

Barnsley Manor - the marketing plan

The following marketing plan is written by the owners of a small luxury bed and breakfast in The Cotswolds

Executive summary

Richard and Anne Taylor have made the move from London to The Cotswolds and at age 40 have purchased Barnsley Manor in The Cotswolds. The property is a beautiful 16th century manor house which has been run as a B&B and is in good condition. Although neither of them have run a B&B before they are outgoing types and prepared to learn.

The marketing plan has been designed to provide a business which produces a substantial income as well as to allow them a satisfying lifestyle.

This business objectives

- To gain an occupancy rate of 70% for weekend traffic and 50% for weekday traffic within the next six months by marketing the quality of the accommodation in a location that has high appeal
- To be considered within two years by the local community as a significant part of the tourist industry and a supporter of the community by being nominated in the UK tourism's awards.
- To build strong relationships with other local service providers: restaurants, bars, shops, galleries etc
- To provide the owners with an opportunity to enjoy their hobbies and activities in their new setting while delivering an income of £60,000 per year after two years of operation

Macro and micro analysis

- Who are the clients we want to target?

Couples and singles in the 30 to 60 age group who have an interest in outdoor life and are looking for the twin comforts of excellent accommodation and fine dining; and also couples in the 45 to 70 age group who are travelling in The Cotswolds who are looking for a convenient stopping place.

- Who are our competitors?

Competition in the area is high with three large caravan parks with cabin style accommodation and six hotels. There are also eight other B&Bs within a 20 mile radius.

- What PEST factors do we need to consider to identify the main opportunities and threats in your market?

Political – Tighter rules/regulations re food preparation/serving

Economic – Increasing cost of petrol and lower discretionary income available for leisure travel

Social – Pressure of inner city living creates a need for convenient, short-term breaks

Technological – Increasing use of the Internet to book accommodation when B&B bookings can not usually be made directly online

Marketing objectives

- Launch B&B and raise profile through appropriate channels: media and other local businesses
- Target new business through appropriate channels
- Look for strategic local partners to promote the B&B

Marketing strategy

- **Product** - to provide 4-star guest accommodation with deluxe rooms and luxury en-suite facilities. In addition guests have access to a large well-appointed lounge with open fire along with an extensive selection of books, DVDs, games etc. Breakfast is locally sourced and varies depending on seasons but would usually include eggs, sausages, bacon, cereals, fruits etc. Friday and Saturday evenings – dinner will be provided with canapés and champagne along with a three course locally-sourced and seasonable dinner. Wi-Fi is available in all rooms and the local tourist centre is available to help people make forward plans. There is also an outside pool, hot tub and sauna – there are plans to develop this in the future into a mini luxury spa with massages and exclusive products.
- **Pricing** – prices for accommodation have been set at the higher end of the market as the client base is seen as mid to higher socioeconomic sector. The pricing scheme is based on a room rate per night and includes breakfast. When the guest is single a discount of 7% is offered, prices for the weekend are 10% higher and when a guest stays for more than 3 nights a discount of 15% will be applied
- **Place** – all services will be provided at the B&B
- **Promotion**

Website

The use of the Internet will be essential in providing information and access to Barnsley Manor. A fully functioning site will be developed to enable prospective clients to see what accommodation is available as well as allow them to book online. The site will also have a virtual tour facility and links to other attractions in The Cotswolds.

Search engine optimisation (SEO)

To maximise traffic to the website, Barnsley Manors will arrange for links with the key Internet search engines and relevant travel and leisure, tourist and other appropriate websites

Advertisements

Adverts will be placed in the local press and other appropriate high-end magazines – Oxfordshire Preview, Wiltshire Preview, Gloucester Preview, Gloucestershire Life etc highlighting the new ownership and offering special deals for customers wishing to visit

Public relations

The week prior to opening, the travel editors of the above magazines as well as the Sunday supplements will be invited for a overnight stay and a chance to see and assess the new facilities. This will be done free of charge.

A grand opening of the B&B to introduce the owners to all local residents and businesses (with particular reference to high-end shops and restaurants) is to be organised with a champagne afternoon tea.

Promotions

A high-quality multi-folded brochure is to be produced and distributed to relevant tourist information, galleries, museums, restaurants, shops, bars and cafes in The Cotswolds. In return the B&B will carry brochures of these facilities and direct residents there for a visit.

Ten free nights accommodation will be made available for local charities to use in raffles and fund-raising.

In conjunction with the above 50 packages of “two nights for the cost of one” weekday deals will be offered in the first three months as well as 10 “three nights for two” weekend packages.

Branding

All publicity will have a consistent look and feel that highlights the superior accommodation and beautiful setting of the B&B. The branding should leave the impression of indulgence and pampering.

The branding is to carry over to the provision of monogrammed uniforms for staff, linen ware on tables, glasses, dressing gown and bedding. These items will be available for sale at the B&B.

Control

The success of the B&B depends not only on the location and quality of service, but how it is delivered. This requires a very attentive and direct approach to the client base. Repeat business will come from personal referral. Electronic answering machines is to be kept to a minimum and all messages (email and telephone) are to be responded to within 12 hours.

Sales promotion – the pricing schedule has been developed to encourage weekday use as well as maximise income for what is expected to be popular weekend deals. The offer of discounts to should drive the business.

Advertising – specific target market approach and the emphasis is on having a break in a relaxing but beautiful location so we won't be using intense mass media.

PR – Barnsley Manor is to be seen as being a positive contributor to the local community and aims to actively participate/support promotion of tourism in the area as well as support local charities.

Direct marketing – the use of a high quality brochure is essential to provide potential client information about the B&B and the area. This is to be available at all tourist destinations in the area and Richard and Anne will deliver these by hand to discuss the offering.

Bulk direct mail is not seen as productive as it does not provide the personal touch.

All guests to the B&B will be entered onto a direct email database (if permission given) and promotions offering discounts to previous users.

Online marketing – the Internet is seen as a critical tool to reach customers. During the opening phase of the programme special deals will be on offer and will be repeated if successful.

The website is to be fully functional to enable clients to request bookings in real time.

Budget

Item	When	Cost	Measure of success
Website construction		£4,000	Number of hits at 2,000 per month
Paid SEO advertisement to increase exposure		£2,000	Additional 1,000 hits per month
Colour brochure and distribution		£2,000	All sites listed carrying information in a prominent place
Advertisements in appropriate media		£2,000	Monthly slot secured for 12 months
Newspaper advertisement for local paper		£1,000	Featured on page 3
Site hosting costs		£1,000	Secured and feature on first page of Google search
Cost of publishers evening		£2,000	Three articles written and published over the next month in magazine and paper supplements
Grand opening		£2,000	200 people in attendance
		£16,000	

Action plan

This has been planned with a view to an early-May opening

Action	March	April	May	June	July	Who
Development of website	21 st					Richard
Prepare logo and brand – order stationary		1 st				Anne
Link website to key tourism site		15 th				IT-development
Open website to public		15 th				IT-development
Test services with family and friends		16 th				Anne
Visit all local tourist offices		15 th – 21 st				Richard & Anne
Place adverts in key magazines		21 st	21 st	21 st	21 st	Anne

Introduce business to local groups and other businesses Distribute brochure and special offers		21 st – 30 th				Richard and Anne
Prepare newspaper advert and place in local paper		23 rd				Anne
Web specials to be released on sites		25 th				IT
Invited writers and publishers week		25 th – 30 th				Richard
Grand opening for local groups			1 st			Richard and Anne
Submit advertorial to appropriate media			15 th			Anne
Repeat web specials				25 th		Richard