

# Do You Have A Winning Proposition?

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**A**ny successful marketing strategy includes development or review of a company's tagline or Unique Selling Proposition (USP). An effective USP positions your company or organization to stand out from its competitors. Based on information about what your organization does, how you do it, and why it should be attractive to consumers, you can develop a winning USP.

## *It's more than, "We sell great cars."*

Depending on the product or service, if you ask some business owners, "What's your Unique Selling Proposition?" They often respond with answers about 'what' they do, such as, "We sell great cars." or "We offer dependable solutions." Too, if you ask, "Why should people patronize your store, or purchase your services?" they may respond, "Because we offer competitive prices." or "We offer friendly service."

Though these answers are absolutely true, and important to gaining an understanding of a company's USP, they represent only part of the information needed to build an effective USP. Why?

Thousands upon thousands of companies proclaim their products or services are "quicker, cheaper, better." As a society, we are inundated with marketing messages from the newspaper, radio and television and the Internet. We hear and read these types of advertising slogans and positioning statements all the time. Unfortunately, these generalized descriptors do not effectively position you to stand out from the competition.

## *It's mostly in the "Why?"*

An effective Unique Selling Proposition very clearly answers the question, "Why should I do business with you instead of your competitors?" For some companies, it's honing in a specific attribute, or set of attributes, to promote to the marketplace that can be the toughest challenge. Fortunately, when it comes to marketing, you don't literally have to be unique - you simply have to strike a chord with your customers - offer a proposition they want and one they can remember.

## *Positioning Your Strengths*

Dominos virtually took over the delivered pizza market with, "Fresh, hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less, guaranteed." They focused on "time to delivery." They were the first company to say they would deliver in 30 minutes - even if other companies had already been doing it - and notice Dominos didn't even promise the pizza tasted good.

All paper towels absorb spills. However, Bounty


Paper Towels positioned themselves as the "Quicker Picker Upper." They told consumers their paper towel could do it faster. They didn't say they were cheaper, or better, simply faster. Over time, they have evolved their USP to promote other attributes - such as strength - but they have maintained a leading market position with the success of their original USP - "The Quicker Picker Upper."

Enterprise Rental Car revamped the car rental market by providing door-to-door transportation service. They expanded their services. Enterprise was the first car rental company that told its customers they'd make the entire car rental process simple and convenient. They didn't say they were the cheapest, or the most dependable, (though they may be) - but they gained tremendous market share by giving consumers a new way to rent cars - without transportation hassles.

### Developing Your Own USP

If you want to develop or improve your own USP, answering the following questions will help you pick your strengths, and develop your winning proposition:

- Why is my company/product better?
- How is my company/product better?
- What do my customers say about me?
- Why would I buy my own products?
- What is my greatest asset?

Remember, no one company can be all things to all people- so target your message. Keep it simple. Try to define your company and/or your product in tangible attributes and quantitative measures (speed, accuracy, price, convenience, etc.). In addition, don't hesitate to think out-of-box by reshaping or redefining your product or service. Above all - be creative 

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With 20 years experience, Ms. Dunckley provides marketing counsel on a range of topics including business planning, strategic marketing, branding, public relations, graphic design and website development. Striking Changes, LLC specializes in delivering business and marketing programs focused on attaining the highest levels of Return On Investment (ROI) for its clients.

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