

How to Create a Marketing Plan and Budget for Your Business



Why does marketing matter?

Marketing is a key player in gaining new customers, increasing revenue, engaging with members, and retaining existing clients. So how do you put your marketing ideas into motion in a way that also works with your budget? Simple: Start with a plan.

A marketing plan helps define your target audience, how to reach them, and how to measure the effectiveness of your strategies. While a business plan helps to outline your goals and objectives, a marketing plan serves as an actionable roadmap that grows alongside your business.

The best part? Creating a marketing plan and budget is simpler than you might think. Plus, Mindbody is here to help you every step of the way.

Ready to get started?

Download a copy of our free [marketing plan template](#) and fill it out as you go through this guide.

Define your goals

When drafting your marketing plan, you'll first want to consider what you're ultimately trying to accomplish. Do you want to attract new clients? Grow a specific service category? Improve retention? Your overarching goals are important—they'll guide how you shape your marketing plan.

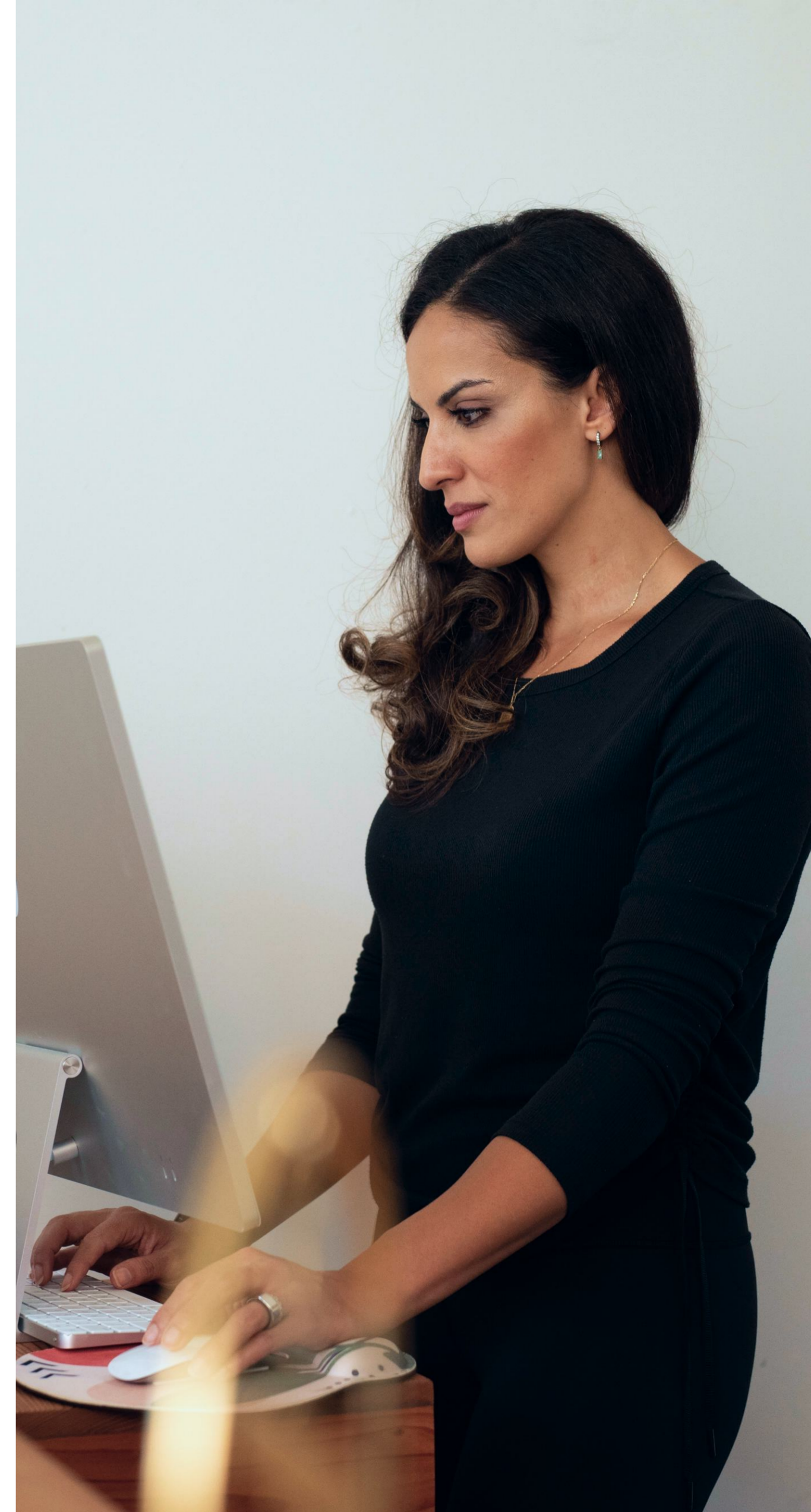
Start with three S.M.A.R.T. (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, timebound) goals. For example, your marketing goals could be to:

1. Grow new clients by 5% each month by the end of the first quarter.
2. Increase website traffic by 10% by the end of Q2.
3. Convert at least ten new customer referrals into members by the end of the year.

Identify the basics of your business

With these goals in mind, write a brief summary about your business to guide your marketing strategy. Consider the following questions:

- Where are you located?
- What services do you provide?
- What problems do you help solve?
- What sets you apart from the competition or other businesses in your area?
- What can your business do to improve?





Dig into your target market

Now that you have a good overview of your business, you'll want to focus on what matters most: your customers.

Start by defining them. Who are they? What motivates them? How can you best serve them? By knowing who you want to attract to your business, you'll be able to tailor your services and determine the most effective marketing efforts. Answer the following questions:

- How old are they?
- Where do they live?
- Where do they work?
- What do they value?
- What problems do they have?
- How can I help them fix their problems?

Find ways to connect with your target audience

Once you've defined your target audience, you're ready to outline how you plan to attract these clients. This includes four segments of marketing:

- Awareness
- Action
- Loyalty
- Advocacy

Awareness: Help new customers find your business

From your website to in-person events, there are a variety of ways to catch a potential client's attention. Depending on your target audience and budget, you'll want to use a combination of the following:

- **Traditional advertising:** Businesses often use flyers, billboards, radio, or print ads to drive awareness in their area. If you're thinking about placing a print ad, confirm the publication's demographic to ensure its readership aligns with your target customer. Consider offering a unique promotion in your ads to entice customers and help track your results.
- **Events:** Pop-up events and open houses are interactive ways to engage with prospective clients in person. Pop-up events hosted in booth spaces, kiosks, or vacant retail spaces help get more visibility. Open houses invite potential clients into your space with promoted services or classes, discounts, raffles, and the like.
- **Website:** As the online "home" of your business, building a modern and user-friendly website is essential. When building your site, make sure your business management software easily integrates so customers can seamlessly book your services online. Mindbody's branded web tools do just that.





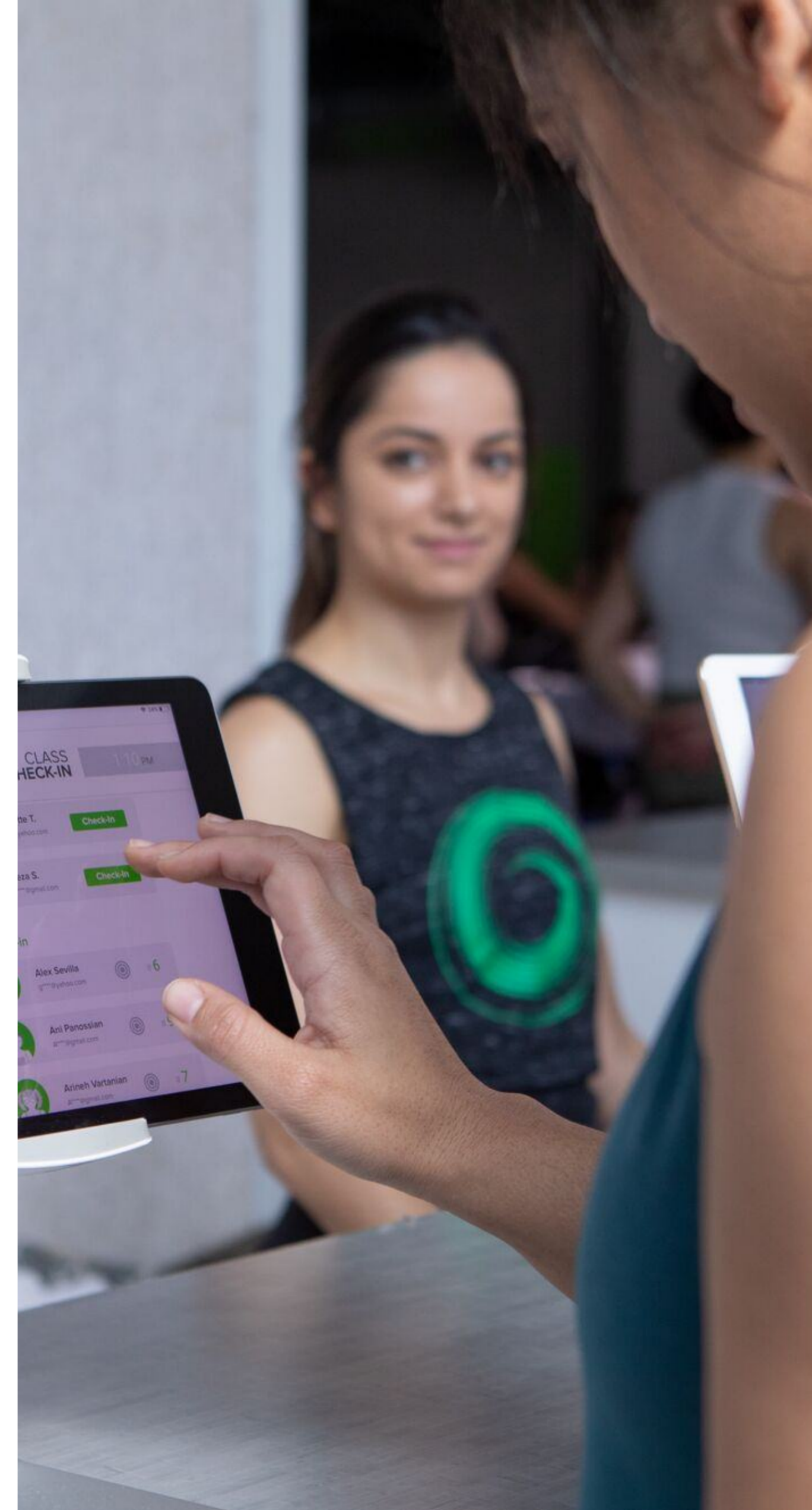
- **SEO:** Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is the process of optimizing your website and online profiles so it's easier to find your business. While there are a variety of ways to spruce up your SEO, you can start with optimized profiles on sites like Yelp and Google.
- **Pay-per-click:** Pay-per-click advertising, or PPC, is an effective way to drive traffic to your website. The most popular PPC ads are run on major search sites like Google. Google Ads, for example, prominently display ads in search results, depending on the quality and relevance of selected keywords.
- **Social media:** Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, Pinterest and YouTube are all important platforms to utilize when marketing to clients. This also includes targeted social ads, which can achieve significant reach with relatively inexpensive investment.
- **Social buying:** Local deals and sites like Groupon and LivingSocial are effective marketing strategies to get new clients through the door. That said, you'll want to consider if social buying is a good fit for your business and ensure you have a strong conversion process in place (we'll cover this in the upcoming sections). Another way to reach new audiences is through listing your business on the [Mindbody app](#) and [ClassPass app](#). The [Mindbody app](#) helps to promote special intro offers and [ClassPass](#) makes it easy to fill empty spots.

Action: Convert prospects into members

Once you've connected with a prospective client, their next step is to book a service or class. That's why you'll want to make it easy for them to take a chance on your business. Here's how:

Propose an intro offer: An effective introductory offer converts clients and increases the likelihood that they'll stick around. Because an intro offer is usually at a special price or discount, it encourages multiple visits and provides you with several touch points to develop a relationship with potential customers. Here's everything you need to know to create your intro offer.

- **Promote your offer:** Having an irresistible intro offer doesn't mean much if it's not seen by the right people. You'll want to promote it through as many marketing channels as possible. Consider listing your promo offers on a consumer booking service like the **Mindbody app**. By putting your business in front of the right type of audience, you'll be able to minimize costs and maximize your ROI. Easy to find and easy to book? Yes, please.
- **Use dynamic pricing:** For class-based services, dynamic pricing brings in new clients by automatically shifting prices on demand. Prices will fluctuate between the minimum and maximum prices you set. For example, on both the Mindbody and ClassPass apps, you can promote classes with open slots in the app's last minute offers section. Clients receive discounted prices, and you fill your classes—it's a win-win. Plus, once they're at your business, you'll have a better chance of upselling your intro offer.





Loyalty: Keep clients coming back

As soon as a client books a class or service (or your intro offer), you'll want to transition them into a loyal member. Client retention is directly related to the experience you provide. That's why you want to create touch points at every stage of the client lifecycle. Of course, you'll want to provide ample in-person attention during each visit to your business. However, the ways in which you interact with customers outside of your business are what really set you apart.

- **Stay in touch:** Keep clients in the know with emails and texts to win back lost members and promote upcoming events and specials. Mindbody's software allows you to both automate and customize your messages for a more personalized experience—without the extra work.
- **Provide personalized offers and promos:** Keep existing clients coming back with personalized promotions. For example, try sending risk clients or past members an email with an exclusive promo code for 25% off their next service. Mindbody automates the process by analyzing customer booking patterns and sending customizable emails at the right time to help with retention or re-engagement.

Advocacy: Encourage your best clients to share the love

Turning clients into advocates can be quite the challenge. How can you leverage existing customers to encourage new business and reward them for their continued loyalty?

Ask for reviews

Client opinions matter—85% of consumers trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations.* Encourage your clients to leave feedback (preferably sharing positive experiences) on review sites like Google, Facebook, and Yelp. Received a particularly heartfelt review? Highlight it on your website, in an email newsletter, or with a social post to reinforce your gratitude (and encourage others to share their experiences, too).

Reward referrals

Referral programs get the word out about your business, which helps you engage with existing clients while connecting with new ones. Plus, it's much more likely a new client will return if they have a friend or family member who's just as excited about your business.

Creating a referral program doesn't have to be time-consuming. Instead, you can use automated marketing software like Mindbody to promote your program and reward clients.

Keep 'em happy

Sometimes the best marketing is by word of mouth. Keep your loyal clients excited about your business with social media contests, workshops, and client appreciation events. Take a look at our [list of proven ideas to keep fitness business customers engaged](#) for some inspo.

*BrightLocal Local Consumer Review Survey 2024





Determine how much you will spend

Marketing is key to profitability and growth, which means it should also be a key component of your budget. Your marketing spend shouldn't be determined by what's left over after other expenses. Instead, you should allocate a percentage of your revenue each month towards marketing efforts that'll both attract and engage clients.

How much should you budget? It depends on a few factors, including your goals and the size and stage of your business. Small to medium-sized businesses should generally allocate 7-8% of revenue to marketing. However, businesses just getting started (within the first six months) will probably want to spend more, at least in the beginning, to drive awareness and jump-start sales.

Track your success with defined KPIs

Marketing without data is like driving with your eyes closed. The only way to see if your efforts are effective is to determine and consistently reference a set of key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs are the specific metrics that help you track the success of your efforts. Data helps you find what's working and what's not, and revisit as needed.

Setting your KPIs: When figuring out your KPIs, be sure they are quantifiable, measurable, and actionable. They should also directly tie to your S.M.A.R.T. business goals outlined above.

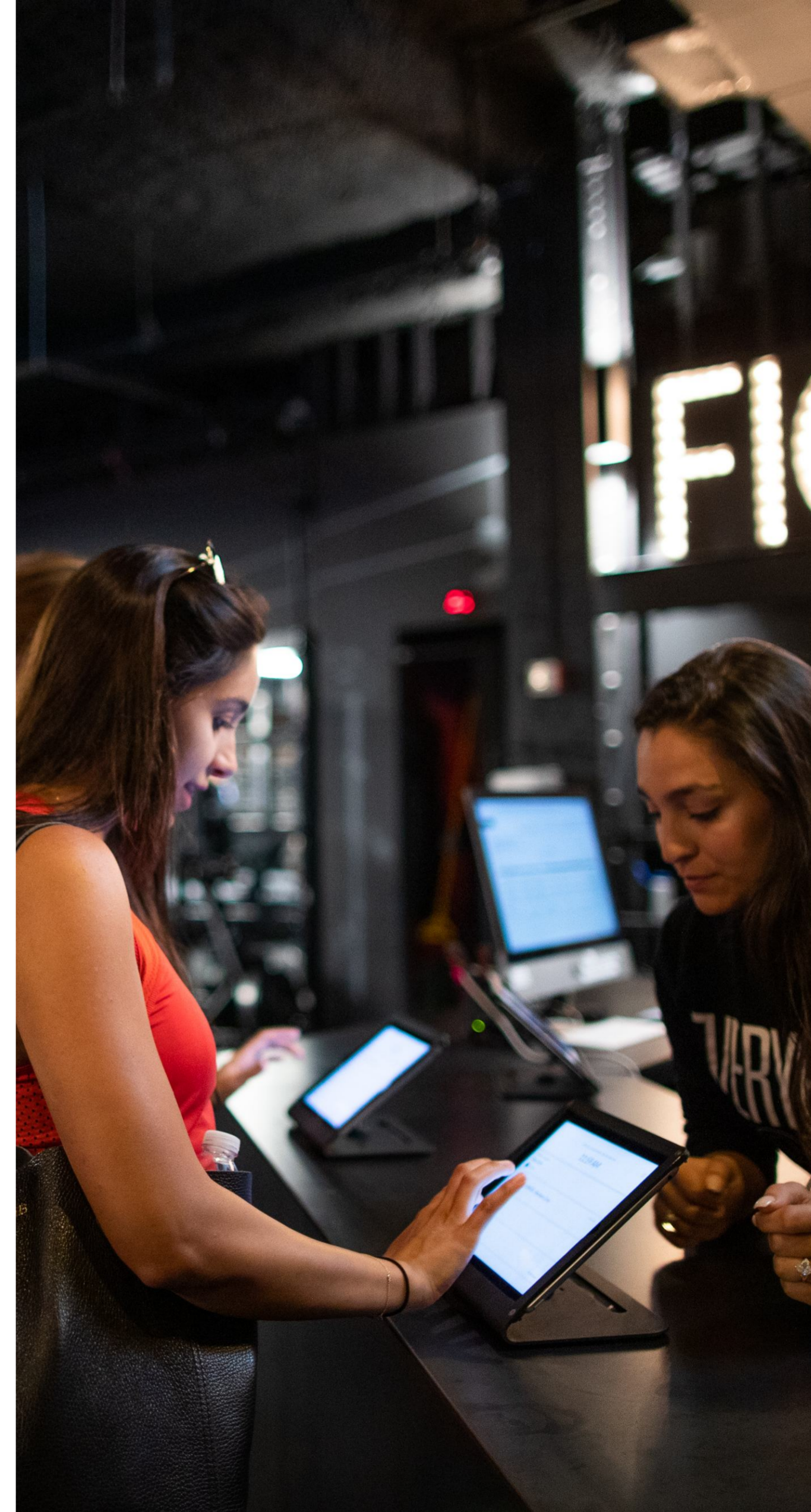
Measuring your results: In general, a marketing strategy is successful if revenue increases every year, intro offers are consistently sold, and new customers successfully convert into recurring customers. Start by tracking your total revenue, new clients, intro offers sold, and referral types. Mindbody software makes it easy to pull these reports on a monthly basis so you can **check on how your marketing strategy is performing**.

Keep in mind it takes six months to a year of consistent marketing to see results, so be patient—and don't stop when your efforts start to work.

Revisit your outlined plan using the 80/20 rule

Marketing is a constant work in progress, but with a plan in place, you can stay one step ahead. When updating your plan, invest 80% of your effort and budget in proven promotions (pay attention to your reports!) and 20% in testing new ideas. By following the 80/20 rule, you'll keep your marketing fresh and grow your business every year.

Learn more about **how Mindbody's marketing tools can help you attract new clients** and keep them coming back.



mindbody

If you're interested in hearing more about how Mindbody can help your business thrive, **reach out to our team to get connected.**