



COMPETITOR KNOCKOUT
CREATING A POWERFUL USP

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The Importance of a USP

Have you been struggling to compete and stand out in your market? Are you fighting your way through a never-ending crowd of merchants, feeling as though you'll never be able to generate the exposure that your business needs in order to survive?

If so, chances are that the reason why you haven't been able to generate the kind of business you'd been hoping for is because you're not giving people a **reason to buy from you!**

In today's market, it's easy to slip into the huddle of new businesses that are cropping up within your market. In fact it's *dangerously easy* to end up being nothing more than a “**me, too!**” business owner where your voice is drowned out by the sound of every other similar business in your industry.

And in today's market, the ONLY way that you'll ever be able to build a business that stands on its own and is successful over the long-haul is by discarding the safety of the “me, too!” space and separating from the crowd.

And my friend, the only way to do this is with a USP.

...a what?

USP stands for **Unique Selling Proposition** (or Position) and it can literally make or break your business because it tells your target audience exactly why you are different, what you bring to the table and why they should choose you, over the competition.

Without a USP, your product slinks into the shadows, barely able to compete in the marketplace.

It doesn't stand out nor does it leave an everlasting impression in the minds of your prospects. In fact, without a USP it's virtually impossible to create a unique brand that will be instantly associated to value because you haven't defined what makes your business special. People will never recognize you as being any different from your competitor.

The great news is that your business, or product already has a USP. It's simply your job to define what that is and implement it into your marketing message so that your target audience knows exactly what you are offering, how they will benefit and most importantly, why they should go to your company or business, rather than the competition.

So, where do you begin? How can you figure out what your U.S.P is and how to deliver your message to your audience of potential customers?

It all begins by evaluating your business, your products and your offers.

- How can what you offer improve someone's life?
- How can it help your customer in some way?
- Why do they need it?
- Why should they purchase from you rather than the competition?
- What are you offering that other people aren't?

Evaluating your product – your business and your offers objectively, from a third person perspective is incredibly important. It's the only real way to determine your strengths and your weaknesses so that you can improve your business, reach out to your global audience and give them a genuine reason to come to you. And when you do this, you will never struggle in the market again because your USP will be the leading force that drives in non-stop business for many years to come.

Knowing Your Customer Base

Before you can create your USP for your business, you need to know your target audience – *your customer base*. What is most important to them? How can you truly connect to your target audience? What is their greatest challenge and how can you help them overcome it?

The more you know your audience, the easier it will be to develop a USP that hits home with them – that provokes a positive response and really shows your customer base that you know what they need.

When creating your USP, think from your customers perspective so that rather

than identifying what YOU may feel is most important about your product, you turn it around - and focus on what THEY want to know and feel is most important to them.

Dan Kennedy's method for identifying a USP is in answering the question, "*Why should I choose to do business with you versus your competitor?*".

The very reason why you created a product in the first place could hold the key to defining your USP. Think about how your product is different than others on the marketplace, how does it add more value? How does it address a question, concern or simplify a process, such as reducing a learning curve, saving your customers time or money.

Your product USP is the **driving force** behind defining value and creating a recognizable brand in your market. There are businesses who have so carefully highlighted their USP that they are able to charge DOUBLE what their competitors charge, and still sell out every single time simply because their USP adds perceived value to their products or services!

One of the most well known examples of an effective USP is Dominos Pizza. The business, struggling and close to filing Chapter 11 needed a quick turnaround. Hence, the USP, "*Fresh, hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less or it's free*" was coined.

Then there's Burger King who, competing against the McDonalds franchise giant had to stand out from the 'pre-made fast food service, and successfully did so by coining the USP, "*Have it your way*" where customers are able to customize their meals based on their preferences. They put customers in control, and the USP was successful at helping them stand out.

Other competitors in the pizza delivery business jumped on board, integrating powerful USP's into their marketing campaigns, including Papa John's restaurant whose USP promises "*better ingredients, better pizza*".

All of these businesses had existing competition yet became successful national franchises that are instantly recognized in their industry. They did this with the help of a powerful USP that made a clear promise and working to align your brand with delivering on that promise.

Your USP will differentiate you from your competition; more than any other aspect of a marketing campaign ever will, but you need to make sure your USP is not only memorable, but **believable**.

Using Federal Express as an example, their USP is "*when it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight*", emphasizing their guarantee of prompt delivery service. "Absolutely, positively" reinforces that promise, adding extra punch to their USP while ensuring they can follow through.

You want your USP to clearly define your brand, separate you from the competition and be believable.

In today's marketplace, your business will struggle to stand out from the crowd without a USP to give that extra boost it needs, so that it instantly offers an added incentive for prospects who are making the decision between purchasing your product or your competitors.

Take your time when developing your USP. Think of ways that you can add unique flare to your product, how you can use your USP to demonstrate value, to illustrate performance, and to showcase the distinctive benefits of your product.

Your USP should be described in a couple of sentences.

You want to keep it short and to the point so that it lends "stickiness" to your campaigns and becomes quickly (and permanently) associated to your brand.

Once you have defined your USP, you want to include it in every single marketing campaign. From newsletters, ezine advertisements, social media marketing, forum marketing, PPC advertisements, to your website itself.

Creating A Successful U.S.P

USP's are far more than just catchy taglines associated to your company, product or brand. They are reinforcement tools that help you establish credibility in your market while shaping the foundation of your business.

When it comes to creating a USP for your information product, think of the different ways that you can stand out from the competition, including:

Enhanced Training Tools

Additional Support Options

Extended Guarantee

Price Discounts

Better Service

Faster delivery/turn around time/completion

Additional Bonuses & Special Offers

All of these are common components of what forms a strong USP. Your objective is to evaluate your product, and come up with a powerful unique selling proposition that you can integrate into your marketing campaigns.

The easiest way to come up with a powerful USP is to think about how you would describe your product if asked by a complete stranger that you met at a seminar. You are given 10 minutes to describe your product in enough detail to sell a copy right on the spot.

What would you feel is most important to say about your business or offer within a 10-minute span of time?

This exercise will help get your creative juices flowing, while helping to verbalize the benefits of your product. Call a friend or family member if you have to, and let them ask you questions about your product.

Not only will this help you to evaluate your product objectively, but you can often gain better insight as to what questions and concerns potential customers may have based on the questions you are asked.

If you have an existing channel of communication with your customer base, either through social media sites, community forums or perhaps even through a newsletter, ask for their feedback.

Offer a handful of customers a free copy of your product and let THEM evaluate it, providing important feedback based on what they felt were the most positive aspects of your product, as well as what could possibly use a bit of improvement.

Many times, your customers are the best sources for developing your USP because they know your product better than even you do. After all, you created it for them and you can gain a lot of incredibly valuable information just by letting them try it out, and sharing their thoughts and ideas as to what the most powerful benefit of your product is.

Evaluating feedback from your customer base will also help you to develop a USP that carries a message that matches your market.

For example, if you develop an information product USP that defines your product as “Advanced Training for Beginners”, you’ll struggle to transfer positive branding if the majority of your market have virtually no experience and are looking for a product that teaches them the fundamentals of web design before considering advanced techniques. In other words, your USP message doesn’t match your market.

So, survey your market, pay attention to feedback, and take a hands-on approach to closely monitoring the questions, concerns and problems that your market is facing. Then, develop a USP that speaks directly to the core of what they are most interested in.

When you have evaluated your product, its competition and have decided on a USP for your product, you need to lead your USP by example.

This means that you might have to make changes to the way you do business, or how you present your product on your sales page, within marketing campaigns and in branding your product.

If your USP is “10 Minute Training For \$10k per month”, you want to make sure that your product is designed to provide quick access to bite size information that your customer base can instantly apply to their online business.

Make sure your product and USP match up, in every way. If you offer extended support in your USP, or you define your brand by being ‘unique or exclusive’, you need to make sure that your product offers a new perspective, a unique approach or a different way of doing something.

Price Based USP

If your product fails to carry a USP, the only way people will differentiate your product from a competitors' is on price alone.

Think about this in regards to your own buying decisions. If you were to visit your local computer shop with the intention of purchasing an external hard drive, knowing little about brands or features, and were presented with two similar products to choose from, which would you buy?

In the absence of any other differentiating factor, the lowest price becomes the deciding factor.

You never want to compete on a price based USP, because it leaves you little control over your markets decision whether to purchase from you or a competitor.

Instead, you need to develop a Unique Selling Proposition that uniquely separates you from other products in the marketplace, and do so in such a way that it would be difficult for a competitor to replicate that.

Also keep in mind that your USP not only helps you stand apart but becomes part of your brand, so even if a competitor replicates your USP, if you've done your job at associating that unique selling proposition to your product, they'll struggle to compete.

Integrating Your USP

When you've decided on a USP for your product, you need to begin weaving into your marketing message.

This includes:

- ✓ Business Cards
- ✓ Your Sales Pages
- ✓ Squeeze Pages
- ✓ Print Advertising
- ✓ Social Media Advertising

Wherever you advertise or promote your business, your USP needs to become a permanent part of that marketing message. You want your customers to identify you by your USP, and to solidify your place in the market by leveraging your USP to build instant recognition.

Your USP is more than just a tagline; it represents your brand and your commitment to fulfilling on your promise. You want your USP to communicate a positive benefit, to leave an everlasting impression with your target audience, and to nurture positive association to every other product you create.

One thing to keep in mind is that your USP can and sometimes, should, change if your market does. Of the examples from earlier, Dominos Pizza and Federal Express no longer use the original USP that was designed to give their businesses that extra push in the market.

Eventually their competitors started incorporating similar USP's into their own marketing campaigns and before too long, their USP's became ineffective.

After all, a USP is designed to help your business or product stand out in the marketplace, but if everyone else is using a similar USP, it can actually hinder your chances at building a recognized and unique brand.

So they changed it, and you just might have to as well.

Your USP can help turbo charge your marketing efforts, but always be open to changing your USP as the market demand shifts, or as new competition enters the arena.

To your success!