

Have fun using The MAPP

By Amanda Bouch

I found using the MAPP planning system very easy and even enjoyable. The Plan-in-a-Box product is highly accessible and encourages discussion on key topics and the facilitator helps with the flow of debate and managing time and priorities. Once the high-level plan is done and uploaded, the online product was intuitive in use and allows detailed planning and easy follow-up. It was an experience I enjoyed so much, I felt all business owners and leadership teams should have access to it, so I took out a license and am now using the MAPP in working with businesses on their planning.

The facilitator started the planning session with the team by asking us to review where the business is now – how are we performing, what is happening in the markets we are in, what capability and resources do we have in the business? From this we generated a SWOT analysis (company Strengths & Weaknesses, market Opportunities & Threats). This gave us a robust, shared understanding of the current situation.

Then the facilitator helped us get into a creative state of mind and we spent some time Visioning and Goal-setting. It was fun to spark ideas off each other as we co-created our vision of the future. We drilled down from idealistic dreaming to a clear vision and goals we felt were challenging, but achievable.

Now the facilitator brought out the Plan-in-a-Box. We were working on a Business Growth plan, (introducing a new product to the portfolio) and the MAPP has a pack of cards representing typical issues that companies have to address in growing their business. These cards (hexagons) were dealt out randomly around the group, which was good because it meant everyone had to get involved and also that the focus of attention kept moving from one business area to another. This had the effect that we were more aware of the links across the business functions and that no one function dominated the discussion.

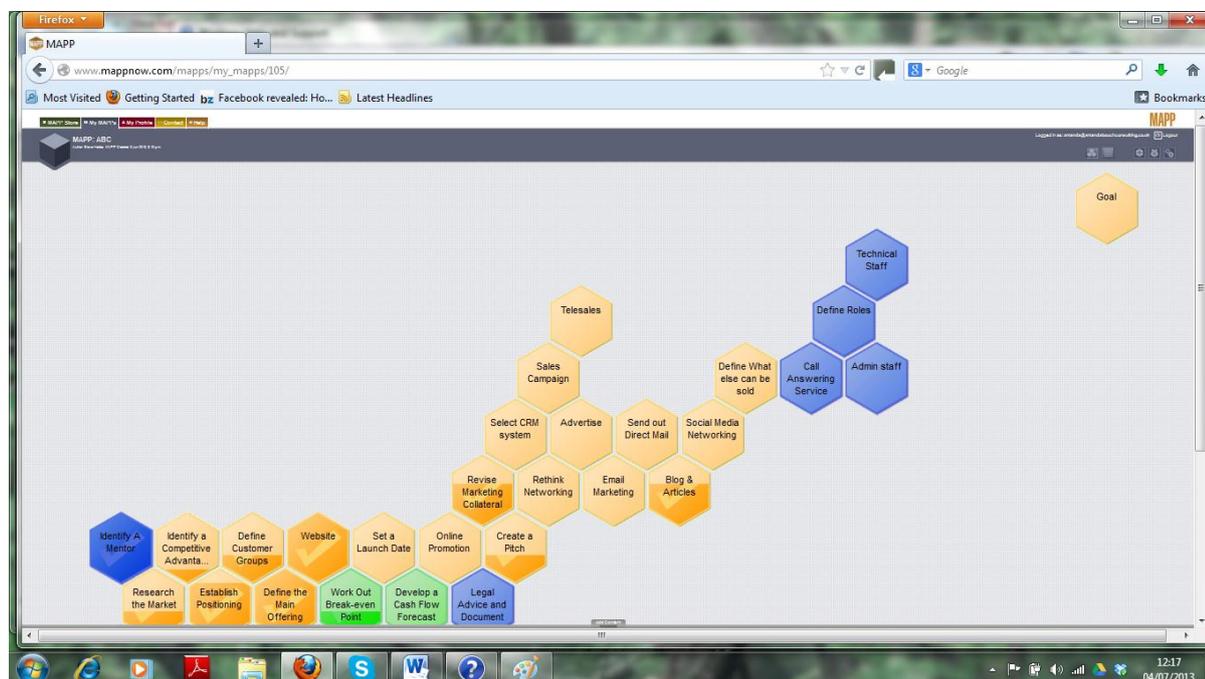


At first we found we were discussing the topic on each hexagon in too much depth, then we realised that the purpose of this part of the session was merely to agree at a high level, whether that particular action would be pursued or not and if so, when on the time line. Once we got into it we found we could move reasonably quickly through the hexagons and built up our MAPP.

The plan is very visual, with different colours for different functions, and this made it easy to see the links between actions and adjust the time-line accordingly.

When we had gone through all the hexagons and completed this stage, the facilitator photographed the MAPP and uploaded it to the online system, sending us access to our MAPP.

Now the task was to review the overall MAPP and drill down into each hexagon to identify the tasks that make up the action and who is responsible. Each team member developed this detail for their function individually and then we came together to review the plan, discuss inter-dependencies and confirm that we were happy to work to it.



The MAPP has a neat visual showing the hexagon filling up with colour as the tasks are completed, so everyone can see progress at a glance. This is so much easier than having to ask each function how they are doing.

Being able to see the whole plan in this way helps us all to think more strategically as we can see how we are inter-dependent and have to work together to achieve the plan. We have scheduled regular review meetings to discuss any changes or obstacles and having the plan up-to-date and online at all times makes preparation for those meetings easy, saving duplication of effort as we no longer have to submit reports.

Altogether the MAPP lives up to its messages of being fast, simple and effective and the fact that it's available anytime, anywhere is a great feature as we can share updates and demonstrate transparency. This has helped strengthen trust between us and we're enjoying using MAPP.

Amanda Bouch Consulting

Helping business owners and leaders to achieve higher performance

For more information on The MAPP and how ABC can help you with your strategic planning

contact Amanda@amandabouchconsulting.co.uk or see

www.amandabouchconsulting.co.uk/services/business-planning