MAKING YOUR COMPOST PRODUCT WORK FOR YOU

On-farm compost operations are important to the environmental and economic health of farms. Composting minimizes the potential environmental impact from nutrient runoff of raw manure, can achieve significant cost savings in manure handling, and improves soil structure. In addition to the on-farm benefits, the off-farm sale of compost provides a significant opportunity for economic sustainability. Demand for compost products is on the rise, presenting a viable value-added product for farmers. Yet, few farmers take advantage of this opportunity, often lacking the time or marketing skills to explore turning compost into a marketable commodity. Composting presents a strategic opportunity for farms to earn income through fees for accepting materials for composting, as well as selling value-added material into the marketplace. As a business, it involves developing a product, marketing, maintaining equipment and employees, and adhering to regulations and standards.

BENEFITS TO COMPOSTING ON THE FARM

- Relatively inexpensive – farmers usually have land, start-up equipment, feedstock
- Efficient method for handling manure and livestock mortalities.
- Significant reduction in volume and weight of waste materials.
- Reduced disease and odor issues, if properly composted.
- Reduced risk of polluted runoff into streams and waterways.
- Final product may be reapplied to agricultural land or marketed for off-farm uses.
- Opportunity for an added revenue stream through taking off-farm feedstocks.

On-farm compost producers may benefit from differentiating their compost product from other municipal, commercial, or industrial waste-derived compost products. Farm produced compost is locally produced—using on farm manures and (typically) local feedstocks. If done properly with quality control measures implemented, and produced consistently, farm-produced compost can be high quality. This presents the operator with a marketing advantage.

MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING COMPOST DEMAND AND SALES

- Compost quality.
- Product consistency.
- Product availability and producing enough compost product to meet demand.
- Economics of transportation and distance to markets.
- Economics and challenges associated with compost application.
- Progress toward developing industry standards and specifications.

OFF-FARM FEEDSTOCK AS REVENUE SOURCE

Composting presents an environmentally-friendly waste management option for communities and businesses. Often the price to send organic wastes to a compost operation will be lower than waste disposal, especially when factoring in transportation distances. Reliable collection services, if the operation is providing these services, or working with a hauler that has a good reputation for quality service is important.

The nature of the compost feedstock and creating the proper “compost recipe” is integral to the compost operation and ultimately the quality and viability of the compost product.

Additionally, some markets may be limited by certain feedstocks. For example, organic growers cannot use compost produced from biosolids. Understanding the relationship between feedstocks, product, and end market is important. Because it takes time to develop the sales end of the compost production, revenues received through tip fees from feedstock can benefit compost operations by providing an additional revenue stream. Incorporating feedstocks from municipalities and businesses enhances the marketability of the product by promoting the “environmentally-friendly” nature of composting.

COMPOST MARKETING PLAN

Successful marketing of compost requires a foundation of knowledge about compost—benefits to potential customers, uses for compost, the composting process, and compost characteristics. It helps to assure customers that your facility is legitimate and dependable. Compost facilities need to compete with other compost operations, as well as traditional soil and planting media (such as peat). Compost operators need to convince potential customers that compost is an effective alternative to these traditional products and that your compost product is the best.

Marketing is an essential component of your business and business plan. Financial lenders want accurate information about potential markets, sales potential, etc. A well-done marketing plan demonstrates a clear understanding of production, capital requirements, costs, market segments, alternative markets, customer needs and purchasing habits, and the competition. A marketing plan is only as good as the information it contains. Accuracy and thoroughness are vital to your marketing success.

A marketing plan should be a useful tool that is revisited on a yearly basis, and viewed and discussed by appropriate staff on a monthly basis. For established, successful businesses, the marketing plan will help to “tune up” and reaffirm the business’s ongoing activities. For a new business or one that is entering new markets, a marketing plan can be the key to business success. A marketing plan explains sales strategies, pricing, promotions, and benefits. It describes how you will get a customer to purchase your compost product. It is an essential part of any business plan and also functions as a standalone document. Keep your marketing message short and your plan simple.

SWOT—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats—is a planning tool useful in business. Strengths and weaknesses are factors internal to the business. Opportunities and threats are external environment factors that may affect your business. A business plan and a marketing plan should include a list of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that affect or have the potential to affect your businesses. Your business and marketing plans should benefit your business by helping you to formulate ways to build on your strengths and take advantage of opportunities, while incorporating a strategy to overcome your weaknesses and threats to your business. A SWOT analysis should be included in your marketing plan.

COMPOST MARKETING TRENDS

According to a U.S. Composting Council study conducted in 2000, the largest target market segments are landscapers, homeowners, and topsoil producers. The most popular applications of compost are for soil amendment, mulch, and growing media. Agricultural

use is an increasing market with significant growth potential. Similarly, use of compost in construction sites and erosion control also presents substantial growth potential.

WHAT IS MARKETING?

Marketing is any activity that leads to customer satisfaction and the sale of your compost product. Ideally it starts before the product is produced and is an ongoing, adaptable process. Successful marketing is oriented toward the product user, not the seller. It involves the following:

- Determining customer needs and wants and meeting these at a price that allows the business to make a profit and compete in the marketplace.
- Undertaking a process of planning and implementing pricing, promotion, and distribution programs to satisfy customer needs and wants.
- Customers want to know – “What’s in it for me?” What are the benefits to the product?
- Collecting information and analyzing alternative market outlets.
 - Determine the scope of the proposed market area.
 - Identify problems or issues and collect information needed to solve them.
 - Consideration of developing different compost products or niche markets to better compete in the marketplace.
- Build and retain a growing base of satisfied consumers of your product.

Market research

Market research is essential in determining an effective marketing strategy and achieving your profit potential. It requires that you explore the market to understand customers, competitors, and the supply network. Doing your own marketing research will yield a higher return which you get to keep and allows you to maintain more control over your product quality, image, and pricing. However, it takes commitment, skill, and money.

Placing yourself in the role of a customer will help you to gain insight into your competition. Visit your competition, garden centers, etc. Evaluate the quality of the products and the amount of sales. Purchase some of the products and look at quality uniformity from day-to-day, week-to-week. Note prices, packaging, promotional displays, and customer education on using compost. Be up front with potential direct competitors. Tell them you want to get into the business. Ask them for an honest assessment of the market—is it too small? Oversupplied? Some will talk with you some will not.

If your research shows there is already substantial competition for the target compost market, consider revising your product definition, reformulating your recipe, and consider other niche compost markets. The information already gathered in your market research can point to other opportunities. Marketing research will allow you to understand and predict the market for your business. It will help you to gain the skills you will need as your business grows.

Why conduct market research?

- Estimate the quantity of compost product and other soil amendment product purchases, bulk and bagged.
- Identify competing products currently in use and possible substitutions.
- Determine customer quality expectations.

- Evaluate marketing, packaging, and distribution options.
- Identify customer preferences.
- Determine compost use and purchasing cycles.

Barriers to market research

- Compost quality standards and specifications vary widely and compost products are still competing with other soil amendments, requiring a comparison of other soil amendment products to estimate the market potential for compost.
- Trends in the market can be difficult to investigate. Retailers and wholesale producers of competing soil amendment products do not readily share sales figures.
- The market and compost applications are complex—compost is not well understood by potential users.

Market research tools

With a little creativity and time investment, conducting research can be done on a small budget. Common methods of research include:

- Investigative research: Trade journals, such as BioCycle; search the Internet; contact the US Composting Council and other industry associations; talk with agricultural extension agencies and others in the profession; consult with local and state environmental regulators; get to know your city/town officials.
 - Technical and economic analysis of potential feedstocks.
 - Investigate regulatory issues or barriers.
 - Potential markets, trends, competition, etc.
- Conduct a targeted wholesale market or retail survey (greenhouses, nurseries, landscaping contractors, landscape architects, retail garden centers). This is best in person, but can also be done via a mailed, written survey.
 - Record range, quantity, and retail price of soil amendment products being sold.
 - Identify competing products currently in use and possible substitutions.
 - Identify market niches.
 - Identify soil amendment distributors.
- Conduct a targeted market survey of agricultural users.
 - Determine current use of soil amendments.
 - Estimate the quantity of soil amendment purchases.
 - Identify the current soil amendment products used (both purchased and farm generated).
 - Identify perceived uses of compost and benefits.
- Research state Department of Transportation agencies.
 - Gather quantity and expenditures data on erosion control and uses of soil amendment products, including mulch, top soil, and erosion control products.
- In-person interviews of users and potential direct market customers. Conduct a simple survey by mail, telephone, or in-person to determine the needs of compost consumers, how and why they may use it, etc. Surveying is a way to ask potential purchasers of compost about their buying habits, likes and dislikes, and what benefits they want from compost. Perhaps go to a farmers market and randomly survey clientele. If you have an existing farm market operation, ask your customers. If you intend to retail your product to garden centers, ask store managers.
 - Keep it short.

- Ask questions where people need to give quantifiable answers.
- Use checklists or multiple choice questions.
- Some limited short answer questions may be helpful.
- Ask demographic information—confidentially and carefully. Give ranges for age, income, etc. Let people know you only want the information for comparison with other potential customers.
- If you intend on starting a database for future mailings, ask for peoples contact information (be sure to get email addresses) on a separate sheet of paper or postcard.
- Observation.
 - Recording the number of products, people, or other factors that relate to your operation. For example, you may want to visit several garden centers and record the number and type of compost products offered.
- Test market your product by providing small bulk quantities of your product to potential customers for growth trials and demonstration purposes. Set up a demonstration garden using your compost at your operation, a school, or community garden. Try to make the test situation resemble how you plan to sell your product.

THE MARKETING MIX OR THE “FOUR P’S” OF MARKETING

1. **Product.** The goal of business is to make money selling products or services. But, it must be the right product to meet the needs of your target customer. Product attributes include quality, benefits, features, options, brand name, packaging, etc.
2. **Price.** The right product offered at the right price.
3. **Place.** The right product at the right price available in the right place to be purchased by users.
4. **Promotion.** Making potential customers aware of the product, its price, and where it can be purchased.

PRODUCT

In order to entice customers to purchase your compost you must first understand exactly what compost is, compost recipe, the process you are using to make the compost, and the intended use of the final product. Customers, especially businesses and municipalities, rely on a steady product supply and consistent product. Product incorporates not only the physical characteristics of the compost, but other characteristics that will make your product attractive, such as quality, uniqueness, options, services, packaging, and brand identification. The product is best thought of as a bundle of goods and services that includes the product appearance, its function and benefits for the consumer, and the support you offer the customer in using your product.

Your product market research should determine:

- The type of compost product your operation can produce.
- The applications for your product.
- The anticipated characteristics and how these will be measured: nutrient content, consistency, texture, and contaminant levels.
- Types of feedstocks available to fit your compost recipe, location of feedstocks, and potential revenues from off-farm feedstocks.
- The type of processing system to be used and the right equipment.

- Whether feedstocks need to be put through a grinder first. Whether finished material needs to be screened. If it needs to be packaged.
- Production schedules to meet demand.

General qualities of a finished compost product

Composting is a controlled decomposition of organic materials into biologically stable, humic-like substance suitable for a variety of soils and plant uses. High quality composts are stable and mature with a pleasant, earthy smell, low soluble salts, and pHs near neutral.

- *Appearance*: Users desire compost that is uniform in texture, is relatively dry, dark brown or black in appearance, and has a pleasant, earthy smell. Size is often the primary determination in compost purchasing decisions.
- *Quality criteria include*: stability, maturity, soluble salts, pH, and the presence of contaminants such as plastics.
 - *Stable*: compost has completed the composting process and does not reheat when wetted.
 - *Maturity*: an indicator of the presence or absence of phytotoxic chemicals that can accumulate during the composting process, particularly under anaerobic conditions. Mature compost does not contain organics acids that can interfere with plant growth.

Quality factors to consider in marketing:

- *Nutrient Value*: What are the elemental components of your compost? Does it have acceptable levels of nitrogen, potassium, and phosphorous? Is the nutrient level consistent in different batches?
- *Physical Characteristics*: What's the desired pH for your customers—near neutral, higher pH that can help to neutralize acidic soils or lower pH for alkaline soils? Is the color of the end product good? Does it have a pleasing smell?
- *Particle size*: It's the size appropriate for the targeted end market. Do you have the means to make it finer? Can your material be made finer or coarser?
- *Weight*: Certain compost applications require lighter compost in order to move through blower or spreading equipment.
- *Biological features*: Is the beneficial fungal and bacterial activity suitable for the needs of your end users? Is the compost relatively stable?
- *Packaging*: Do your customers want material in bulk or packaged? What type of packaging—small bags for retail sales, larger (1,000-2,000 pound tote) bags for nursery, golf, and some agricultural users. If selling to agricultural and other users, determine the application equipment to be used so that the product can sufficiently meet their needs..
- *Alternative markets*: Can you add something to your compost, such as blending with soils or peat, to enhance your product?
- *Availability*: Does your production timeline meet the needs of users?
- *Transportation services*. Do you offer feedstock pick-up? Can your feedstock provider also use your compost product? Do you offer delivery services that meet the needs of customers (such as off-hours for retailers)?

Importance of product quality

Compost users can benefit from accurate information on the compost product which also includes suggested uses. The characteristics of specific compost products will determine appropriate applications and use. Quality and market reputation is vital for sales and the long-term success of the compost operation. Quality is important from the start. Sell your product's quality, keep up with quality standards, and make improvements in the product as necessary. Describe the product, its range of size and quality, product mix, varieties or types, and other characteristics. What makes the product appealing?

Product testing is important to verify compost quality and to gain a positive reputation in the marketplace. In order for a user to effectively determine if the compost product will meet their needs and intended use, consumers need information on compost quality and other characteristics including original feedstock inputs, nutrient content, percent organic matter, and particle size. Typical quality tests for compost include: pH, soluble salts, nutrient content, moisture content, organic matter content, trace metals, pathogens, particle size, stability, and germination (bioassay). Testing frequency is typically based on the amount of compost produced. There are a number of labs that offer analysis of compost. [Florida Organics](#) has a searchable database of compost testing labs. Universities typically offer low cost soil testing. While this is not as comprehensive as compost testing, it is adequate for smaller generators and has the advantage of being low cost.

The US Composting Council has developed the [Seal of Testing Approval](#) (STA) program to address the need for standard testing and reporting procedures to promote high quality and consistent products. The US Composting Council has also developed minimum guidelines for compost use that are helpful in educating compost product users. The use guidelines incorporate environmental criteria (metals standards) and product quality standards for most current uses of compost. These are available for free download from the Council's Website.

Determining what target customers value

To be an effective sales person you must be able to tell potential customers the specific applications your compost product can be used for, whether it's to grow and maintain turf, organic farming, gardens, trees, plants, etc. You must be familiar with the requirements of particular crops and markets in order to target them successfully. You must know all the characteristics of your compost in order to show that it can meet the needs of a particular target market or consumer need. Know its use and potential limitations. Customers typically choose a business based on product quality, customer service, availability, consistency, convenience, and/or price.

Customer research

- Who are the customers? Who buys compost?
- What customer groups can you better serve than your competitors?
- Survey current or prospective customers – How much would they be willing to pay?
- What target consumer will your product appeal too?
 - How will your compost meet the demands of these consumers?
 - What are the benefits that the customers perceive to be important?
 - How can you best communicate the benefits to potential customers?

Assessing the Compost Market

Conduct market research by collecting timely and relevant information on compost products.

- Determine that there is a market for compost in your area.
 - Can a demand (or more demand) for compost be created?
- How many other companies in the area sell compost?
- Scope out the competition— who are your competitors? What do they offer? At what price? How do they promote their product? What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- Where do garden centers get their compost?
- What are your competitors' market strategies?
- What is your competitive advantage over other companies selling compost?
- Can your compost compete in established markets with defined performance standards?
- Can the business compete in price, quality and services?
- Can the compost product(s) be priced to generate the projected profit?
- What are the seasonal demands of compost products in your area?
- What quantity of compost are consumers likely to purchase?
- What volume are you likely to sell in the target market?
- Is there a need for more compost suppliers in your area? For all compost products? For niche products? Which ones?
- What is the current size of the market?
- What is the growth potential of the market? Can it be expanded? How?
- What are the future trends for this product or service?
- Analyze alternative market outlets and niche potentials
 - Are there other product forms that you might be able to develop in order to compete more effectively?
 - Are customers different for each product? How? What do they expect?
- Niche markets: Is there a void in the compost market in your area or a customer based underserved? Are there new applications for compost in your local area that can meet the needs of a potential client?
- Uniqueness—Successful businesses and their product need to be unique. What is unusual, different, better about your product? Another common term found in market plans is your company's "Unique Selling Proposition (USP)."

Target marketing

Dividing customers into "market segments" is called target marketing. Each segment is distinct in its need for product, price, place (distribution), and promotion. With limited resources to spend on marketing, concentrate on one or a few key market segments to get the most return from small investments. Your target market includes the people you are trying to attract to purchase your product. Identifying and understanding your target market will help you avoid potentially costly mistakes as you develop and promote your product. Understanding the target market requires research into demographics, lifestyle patterns and expectations of potential buyers. A demographic search provides information such as typical age of buyers, their income levels, where they live and work, whether they have children, are they home owners, and their level of education. Lifestyle patterns would include knowing customer values and beliefs. For example, buying local and farm-produced appeals to many targeted customers.

- Geographical segmentation
 - What are the needs of customers in your geographical area?
 - What geographic area will the business serve?
 - How far will customers drive to purchase compost?
- Customer segmentation
 - Who is most likely to buy your compost product?
 - What expectations does the target group have regarding quality, service, product mix, convenience and price?

Market trends

Identifying trends that may affect sales and profitability (by identifying problems and opportunities).

- Changing customer demographics.
- Regulatory and legal developments in compost feedstocks, market sales, and facility siting.
- Current and future economic situation.

PRICE

“Price” is the amount you charge for your compost product. There are many formulas and strategies for setting prices. These should be addressed in your business plan. Conducting market research will tell you the prices competitors are setting, how prices fluctuate over the seasons and from year-to-year, and how prices are affected by supply and demand, product quality, different compost products, sales quality, and service. Research what you can about price ranges, variation, and trends in prices of compost products in your region. Be conservative about projecting operation revenues. Pricing strategy will reflect the competition, costs of production, the quality of the product you are offering, service and convenience provided with your sales, the types of buyers targeted, and a level at which a product will sell, is comparable to other competing brands, and is higher than the average cost of production.

Your approach to setting the price for your compost should be appropriate for the position of the product in the market, allowing for production costs to be covered and a profit be made. The price should be competitive with other compost and compost alternatives. Some customers may interpret lower pricing to mean poorer quality, so be careful to price the product according to quality and competition. Effective pricing is important for the success of the compost operation. Ultimately, it must not only cover the cost of production, but also enhance your product image by portraying the perceived value of your compost, its quality, and superiority over competing products. Pricing will also be affected by the type of distribution, whether the compost product is sold directly from the operation or sold through a retailer or wholesaler. The term “break even analysis” describes the amount of profit necessary to keep the business running effectively and the sales required to reach that point.

Pricing products to compete in the marketplace

- How will the compost product be priced to make a fair profit and be competitive?
 - High quality, higher price
 - Larger volume, lower quality, lower price

- Provide quality product for lower price or perceived better value.

Some pricing strategies¹:

- Cost-plus: Affix a percentage product above the determined cost of compost production.
- Value-based: Determined by the purchaser's perception of the value of the product.
- Competitive: Pricing is determined by the price of competing products.
- Skimming: Pricing the product at a higher price to appeal to a more specialized market.
- Discount: Offering coupons or other discount incentives below the advertised price.

Other factors affecting price include long-term contracts or bid awards. If compost is purchased by landscapers or through a government contract, payment periods will need to be established and considered in business planning. Reasonable discount pricing on large quantity orders can be offered as a purchasing incentive. Composting sales are seasonal. To be successful, compost operators need to consider this in their operational planning. Services could be bundled to include collection of feedstock or delivery of end product.

Expected sales volume

Estimate how much of your product you will be able to sell in an average future year. The average future year is the one where you expect your business to be well established and stabilized. Research target markets, marketing options, market demands, competition, trends and prices. Compare and analyze the results, project the volume of sales you expect to generate when you enter the market. Estimate the minimum and maximum volume you believe you could sell. Set a realistic goal for sales in an average future year. Conservative estimates on early sales revenues is also important.

PLACE

The market for the compost is typically local, within 25 to 50 miles of the compost operation, due to the relatively high cost of transportation compared to other production costs. While this presents a market barrier, it can also present an opportunity as it limits competition to the immediate area.

Distribution

- How are customers going to get your product? How will the compost product be sold?
 - Make your product easy to get.
- How will you handle delivery, processing, packaging, instructions or other services that accompany the product?
- What is the marketing season?
- Will the product be bagged for shipping? How will the product be labeled?
- Will the company offer delivery services? What will be the terms of delivery?
- What are the anticipated costs associated with distribution?
- What are minimum inventory levels to meet demand?
- Will you have salespeople? Is there a training program for sales representatives?
- Will it be sold to a retail center? Who will educate the retail center staff to sell the compost product?

¹ Derived from "Marketing's Four P's: First Steps for New Entrepreneurs," Cole Ehmke, Joan Fulton, and Jayson Lusk, Purdue University Department of Agricultural Economics, 2005. (EC-730)

- What are other distribution options? Large, chain retail outlets, local retail outlets, government contracts.
- Will you use distributors or manufacturers' agents?

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing from the compost operation site allows for you to have control over the product range, how it will be sold (whether by bulk or bagged), and at what price. Direct sales of compost works well, especially for new operations and to meet the seasonal production and demand for compost. To conduct direct sales, however, requires a high level of expertise of the compost product. Determine the most effective and efficient means to get your products to those markets. To gain ground in existing markets, learn who the buyers in the target market are, what they purchase, how often they purchase, and the price they pay. Sales skill development is a must in direct customer interaction.

Sales strategy:

- How does the compost benefit the customer?
 - Sell the benefits...not just the features of the product
- Are potential customers aware of your product?
- Are customers motivated to purchase your product?
- What's your positioning message—what are you saying to your targeted customers?
- How are you letting them know the benefits of your product and what makes it unique?
- Sales people need to provide tips on uses of compost

A simple way to project direct market sales is to use a local map and draw a 25-50 mile radius circle around your compost operation location.²

- Where is the highest concentration of people?
- How many estimated households are there? Homeowners?
- How many times a year will they buy the product?

Marketing through retailers

Retailers purchase compost directly from processors and/or wholesalers in order to provide a mix of compost products to attract consumers to their stores. Retailers depend on consistent quality and availability of products. They purchase products to benefit their own business.

Wholesalers and distributors

Wholesalers sell product to retailers, other wholesalers, and industrial users. Selling your product to a wholesaler or distributor allows you to focus on product production without having to deal with the marketing or sales end; however, it means that you will lose a percentage of your revenue.

PROMOTION

Promotion and advertising tell a consumer what a product can do for them as compared to other similar products. It helps consumers differentiate between similar products. Good advertising should reflect the character, beliefs, needs and wants of the targeted market segment. Your marketing plan should include a description of the advertising to be

² Derived from Building a Sustainable Business, Minnesota
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conducted, a timeline, as well as estimated costs for the advertising and promotions. A promotional method must be effective in reaching the targeted market or customer base. Advertising should be consistent over a period of time, and it should be what your business can afford.

Marketing budget

As a general rule, startup companies or ones venturing into new product areas will spend 20-30 percent of their budget in the first year or to on marketing activities. Once established, plan on spending 5-10 percent of your budget on marketing.

- Direct customer interaction.
 - Carry business cards wherever you go and pass them out.
 - Use your brand name, logo whenever you send out emails or direct mail to potential customers. Always make your outreach look professional.
 - Develop a database of potential customers, and send promotional material to them through via email, blogging, twitter, or direct mail.
- Website and utilizing social media (Twitter, Facebook).
 - Most companies will find having a Website is an effective promotional tool.
 - Social media, such a Twitter and Facebook can be used to drive customers to your Website and ultimately your product. Announcing new product offerings, specials, the start of the gardening season, etc. on Twitter and your Facebook page will draw customers and remind existing customers about your product.
 - Publicity can be gained through a number of avenues, such as testimonials, press releases, bartering, joining in blogs, and listing products and services on agricultural databases, such as local agricultural markets.
 - Utilize customer referrals; give rewards to customers who bring in other customers.
- Promotions: discounts, coupons, demonstrations, and samples.
- Create a company brochure.
- Advertise in local community newspapers in your target market areas, on the radio, or Internet.
- Join business networking groups in your local area.
- Join your local business Chamber of Commerce and trade association related to your industry for marketing leads.
- Consider a joint venture with other businesses in advertising your product/service, and in providing a seminar or workshop for potential customers.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Set performance standards and compare actual results for each strategy.

Audit performance on a quarterly basis.

- Is the company successfully meeting customer needs?
- Are customers satisfied? Are they coming back?
- A marketing plan should include a mechanism for seeking consumer feedback on the compost product. Ask consumers how they viewed the product and the company; did they like the product; did it meet their needs. Ask them if they would buy the product again.