





Tap to Table: The Business of Marketing Your Syrup Business

Maple Products Marketing
in the Southeast



Marketing Maple

- Marketing Success
 - Maple Branding
 - Traditional Marketing v. Marketing Maple in 2018 and beyond
 - Exploring New Methods
 - Tips for Success
- 
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Which is Most Important to a Successful Maple Syrup Marketing?

- Having a good product that consumers want and are willing to pay for
- Marketing your product to the right set of customers
- Selling the right amount to be profitable
- Selling at the right price
- **All of the above**



Getting the Big Picture - Your Business/Marketing Plan

- A business/marketing plan help you to:
 - Identify an opportunity
 - Understand how you can meet that need
 - Determine if you can do it profitably
 - Determine how you will let customers know you are in business and how your business can benefit them.



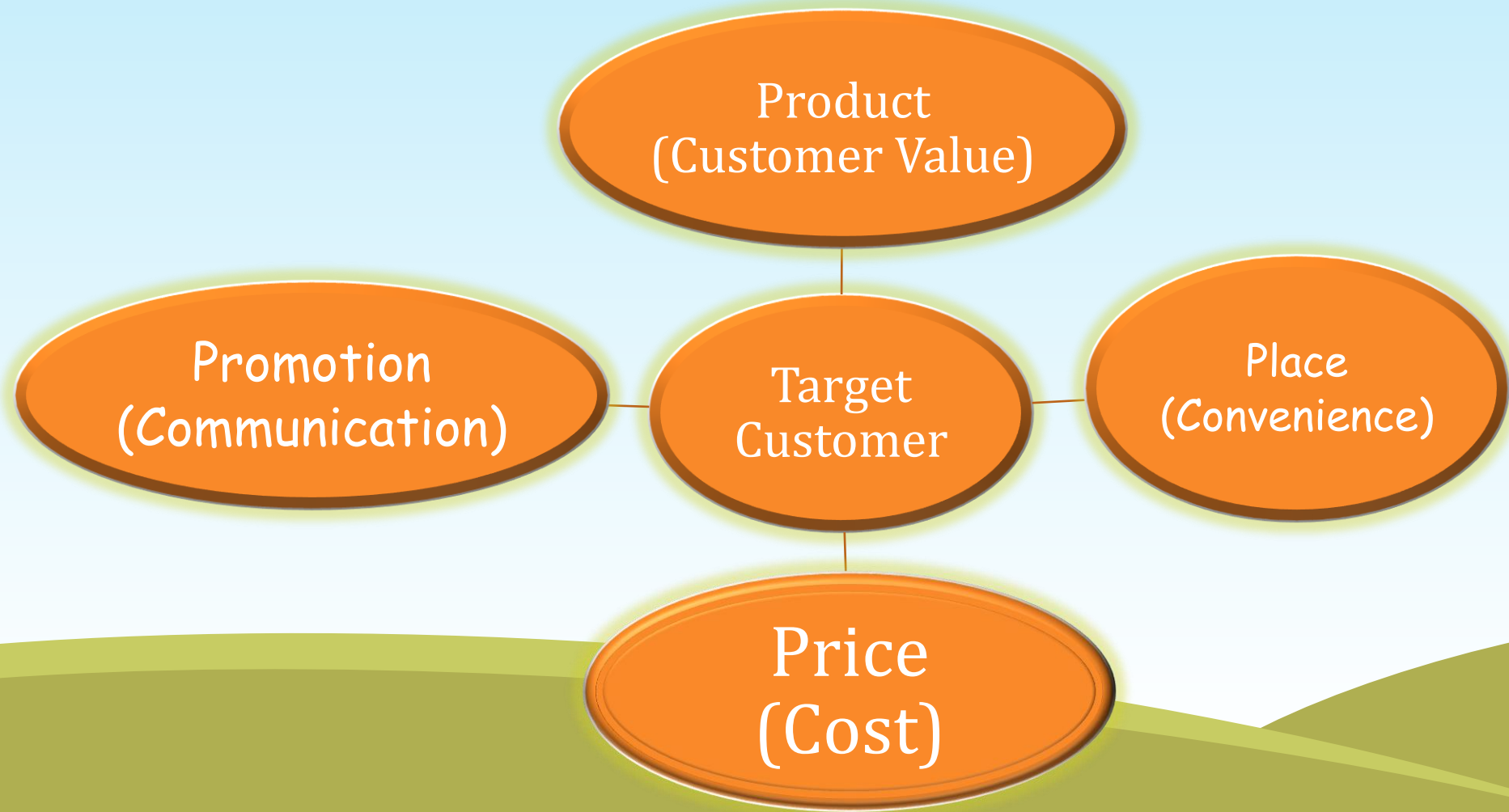
Marketing does not begin after production, but well before the tree is tapped.

Your Marketing Plan

- Understanding the market
- Who is the potential customer?
- What is the potential market size?
- Knowing your competition
- What is your unique marketing position/advantage?
- How you will reach your potential customer?
- Making the sale
- Remember, selling is just one part of marketing!
 - Customer follow-up and retention
 - Building a brand and creating community
 - Continuously monitor and enhance your firm's reputation and image







MARKETING is making yourself the preferred solution provider.
(4 P's/4 C's)





Consider the solutions maple provides....

- Local
 - Natural sweetener
 - Labor intensive/hand crafted
 - Customizable
 - Multiple uses (consumption (consumer demand), ingredient (reduced amount as a substitute), food service (individual to bulk packaging), retail (multiple outlets including gift), etc.
 - Process makes a compelling story and content provider
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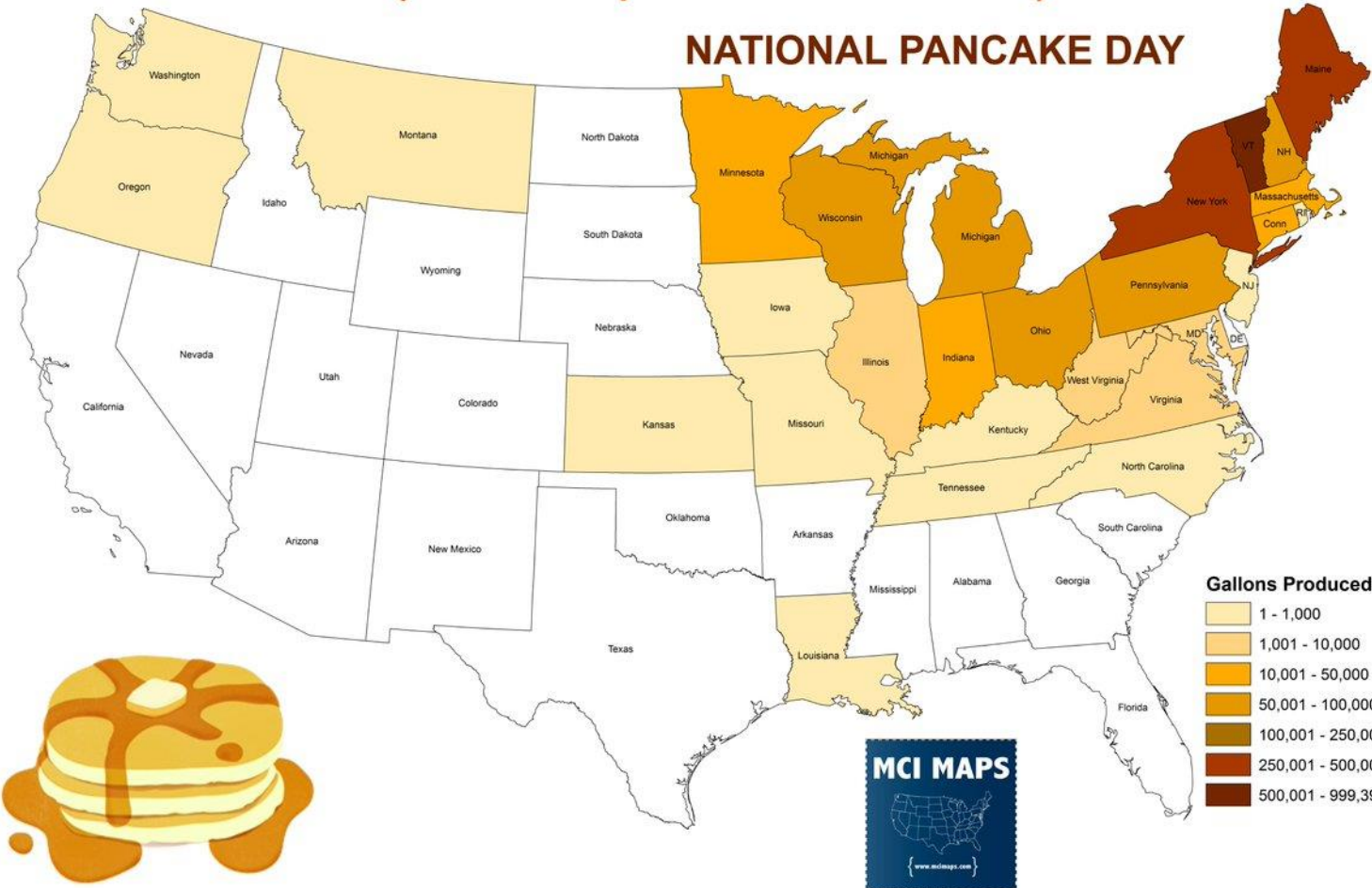
Branding - Its' all about your business

- What consumers know and believe about your business.
- Your business' face in the marketplace.
- How consumers respond to what they know and believe about your company.
- Your way of differentiating yourself within the marketplace.
- Why consumers shop your store and buy your products, rather than someone else's.
- A powerful brand will make customers sit up and take notice!
 - Keep it simple
 - Think of all the ways you can communicate it
 - Create an experience to show reliability
 - Have a professional website
 - Get noticed
 - Know your elevator pitch

Reputation + Sum of
Customer Experience =
Brand

Maple Syrup Produced by State (Gallons produced - 2012)

NATIONAL PANCAKE DAY



Maple Syrup Supply-National

Maple Syrup Taps, Yield, and Production – States and United States: 2016-2018





State	Number of taps			Yield per tap			Production		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
	(1,000 taps)	(1,000 taps)	(1,000 taps)	(gallons)	(gallons)	(gallons)	(1,000 gallons)	(1,000 gallons)	(1,000 gallons)
Connecticut	85	86	73	0.224	0.233	0.247	19	20	18
Indiana	60	62	70	0.200	0.194	0.257	12	12	18
Maine	1,860	1,890	1,870	0.363	0.375	0.288	675	709	539
Massachusetts	315	320	320	0.244	0.263	0.225	77	84	72
Michigan	400	440	455	0.225	0.250	0.275	90	110	125
Minnesota.....	76	77	65	0.184	0.182	0.200	14	14	13
New Hampshire	545	550	560	0.310	0.280	0.291	169	154	163
New York.....	2,515	2,650	2,730	0.281	0.287	0.295	707	760	806
Ohio.....	370	400	400	0.189	0.200	0.225	70	80	90
Pennsylvania	660	660	670	0.217	0.211	0.212	143	139	142
Vermont.....	4,850	5,410	5,670	0.410	0.366	0.342	1,990	1,980	1,940
West Virginia	51	61	66	0.118	0.148	0.121	6	9	8
Wisconsin.....	765	735	750	0.307	0.272	0.300	235	200	225
United States.....	12,552	13,341	13,699	0.335	0.320	0.304	4,207	4,271	4,159

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_York/Publications/Latest_Releases/2018/Maple%20Syrup%202018.pdf



Maple Syrup Demand

In 2011-2012, it is estimated that the US imported four times as much maple syrup as it produced.



Source: Farrell, Michael & Chabot, Brian. (2012). Assessing the growth potential and economic impact of the U.S. maple syrup industry. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*. 2. 11-27. [10.5304/jafscd.2012.022.009](https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2012.022.009).



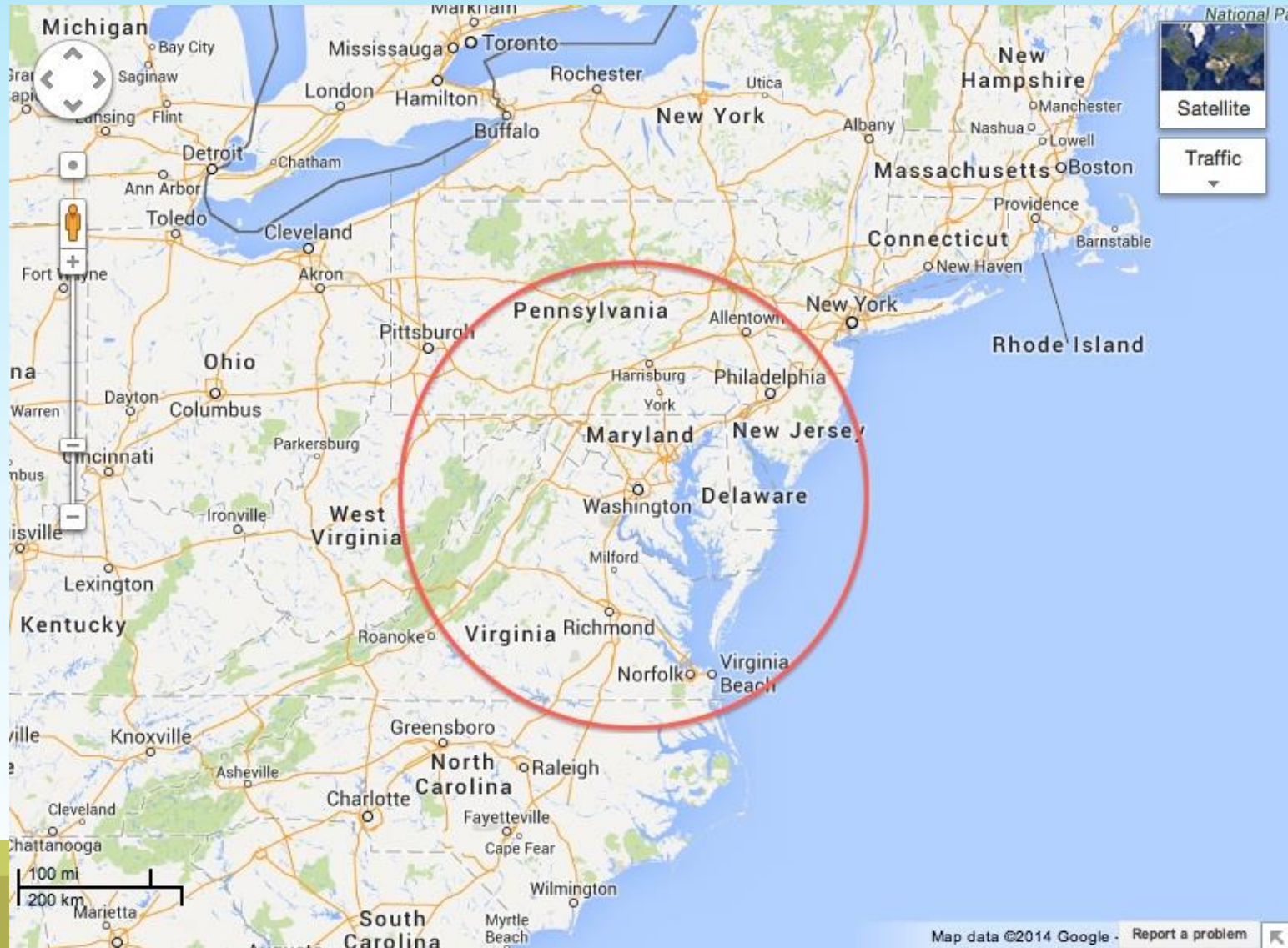
Based on 2018 Production Figures....

The demand for maple syrup in the United States is estimated at 16.636 million gallons. NASS figures show the US produced 4.159 million gallons in 2018.

12.48 million gallon



The Mid Atlantic...



<http://www.packedsuitcase.com/2014/01/3-day-weekend-travel-tips.html>

What cities are in your 9-hour circle?

- Atlanta, GA
- Columbus & Cincinnati, OH
- Richmond, Norfolk & Virginia Beach, VA
- Indianapolis, IN
- Chicago, IL
- Lexington & Louisville, KY
- Pittsburgh, Harrisburg & Philadelphia, PA
- Washington, DC & Baltimore, MD
- New York City
- Greensboro, Charlotte, Asheville, Wilmington & Raleigh, NC
- Newark, NJ
- Myrtle Beach, SC

Marketing Maple

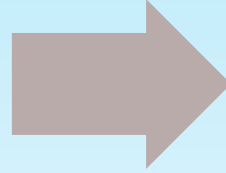
Volume & Production Capacity

- Infrastructure capacity
- Packaging
- Rules & Compliance
- Storage Capacity
- Price/Profitability

Marketing Maple

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Step 2 Customer & Market Assessment, Market Plan Development

- Distribution channels/cost
- Cost analysis & breakeven point
- Profitability
- Market plan development & deployment

Marketing Maple

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Step 3 Sales

- Manage marketing plan
- Manage message & customer feedback
- Maintain quality
- Responsive to customers
- Create customization opportunities

Create your Unique Selling Proposition

Market

- Who will buy your product

Need

- What will they use it for

Pain

- What your product does that other products don't

Solution

- How your product fulfills customers' needs

Maple Syrup

United States

State

Region

Farm

Differentiator



Do You Have an Elevator Pitch?

Elevator Pitch sentence structure:

FOR (target customer), WHO HAS (customer need), (product name) IS A (market category) THAT (one key benefit).
UNLIKE (competition), THE PRODUCT (unique differentiator).

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Maple Marketing Methods

Traditional

- Bulk
- Wholesale
- Direct
- Retail
- Gift
- Value-added
- Agritourism

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Marketing today

- Social media
- Agritourism-clustering
- Self-serve markets/honor system
- Online shopping
- CSA
- Customization
- Value-added (ingredients)
- International

Online Marketing vs. Traditional Marketing

- Online marketing goals mirror those of traditional marketing.
- You are trying to:
 - Reach the customer
 - Give your product pitch
 - Make the sale
 - Provide customer follow-up and support
 - Retain customers
 - Establish and maintain your business image
 - Build a brand



Trying to do all of this PROFITABLY!!!

Listen to your
customers....
EVERYWHERE!

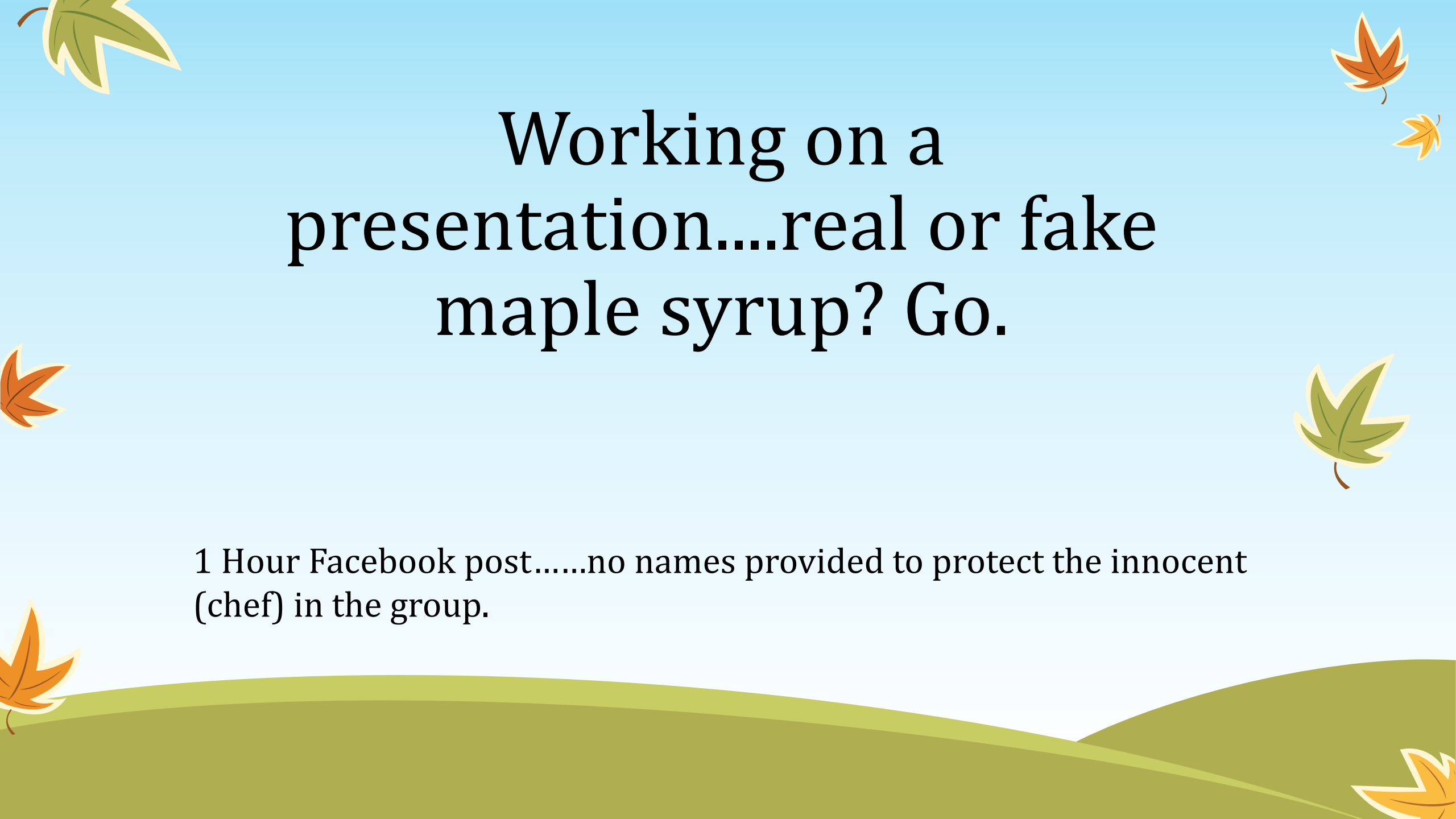


**Americans overwhelmingly
prefer fake maple syrup..**




Source: Ingraham, Christophe. Washington Post. Published March 27, 2015. Retrieved from:

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/03/27/why-americans-overwhelmingly-prefer-fake-maple-syrup/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.644b470768f0

The slide features a light blue background with several stylized maple leaves scattered around the edges. The leaves are in various colors: green, orange, and yellow. The main text is centered in a large, black, serif font.

Working on a presentation....real or fake maple syrup? Go.

1 Hour Facebook post.....no names provided to protect the innocent
(chef) in the group.



Is fake like Mrs Butterworths? I love real, but don't always have it on hand. I'm going to fix that!
I do always have fake on hand.



Real!

Always Real!

WHAT!?!? Real!!! Real!!!!!! It is stronger, but much like honey,
once you've gone real you can't go back.

We all vote "real" in the Biggs house! It's all we buy.

Real. Bottle says 100% Pure grade A Amber.

Real for sure. Only way to make it legit

Always real

I like real, kids still use fake but working to convert them



Real

Of course Real!

Do you even need to ask?




Real from Vermont...

Real!

Depends on what your doing with it. Waffles, pancakes etc I
prefer the log cabin (fake stuff) to cook & bake with I prefer
the real stuff grade amber

I grew up with fake. And it was hard to transition to real. I
use real but I still think of that talking Mrs Butterworth



Are you kidding? There is NO point to having fake syrup!!
Only real will do!



Real



VectorStock®

VectorStock.com/18031362

Reviewed
August 6, 2018

*“Exceptional corn fritters
and baby cones*

*While you would expect
their delicious pancakes
and maple syrup, their
corn fritters are an extra
special treat while the
maple-flavored soft serve
25 cent cones are
delightful.”*



https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g41809-d220263-Reviews-Gould_s_Sugar_House-Shelburne_Falls_Massachusetts.html

Content, Content, Content



Hint: Make your posts authentic and personal; tagging provides a forum for your story and a call to action.

“HELLO.. Today is Opening Day for Spring Season 2018.. Welcome Spring.. We can not wait to see you all...The trees are tapped, and they guys have boiled a couple times already..”

<https://www.facebook.com/GouldsSugarHouse/photos/rpp.241354815958001/1631564340270368/?type=3&theater>

It Doesn't Have to Be Complicated

*The "wheel" can't be
re-created but it
can be re-shaped.*



Getting the Big Picture - Your Business Plan

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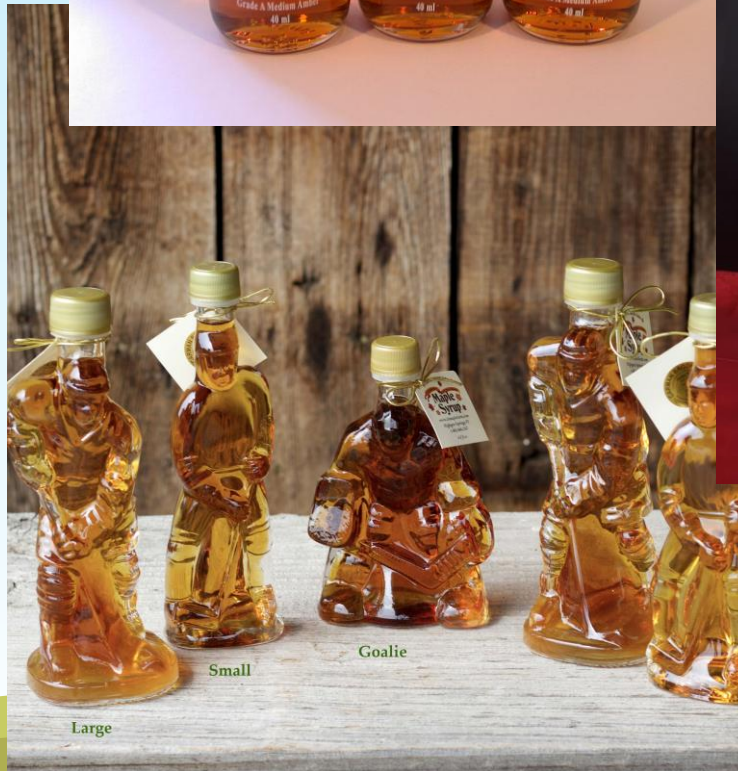


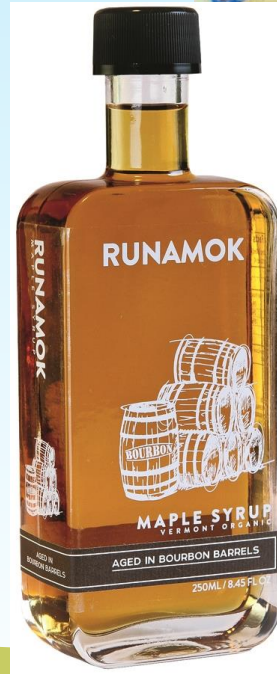
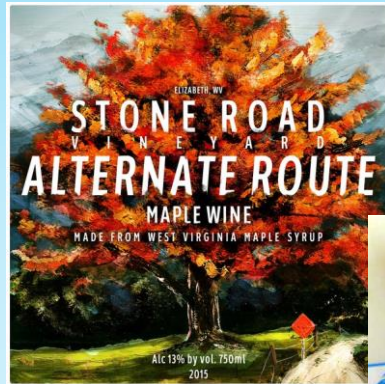
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Planning does not begin after you have opened your doors, but well before the first visitor arrives.

Value Added Maple Products

- Gift market packaging (smaller)
- Special events
- Corporate gifts
- Recipe and flavor combinations
- Candies & confections
- Drinks & beverages
- Infusions
- Aged
- Food service & institutional applications
- Private label
- Customization
- Flexible packaging
- Maple fluff, crumble, etc. (texture based)
- Seasonal promotion
- Agritourism
- Pairing/combining (i.e. cheese, adult beverages)





Mountain State Maple Days
 Join one of our maple houses for a pancake breakfast, a tapping demonstration, or just to learn more about this growing West Virginia industry!

February 24 & March 17, 2018
 Locations & times to be announced

For more information: [facebook.com/wvmaplesyrup](https://www.facebook.com/wvmaplesyrup)



Tips for Success

- Don't be afraid/embrace social media
- Listen to your customers across all mediums
- Participate, cooperate, cluster
- Flexibility
- Have a Plan B (and C, D, etc.)
- Diversify yet focus markets
- At what level are you branding?
- Education is critical; is maple syrup the new "milk" or "popcorn"?
- Know your product and what it provides your consumer
- Delegate, plan
- Respond, fulfill
- Engage authentically
- Inform, educate, create
- Customize
- Always ask, "Who am I selling to & do they know what they are consuming?"
- Quality is part of your brand; emphasis on off flavors entering the marketplace is important to all
- Experiential rather than observation (sampling)

Tips for Success

- Know your product (nutrition & uses; research based)
- Have a brand but protect it while being a good cluster partner (co-opetition)
- Invest in marketing training and customer service just like best production practices
- Use audits, inspections, certifications, and food safety as marketing tools
- Web page is not the only digital answer
- Update and keep current with social media platforms (posts only during season don't mean you are invested)
- Have an elevator pitch
- Stay involved & use resources (i.e. crop insurance, REAP program)
- Finally.....**HAVE A PLAN!**



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