

Tables and Checklists from “4 questions for more charters”

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**Here’s your downloadable copy of the tables in the article,
which you can print out and fill in with your details.**

Task Checklist: Creating My Railcar Marketing Plan			
√	Task	Deadline	Completed By
	Question 1: What do my railcar and I have to offer?		
	Complete Worksheet #1: Benefits vs. Features		
	Check if my existing advertising promotes the benefits of the features.		
	Question 2: Where does my car fit into the market?		
	Complete Worksheet #2: My S.W.O.T. Analysis		
	Question 3: How do I get the word out?		
	Do Worksheet #3: Four Ps (Marketing Mix)		
	Question 4: Over time, how can I get better results?		
	Try the new marketing ideas I’ve discovered		
	Track my advertising and marketing effectiveness		
	Adjust my marketing strategy, adapting as things change		

Worksheet #2: S.W.O.T. Analysis

Filling out the worksheet below will be the start of a S.W.O.T. analysis of your railcar(s)—and of yourself. See what will help you increase sales and what might hurt you.

Look at your sales receipts and your expenses—what do you do that makes you the most money? Those activities are probably some of your key strengths. Take a look at the Features and Benefits from Worksheet #1 for further inspiration.

Take your time. There are no wrong answers. The goal is to get you thinking. Consider how you can use this information.

<u>S</u>trengths (My Car and My Own)	<u>W</u>eaknesses (My Car and My Own)
<i>e.g., "I provide the service and amenities of a top-rated hotel"</i>	<i>e.g., "My car has a lounge area but no rear observation platform"</i>
<i>e.g., "Brand new interior: plasma TV, surround sound, and more"</i>	<i>e.g., "The interior hasn't been updated in 20 years"</i>
<u>O</u>pportunities for Me and My Car	<u>T</u>hreats to Me and My Car
<i>e.g., "A few cheap siding-rental options just came on the market"</i>	<i>e.g., "Amtrak announced it's cutting service from my city"</i>
<i>e.g., "Several prospects called after GrandLuxe shut down"</i>	<i>e.g., "My primary contact in state government is retiring"</i>

Worksheet #3: My Railcar's Four Ps (Marketing Mix)

Fill in your Four Ps in the table below. *Samples are in italics.*

PRODUCT *e.g., 1934 Pullman business car with lounge section, dining area, and bedrooms (accommodating six overnight passengers or 16 day passengers). Offer scheduled daytime excursions, stationary charters, and overnight mobile charters.*

PRICE: *e.g., \$250+ per passenger for scheduled excursions; \$3,000 for a stationary party charter; \$7,000/day for mobile Amtrak-based charters; other charters as negotiated)*

PROMOTION: *e.g., Advertising in local luxury-travel magazine, listing in AAPRCO Charter Guide, running a website for the car, sending promo e-mails to our in-house mailing list, and creating commission agreement with local travel agents.*

PLACE: *e.g., Car is physically based in metro New York City area. Departures primarily from New York Penn Station. Sales made via railcar website, toll-free phone number, and travel agents.*