

marketshare [mahr-kit shair] -noun

1. Is a program of marketumbrella.org, which works to cultivate the field of public markets for public good.
2. These free documents (called "shares") are the best of "lessons learned" from public markets everywhere.
3. Employ as needed, & please feel free to tell us about your results, so that we can share those with other markets.



Organizational Details: The Strategy of 4M's

Mission, management, marketing, measurement tools keep us on track

At marketumbrella.org we've developed "Four Ms" that help us structure our work, organize our resources, focus on our mission, and measure our results. In the years since our founding in 1995, these Four Ms helped us develop and grow the Crescent City Farmers Market (CCFM) to four weekly markets plus an annual Fair Trade/ ecological market (Festivus) and start White Boot Brigades (wandering seafood markets), prior to Hurricane Katrina. Afterwards, the Four Ms helped us re-order our priorities to mobilize public markets as a means to help the New Orleans region get back on its feet. So, we think the Four Ms are useful. But, like everything else we offer at marketumbrella.org, the Four Ms are a strategy, not a formula. If used to help order each project or idea, they can keep your organization on the right track. Use them if they're helpful; modify them or toss them if they're not.

Mission

The first M stands for "mission." What is your reason for being? What goals are you trying to achieve? If you are deciding on a new market, or an added project, does your mission support that new work? Often many of us are asked to do much for the local economy or food system, and to do so, markets often stretch themselves past their written mission, finding themselves far off from their stated

purpose. If the new work is not reflected within your mission, then stop to decide with your advisors whether it's time to rework your larger mission (this does happen every few years for many NGOs), or put the project away. The level of management, marketing, and measurement you do of this project will all depend on how you have decided this project will help your mission.

Management

The second M is for "management." If your mission is to allow producers and shoppers to connect directly, and your new project is designed to add agri-tourism trips, then it can seem logical and efficient to use your staff time to do site visits while bringing visitors along. If you are thinking of adding a craft market, then you must revisit your mission to see if supporting non-food artisans is clear and then decide on the amount of management time that will be needed. Management time calculation should be the strictest test you apply to make sure you are using your time well on new, exciting plans and still handling that work you already are responsible for.

Marketing

When you decide on a new project (after checking that it is included in your mission and can be handled within your management time), then you must decide what and when to tell your community about it. This includes vendors, partners, market neighbors as well as shoppers; many times, a

market's projects are undone by their own long-time community's lack of support: they may not understand or even want to see this new project. If you can communicate how it fits in within your mission and how it will be handled correctly by the staff you have, then telling everyone is much more fun.

Measurement

How did the new project succeed? Did the market or community benefit directly or indirectly? Can you find the time to ask members of your community what they think of the project? Measuring each step is a good way to stay within your original idea, and keep you from saying yes to all ideas that are offered to you.

On many of our starter pages, we will have a space for you to work out a way for you to ask these questions for each new idea. We also use the 4Ms as an organizational strategy session method; each project must present their 4Ms on a regular basis to other staff, to advisors and to community members. This process helps us to stay on target and also make sure we have agreement (or at least understanding) among our supporters.

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mission | management | marketing | measurement

Thank you for using a share document. This 4M worksheet below is to help you think through what you just read and how to apply it to your situation. Read the share titled "The Strategy of the 4Ms" to learn more about this marketumbrella.org teaching tool.

Is this issue or strategy covered in your current mission (or values)? _____

Does your management structure allow you time to handle this, or is there another organizational partner to help?

How will you communicate to others about this issue or strategy (marketing)? _____

When and how will you measure the impact of this resolution of this issue or the completion of this strategy?

