

# Developing A Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

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Committed To Your Business Success

*‘Why should I choose your business/practice above and beyond all the available choices (including doing no even buying anything)?’*

*‘What are the reasons to buy from you that are different to your competitors and more advantageous to me your prospective client/customer?’*

The creation of a USP (Unique Selling Proposition) or propositions is the start of any marketing project and a credible USP answers the above questions.

The purpose of a USP is to set your business apart from your competitors and to make your business the logical choice from the rest of the **‘me too companies’** in your industry.

A USP is a statement which defines in a sentence your company’s or practices unique benefit (s) that are offered to your prospective client or customer that distinguishes your organisation above and beyond your competitors.

Let me firstly give you some examples of what a USP isn’t

- We offer a quality service
- We’ve been established for 15 years
- A wide range of expertise
- Prompt professional service
- Specialists in accountancy
- Building solutions
- We add value
- Supporting your business

These examples are full of empty words; they don’t describe the **WHATS IN IT FOR ME** from your prospective client/customer’s point of view.

## How Do You Go About It?

The process I use is; to firstly conduct a workshop with the owners and the employees of the business to get facts and opinions about their products and services, why they think they are special, better, offer more value to their clients/customers etc. What sets them apart?

Then talk to their customers to find out what their opinions are and what else; do they think the business could do better. The next step is the most important.

Shopping the competition; it's vital to know what they are doing; it's no good you thinking what you're offering is better, offers greater value and is more useful to your clients, if your competitors have got what you're offering, plus even more 'bells and whistles.'

Then it's a case of looking at all of this information, considering the implications and designing something that's superior.

By going through this process you'll know a lot more about where you are; what your clients/customers want and if you have any shortfalls and revised offering won't be based on guesswork or 'gut feel.'

### **So how can I be different?**

The creation of a USP should help you gain advantage (s) over your competition, the central aim is to **close more sales, make more profit and gain more market share.**

There are three generic business strategies to gain competitive advantage

1. Cost Leadership (Being the lowest cost producer)
2. Differentiation (Seeking to be unique in your industry offering benefits valued by buyers)
3. Focus, which is concentrating on a segment or groups of segments in an industry.

You can of course combine any of these strategies; for example you can focus on a niche and be the lowest cost provider or you could focus on a niche and differentiate.

Ultimately, unless you're going to be the lowest cost product or service provider, you need to develop strategies which focus on '**differentiation**' which in marketing speak is being DIFFERENT, providing better products and services than the competition.

Price is of course an important factor in the prospects mind, but **not the most important, if you can demonstrate greater value for money in what you are providing.**

If price was the determining factor then everyone would buy their food from the cheapest supermarket for example. So instead of worrying about being undercut on price, turn your attention to; 'how can I create more value for my clients/customers?'

Even a tough price shopper can be shown that it might be worth spending more money, if you can demonstrate greater value for money from your offering.

I cannot take you through the whole strategic marketing and planning process in this article, I might have to write a book to do that!

## Examples of Different Ways to Gain Competitive Advantage

There are countless numbers of ways which are available to favourably distinguish your business or its products and services in the eyes of the customer or end users.

The Advantage (s) which you need to create may not be unique in themselves your uniqueness can be the fact that the number of advantages you offer are far greater than your competitors or the norm within your industry.

You have to zero in on the areas where you decide to be unique and where you are able to deliver superior value to develop your USP.

### USP Examples

#### Speed and guarantee USP

**Domino Pizza** – Fresh hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less-guaranteed or they don't have to pay. (This is no longer used although it did help Domino build a multimillion dollar business).

It's now been shortened to We Deliver.

**Benefit to the customer:** Fast service hot pizza ready to eat brought to your door without the hassle of getting in the car no risk of a cold pizza or there is nothing to pay.

#### Broad selection USP

We always have 2000 different products available for immediate delivery, in 10 product ranges at prices ranging from £99 to £800

#### Service Availability USP

Most Service Businesses work from 9 to 5

At ABC Services we're open 24 hours 52 days a year, including bank holidays. We have 50 qualified engineers who are on call and can be with you within 3 hours.

#### Integrating Your USP

Your USP needs to be used everywhere in all of your marketing, sales letters, ads, sales Web site, presentations etc.

It should be clearly understood and when asked all of your staff should know it, including people that don't deal with customers or clients.

When someone asks you in a social gathering 'what do you do?' you should feature your USP.

For example when I'm asked I say; *'I increase the value of businesses.'*

***How do you do that? 'I work with my clients as a partner creating new profit centres, new revenue sources and I improve hidden or underperforming marketing assets.'***

***Could you explain that or tell me more.***

***'I investigate conduct research and identify where upside potential is in a business where new profit centres can be added without any risk or additional work; then I put together sales and marketing strategies/tactics and implement them making sure they fit with what the owner wants with the specific aim of increasing the value and saleability of the business.'***

***Everything I do is self financing, so the client cannot loose.'***

I hope you've enjoyed this article, if you want to know more about the subject or have any questions relating to growing your business, you can call me on **01623 720022** during normal business hours or click this [link](#) to let me know when it's a good time to talk.

How successful do you want to be?

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke underneath the name.

Mark Wheatley

Mark Wheatley is a business growth and marketing expert who specialises in growing small to medium sized businesses through low risk marketing strategies and improving sales skills