

## Reviewing Your Market's Vision and Mission

This chapter will enable you to:

- ▶ Review, evaluate, and, if necessary, revise your market's vision and mission statements.
- ▶ Understand the role of the vision and mission in strategic marketing efforts.
- ▶ Use your market's vision and mission to evaluate your market's performance and craft a plan with a strong purpose and likelihood of success.

Your farmers market probably has vision and mission statements. They may be used to actively guide decision-making regarding the market's direction or they may be filed somewhere and practically forgotten. When undertaking a strategic marketing effort, it is a good idea to review and perhaps revise the vision and mission statements so that they can be used to guide your efforts. If you do not know why your market is in business, what niche it should fill, and whom it exists to serve, you run the risk of trying to be all things to all people and may be pulled in so many directions that you cannot be effective at anything in particular.

### The Vision Statement

The vision statement is a broad statement of the place of the market in the community. The founders of your market probably had a mental picture of the farmers market they wanted and the role it would play in the community or a clear idea of the problem to be solved with the addition of a farmers market. That vision may or may not be relevant today.

As manager, you probably have your own vision for the market. Some of the common elements of a farmers market that can reflect the vision of its founders and management are listed on the following page along with space to draft your own vision statement. You can use these elements to articulate your vision for the farmers market, draft your vision statement, and compare it with the existing one. Reviewing and revising the vision statement should entail dialogue among

#### A Sample Vision Statement

*The Park City Farmers Market will meet the community's need for healthy fresh food and provide an inviting educational venue through which urban residents develop a deeper understanding of farming and its*

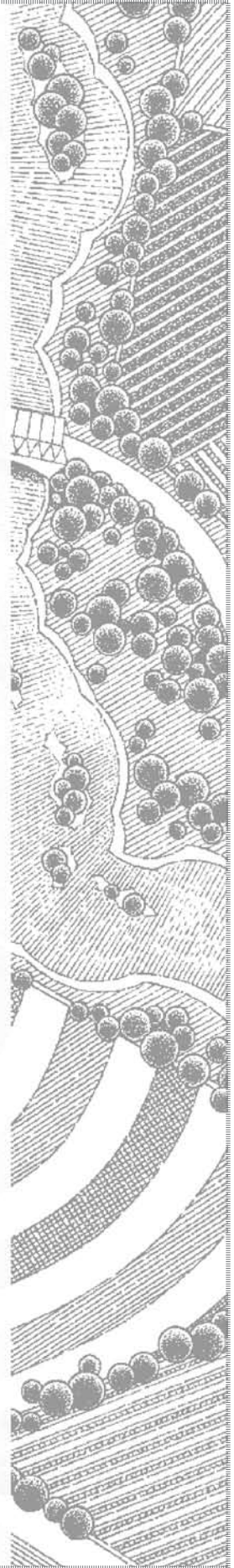
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the board of directors, the market manager, and stakeholders so that the vision defined by it has broad support.

### Our vision includes these attributes and goals:

- Affordable produce
- Lots of variety
- Neighborhood-based
- Convenient
- Cultural forum
- Free speech
- Individuals/families as customers
- Entertainment
- Arts and crafts products
- Education
- Fundraising
- Sustainable agriculture
- Accessible by public transportation
- Meats, fish, dairy, eggs, honey, etc.
- Downtown
- Community gathering place
- Information dissemination
- Gourmet products
- Restaurants as customers or vendors
- Family friendly
- Value-added products
- Product demonstrations
- Agricultural heritage

### Vision statement:



## The Mission Statement

The mission statement is a concise, fairly concrete, specific statement of the major goals of the market organization in seeking to realize the vision of its founders. Clarifying and synthesizing the group's purpose and beliefs in a written statement

makes it easier to present the concept to growers, the community, and others and to use it to guide decision-making.

Sample mission statement from the Pacific Coast Farmers Market Association:

*Our mission is to establish and operate community-supported certified farmers markets that provide: viable economic outlets for California farmers and food producers, local access to farm fresh products, support for local businesses, and education concerning food and sustainable agriculture.*

The answers to two questions—*What are the market's goals?* and *What are the market rules?*—are reflected in the market's mission statement as well as the market's bylaws. Even if the market does not incorporate or have nonprofit tax status, it is a good idea to put the market's goals in writing. The mission statement should:

- Identify the market's key goals; and
- Provide philosophical direction for developing the market's objectives.

A clearly defined mission statement will give the market a starting point for long-range planning and for major decision-making.

The organizational mission statement should be agreed upon and supported by everyone on the board. If there is no mission statement for your market, here is a process to create one:

**Step 1.** To define your market's mission and develop a mission statement, first look at the vision statement. The mission statement should grow from and be consistent with the vision statement. Write the vision statement on a large piece of paper or a whiteboard with plenty of room around it for ideas about the mission.



**Step 2.** With the vision statement on a large piece of paper or whiteboard, start brainstorming actions that would be most effective in achieving the vision. Brainstorming means simply getting ideas on paper without judgment, censorship, or evaluation yet.

**Step 3.** When the ideas are exhausted, it is time to start evaluating them. Which ideas are not actions or cannot be turned into actions? Set them aside (they may be great ideas, just not mission statement material). Which

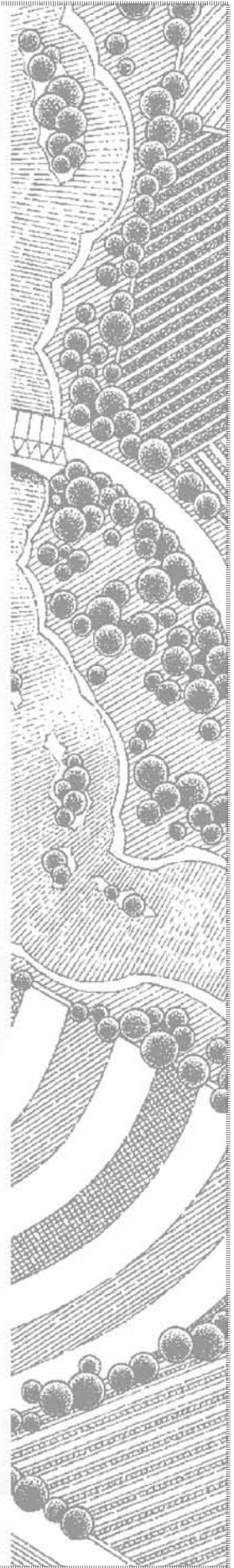
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would be the most effective action (big steps versus little steps—the mission involves giant steps)?

Step 4. Write the mission statement. Get feedback from all members of the board of directors and, if possible, from other stakeholders. Evaluate, revise, and get more feedback until members of the board are satisfied with the mission statement for the market.

### **Mission statement:**

If your market already has a mission statement, review it to be sure it is still relevant and does not need revision. If the mission statement needs revision, follow the same steps previously outlined for creating one.



## How Do the Vision and Mission Guide Strategic Marketing?

Strategic marketing involves increasing revenue consistent with the market's vision and mission. In some cases, it might be easy to increase revenue if the board of directors and manager ignore the market's vision and mission and much harder to accomplish while remaining true to those guiding statements. This is especially true if the vision and mission involve activities that generally are not highly profitable, such as providing access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables for a low-income neighborhood or population. So it may be tempting to either depart from the mission or expect low revenue. Once you have reviewed the vision and mission statements and are certain they still reflect the purpose, direction, and goals of the market, the next steps are to:

- List the ways the market can fulfill its mission and indicators by which to gauge whether and to what extent it is doing so.
- Gauge the extent to which the market is fulfilling its mission by collecting data from vendors, customers, and other stakeholders.
- Assess the competition by collecting and analyzing data from competitors.



### Listing Indicators of Success

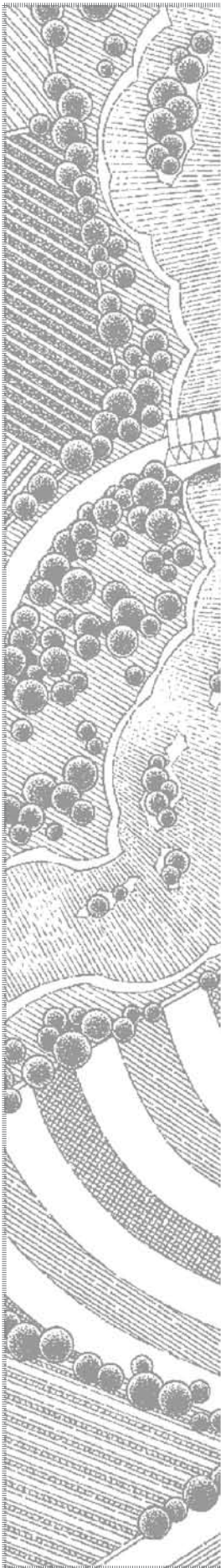
Depending on the market's mission, individual aspects of the market will vary in importance. For example, if the market's mission is to provide access to affordable fresh fruits and vegetables, then price is a primary consideration. If, however, the mission of the market is to promote organic farming by providing direct-marketing opportunities for organic farmers, price is a much less important consideration and access to the market by organic growers becomes more important.

Use your market's mission to generate a list of indicators that can be used to assess whether the market is fulfilling that mission. These are things you will look for and ask about as you gather information to assess your market's performance. Use the following example to create a table with your market's mission and indicators.

**Sample Mission Statement:** To provide high-quality, affordable produce to low- and middle-income residents of Small City.

Use parts of the mission statement to create indicators:

To provide **high-quality, affordable** produce to **low- and middle-income residents of Small City**.



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The highlighted parts of the mission statement can be used to develop indicators of how well the market is achieving its mission. If providing “high quality” produce is one part of the market’s mission, then you need to list factors that describe quality.

### Indicators

#### Part 1: High Quality (see Chapter Ten)

Indicators of Quality—*What does “high quality” look like?*

- ▣ Freshness
- ▣ Flavor
- ▣ Texture
- ▣ Appearance
- ▣ Size
- ▣ Maturity/Ripeness

#### Part 2: Affordable

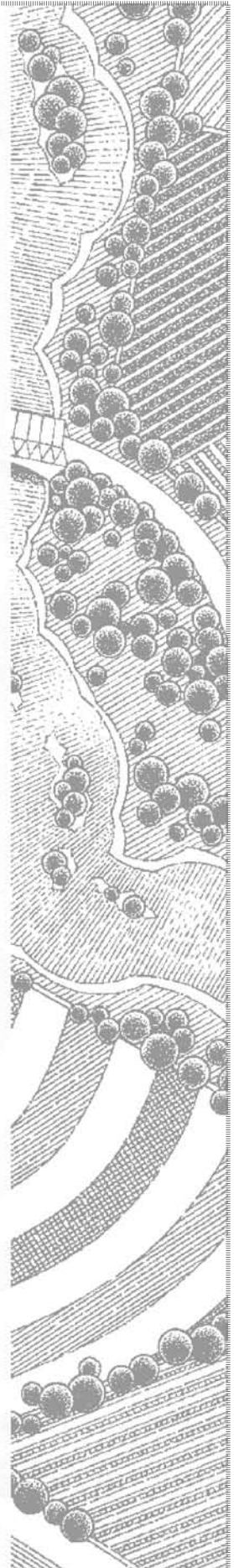
Indicators of Affordability —*What does affordability look like?*

- ▣ Prices lower than or equal to supermarket
- ▣ Prices lower than or equal to club store
- ▣ Prices lower than convenience store
- ▣ Prices lower than or equal to other competitors
- ▣ Prices lower than or equal to customers’ expectations

#### Part 3: Serve low- and middle-income residents of Small City

Indicators of Serving Low- and Middle-Income Residents—*What level of service is acceptable?*

- ▣ \_\_\_% of low- and middle-income residents who shop at our farmers market
- ▣ \_\_\_% of shoppers at our market who are low- or middle-income
- ▣ \_\_\_% of shoppers at our market who live in the city



**Develop Indicators for Your Market**

Use the preceding example as a model for creating indicators for your market.

First, write your market's mission statement here:

Next, use a highlighter, numbers, or symbols to break the mission into its parts and then list measurable, observable factors that make up each part of the mission that you can use to evaluate how well your market is achieving that mission. We will use this worksheet as the basis for the next steps in the evaluation and strategic marketing process.

**Part 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicators—*What does success look like?*

**Part 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicators—*What does success look like?*

**Part 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicators—*What does success look like?*

### Conclusion

When you gauge the extent to which the market is fulfilling its mission, any gap between the market's mission and its current performance is an opportunity to employ strategic marketing activities to bridge that gap. The next chapter will familiarize you with ways to collect data so that you can assess the extent to which your market is fulfilling its vision and mission.

