

How to Conduct a Comprehensive Marketing Audit

B BRAFTON
FUEL YOUR BRAND









Table of Contents

- 1.** Introduction
- 2.** What is a Marketing Audit?
- 3.** What to Include in a Marketing Audit (Hint: Everything)
- 4.** Goals, Goals, Goals
- 5.** Start With an Inventory
- 6.** From Inventory to Audit
- 7.** Crawl URLs and Record Web Metrics
- 8.** From Analysis to Insights
- 9.** A 360-Degree Competitive Advantage
- 10.** Building out Audit Matrices for Easy Competitor Analysis
- 11.** Implementing Top-to-Bottom Marketing Solutions
- 12.** Conclusion

What to Include in a Marketing Audit *(Hint: Everything)*

The true scope of your marketing audit is customizable to your business needs at that moment. It's not uncommon to perform a hyper-targeted audit that covers just one marketing tactic over the course of one month.

But for a full-scale audit that provides panoramic visibility into your brand marketing, **it's best to include all your activities that are measurable.** Consider this breakdown as a strong starting point:

 <p>Branding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand mentions. • Reviews. • Customer ratings. 	 <p>SEO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link profile/authority. • Organic rankings. • Click-through rates. • Conversions. 	 <p>Website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Page speed. • User Experience. • Indexability.
 <p>Social Media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement. • Social lift. • Industry influence. 	 <p>Offline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business referrals. • Press coverage. • Trade show connections. • Speaking engagements. 	 <p>Competitive Analysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market share. • Organic position. • Brand reach. • Customer perception.



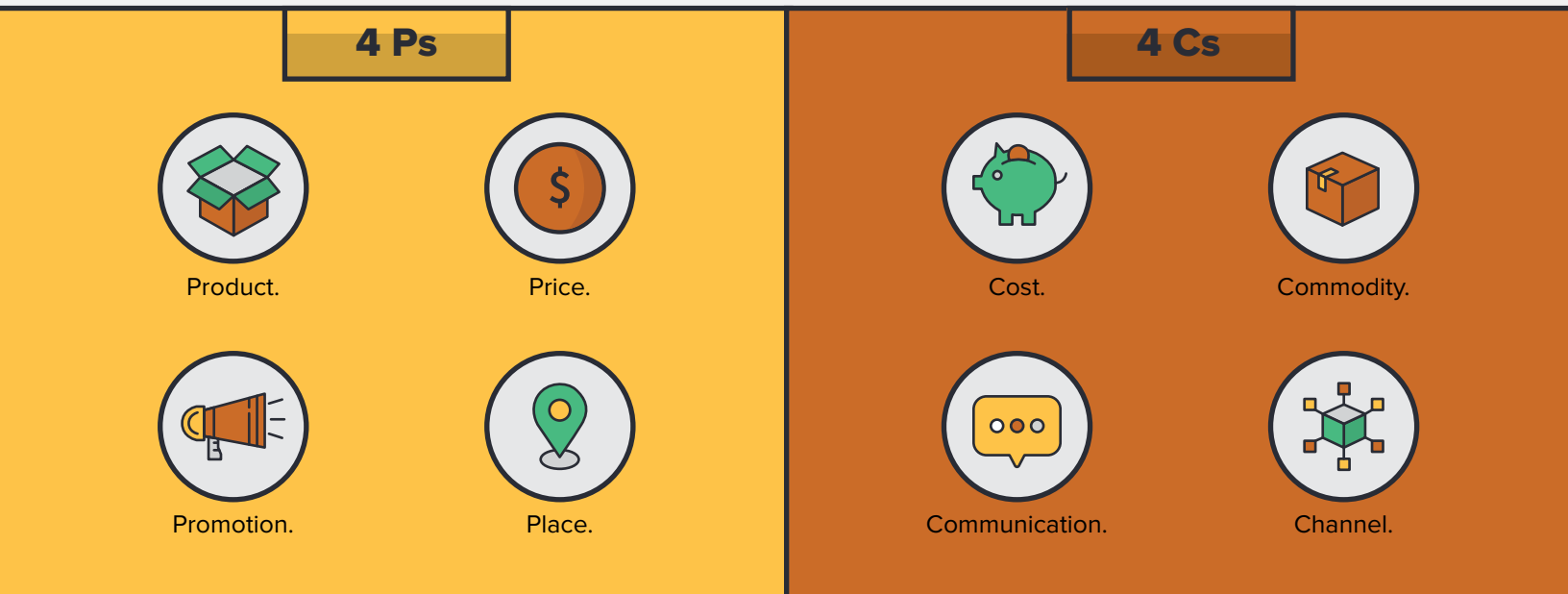
There are myriad metrics to dive into within each of these categories, and being as comprehensive as possible will provide additional opportunities for understanding your business and competitors.

Goals, Goals, Goals

Conduct your marketing audit in line with your core business goals. Pulling together your commercial objectives into a report or short list provides a common understanding between all stakeholders involved in the audit process. Also think of what you're auditing (content, site, product branding, etc.) through the prism of your marketing mix.



We can define marketing mix in two related ways:

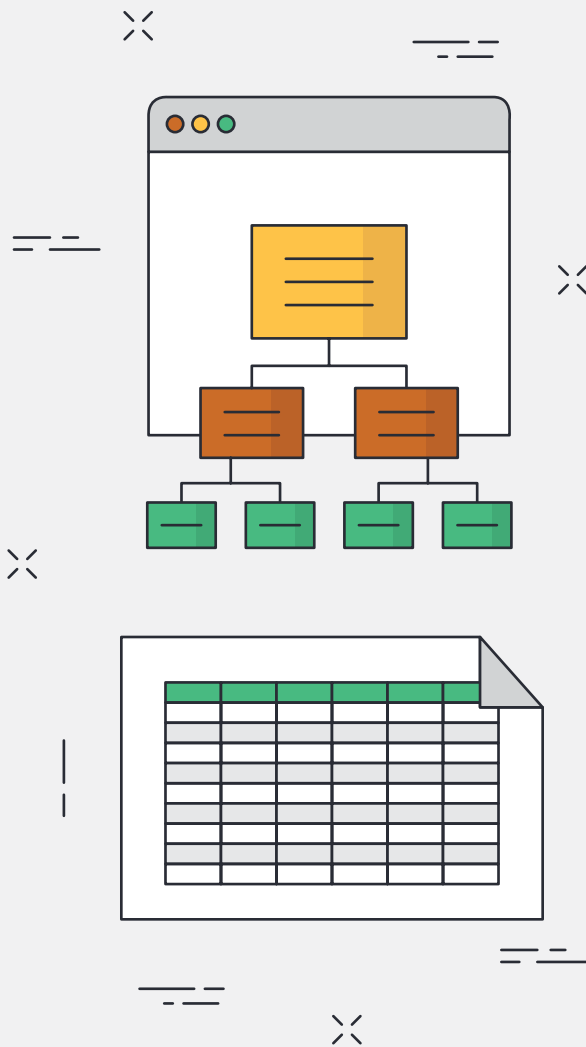
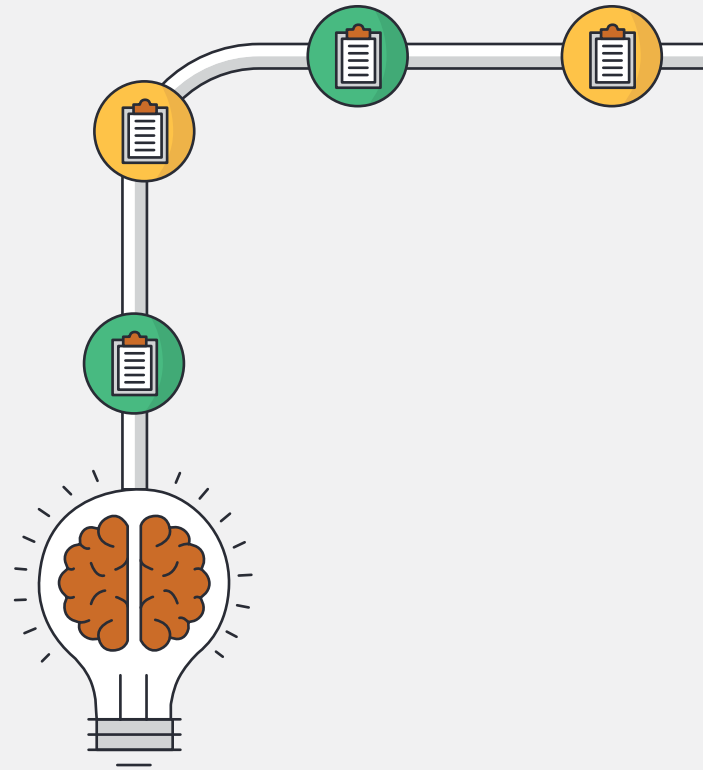


Your marketing mix is a model for understanding how your marketing objectives should be achieved and the types of questions you should ask through your audit, such as:

- *How does channel X drive positive product reviews?*
- *How does the current marketing environment impact our costs and communication vehicles?*
- *Are there competitive offerings that can be commodified?*
- *How can promotions on social feeds improve customer satisfaction and market perception?*

Start With an Inventory

As a general practice, an annual marketing audit should be integrated into your standard operating procedure. Before embarking on new marketing campaigns, cycle previous audit findings into your brainstorming sessions so that all of your content remains on brand and data-driven.



Compiling and cataloging all of your brand materials and marketing collateral is no easy feat. But starting with your sitemap and a spreadsheet is as good a place to begin as any.

Mapping URLs to product hierarchies, search terms and other categorizations keeps your marketing inventory **clean and interactive**.

Once you have a singular database that houses all of your inventory, you can use filtering and segmentation features to repurpose information for multiple uses. For instance, this database can be used for a targeted content audit, to identify competitive keyword opportunities or to uncover site performance issues.

From Inventory to Audit

Your marketing plan can be dissected a number of ways. Regardless of such, you'll need various digital marketing tools to do so. Here's a quick list to get you started:



Branding:

- Mention.
- Google Alerts.



SEO:

- SEMrush.
- Searchmetrics.
- Google Analytics.
- Google Search Console.



Website:

- Screaming Frog.
- Raven Tools.
- PageSpeed Insights.
- Lighthouse.



Social Media:

- BuzzSumo.
- Rival IQ.
- Twitter/LinkedIn Analytics.
- Facebook Insights.



Competitive Analysis:

- SEMrush.
- Ahrefs.
- MarketMuse.
- SpyFu.

Armed with these tools (most of the above accomplish a wide spectrum of marketing activities, so there's no need to purchase more subscriptions than you need), it's now a matter of putting them to good use, following the audit prompts to generate metrics and reports.



Crawl URLs and Record Web Metrics

Many tools offer API integration with Google Analytics, which can speed up the audit process. However, these auto-generated figures can often contain data that are irrelevant to your goals or columns of information that are not entirely helpful. Hence, some marketers use **a combination of automation and manual data entry to segment information as cleanly as possible.**

Enter page URLs through your tool of choice and record a number of key indicators:



Broken links.



404 errors.



Duplicate content.



Spammy links.



Traffic by channel.



Time of publication.



Click-through rate.



Engagement.



Sessions.



Pageviews.



Dwell time.



Shares by network.



Content length.



Metadata.



Content type.



Organic position by keyword.



Page speed.



Bounce rate.

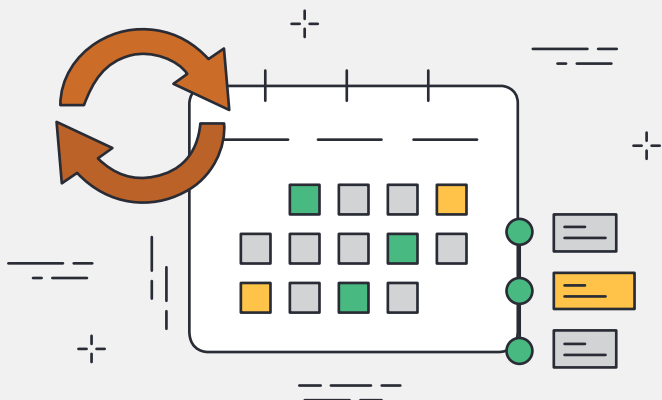
Under a separate tab in your database, you can log offline metrics, such as number of industry events on your calendar, number of business cards passed out, cold call close rates, number of in-person prospect meetings, etc.

From Analysis to Insights

After running an audit, what did you find? What jumps out?

The key to getting the most out of your marketing audit is to ensure you have **actionable next steps to take**. Oftentimes, this means organizing your action items into a priority list. For example:

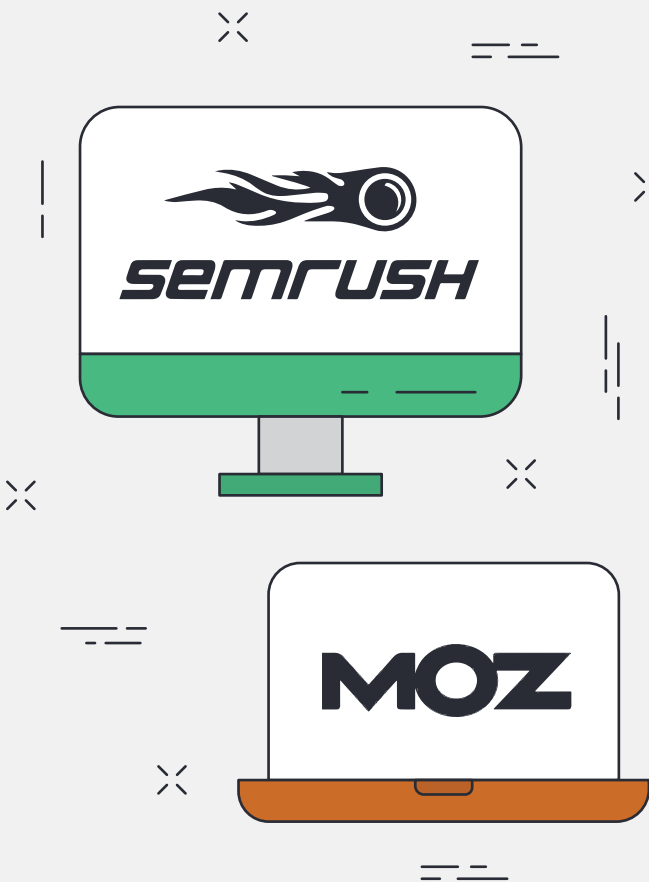
<div data-bbox="332 682 500 751" data-label="Section-Header"><p>#1.</p></div> <div data-bbox="94 751 305 961" data-label="Image"></div> <ul data-bbox="332 787 771 961" style="list-style-type: none">• Address all site penalties.• Clean up any analytics-tracking errors.• Pinpoint gaps in existing content.	<div data-bbox="1096 682 1263 751" data-label="Section-Header"><p>#2.</p></div> <div data-bbox="857 751 1068 961" data-label="Image"></div> <ul data-bbox="1096 787 1534 940" style="list-style-type: none">• Identify organic ranking opportunities easily within grasp.• Optimize high-conversion pages and metadata.
<div data-bbox="332 1024 500 1094" data-label="Section-Header"><p>#3.</p></div> <div data-bbox="94 1129 305 1339" data-label="Image"></div> <ul data-bbox="332 1134 779 1371" style="list-style-type: none">• Expand, consolidate or refine social media channels.• Reclaim unlinked brand mentions.• Respond to user reviews on Google My Business and other online directories.	<div data-bbox="1096 1024 1263 1094" data-label="Section-Header"><p>#4.</p></div> <div data-bbox="857 1129 1068 1339" data-label="Image"></div> <ul data-bbox="1096 1134 1469 1402" style="list-style-type: none">• Formally update brand guidelines/messaging.• Test for additional CRO and UX opportunities.• Identify future networking, publication and industry-specific possibilities.



Your company's priorities may diverge from the above application, but the broader direction remains the same: Chart your course of immediate, near-term and long-term changes to your marketing strategy, and inform all stakeholders of updates and timelines.

A 360-Degree Competitive Advantage

With a stronger understanding of the competitive landscape you face, you can now go to market with more confidence. Plus you have much more data to inform your decision-making.



Tools like SEMrush and Moz can spotlight how you stack up against your primary, secondary and tertiary competitors by comparing link profiles, Domain and Page Authority scores, keyword positioning, top-performing content, social engagement and similar indicators.

Your competitors may or may not have this information on you, but you can rest assured that your marketing team has done its due diligence in exposing all the places your competitors are faltering and how you can outperform them.

Building out Audit Matrices for Easy Competitor Analysis

One of the best ways to visualize your audit findings is to **format your and your competitors' marketing proficiencies in a matrix or table.**

Use columns to distinguish between each of your core audit categories and graphically annotate how you stack up against competitors.

Competitor Content Audit

	Core Landing Pages	Blog and Resources	Video Presence	UX/Lead Gen	Social Media
My Brand	✓ — ✗				
Competitor 1					
Competitor 2					
Competitor 3					

Key: ✓ Brand does a sufficient job of satisfying most criteria.
 — Brand does a sufficient job of satisfying some criteria, but leaves room for growth.
 ✗ Brand does not satisfy most criteria and leaves a lot of room for growth.



A formatted, handy guide serves as a go-to resource for all of your stakeholders across marketing, sales and the C-suite, and you can continuously update a cloud-based version so that you don't have to re-audit and reformat in the future.

This approach turns your audit into a genuine business asset, and there's nothing your boss likes more than having a SWOT analysis represented on a single sheet of paper.

Implementing Top-to-Bottom Marketing Solutions

Your marketing audit is meant to generate revelations about your brand. But it also needs to produce results.

Map your priority list to actual business investments and estimate the potential impact of your new actions, such as:



Increase trade show attendance from two to eight this year for stronger networking and physical marketing presence.



Improve Domain Authority five points by guest-posting on high-value industry sites and promoting external links to proprietary research.



Drive two new sales-ready local leads monthly through Local SEO and word of mouth.



Update all email CTAs for 25 percent increase in click-through rate.

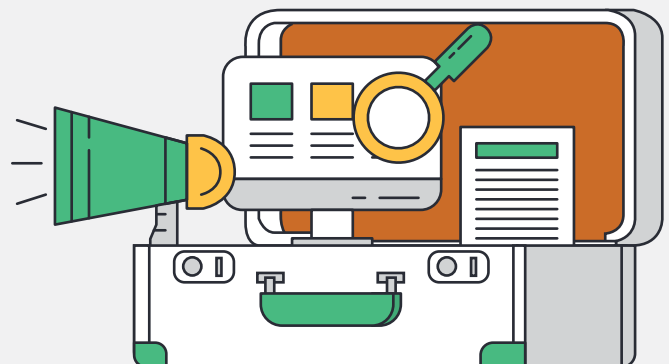


Produce 10-15 new conversion landing pages based on high-value keyword targets.



Include one video or animation in social posts per week, varied across channels.

With clear commercial goals on hand, it's up to you and your team to integrate marketing solutions into your business model, leaving no stone unturned.



Conclusion

Nearly half of U.S. B2B companies have formal marketing plans, which may feel low. Historically speaking, that number is on the rise, though.

Marketers are becoming more sophisticated in their strategies thanks to the adoption of marketing automation software, the backing of analytics-driven investments and hands-on experience with newer tactics like content marketing.

Companies are also more self-aware in terms of their market shares and segmentation relative to other organizations with whom they compete. Whether it's social reach, organic presence or site UX, there are documented ways to compare and contrast one company's marketing strategies to another, something that would not have been possible a decade ago before the proliferation of enterprise tools.

An audit provides a leg up in the marketplace. What's better than that?



B BRAFTON

FUEL YOUR BRAND



WWW.BRAFTON.COM

