

Make Your Service Unique

A Telescan, LLC Business Resource Document

A Telescan Business Note, No. 2

Business Note 1, “Maybe You Should Sell Niches,” discussed the concept of finding a niche market for your business. That is, finding a way to make your business different by making the service you offer stand apart from your competition.

To further emphasize this concept of differentiation, we recommend a marketing concept called USP, or Unique Selling Proposition. It was developed during the 1950’s by Rosser Reeves, who was chairman of the Ted Bates & Company ad agency, as a technique intended for marketing in a crowded or narrow marketplace. A marketplace like the telephone answering industry, where there is so much similarity between the offerings of each competing service.

A Unique Selling Proposition is identified by the following elements:

- ? Your advertising must make a specific proposition to the customer – if you use our messaging service you will receive this specific benefit.
- ? Your proposition must be unique – that is, the service you offer must be one not offered by your competitors, or not claimed by them.
- ? Your proposition must be compelling so that it motivates individuals to act.

DEVELOP YOUR USP

Developing your own USP is a matter of describing a market position that sets you apart from your competition; in other words, the niche market concept discussed in Business Note 1. For example:

1. What benefit is unique to the service I offer, and why?
2. Who are the target prospects that will be most interested in this benefit?
3. What unique features and benefits are my competitors offering these target prospects?

Before a prospect will buy your unique answering service, the features you offer must be turned into benefits.

A **feature** is something you have designed into your service – like having a professionally trained staff of agents available to answer all calls.

A **benefit** is what the customer gets out of it – a first-class impression left with all callers and complete and error free messages.

While a feature might be useful, it may not be of principal interest to the prospect. But, the benefit must be. The benefit is the solution to the prospect’s problem. It’s what’s going to make their life better; or what’s going to save them money; or what’s going to improve their business. The benefit is the reason why they will opt to use your service.

If for some reason you can't find a completely unique service to promote, look for one that your competitors have overlooked. But whatever you decide on it must be real. That is, you must be able to deliver the "U" in your Unique Selling Proposition.

BE FIRST

Once you have settled on your unique service offer, you need to emphasize that difference to set yourself apart from your competition. "But don't answering services pretty much all offer the same services," you ask?

Perhaps, but that only means it's even more important for you to find and emphasize that one compelling service and benefit you can offer that will make a prospect choose your answering services over another.

If possible, try to be the first in your market to offer your unique service. It's always more difficult to challenge a competitor for a position that's already been taken. It's important, then, that you know the marketing positions your competitors are taking so you can avoid any direct marketing challenges. You want to establish your own niche market where you can be both first and best.

What if you simply can't find a niche market in which you can be first? Well, then take a cue from some notable 'number twos' and how they handled the problem: Avis was number 2 to Hertz, but tried harder. Seven-Up tackled Coke by positioning itself as the un-cola. Tylenol suggests it's better than aspirin because it does not irritate your stomach's lining.

SUMMARY

When services provided by your competition seem to deliver the same benefit as yours, then other features and benefits must set your service apart as being the better choice. Take a close look at your 20% best customers (i.e., those producing the most revenue) How are they similar? Why are they using your services? What are the benefits you provide to them? Emphasize the benefits they receive from your unique service in your marketing and sales materials and you will attract others like them. Once you decide on your Unique Selling Proposition incorporate it all your advertising and make it the center of your marketing efforts. Use it, and your business will grow.

Compliments of:

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We invite you to call us to discuss any questions you may have about our systems and services. Our staff is available to answer your questions without any obligation.

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