



MERCURY WEBDOMAIN

Creating a Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

At Mercury WebDomain, we stress the importance of highlighting your business's USP, or Unique Selling Proposition, on the home page and throughout website. Here is an excerpt from an article by Jay Abraham, President of The Abraham Group and author of "Getting Everything You Can From All You've Got"

How to Create a Unique Selling Proposition

By

Jay Abraham

Even while you creatively imitate others, remember that it's also important to be different. Distinguish your business or practice from all the rest. Make your enterprise special in the eyes of your customer or client. That is the goal I want you to pursue.

How do you get your business differentiated? By creating a Unique Selling Proposition - or USP.

A USP is that distinct and appealing idea that sets you and your business, or practice, favorably apart from every other generic competitor. The long-term marketing and operational successes I help you achieve will, ultimately, be helped or hurt by the USP you decide upon.

The possibilities for building a USP are unlimited. It's best, however, to adopt a USP that dynamically addresses an obvious void in the marketplace that you can honestly fill. Beware: It's actually counter-productive to adopt a USP if you cannot fulfill the promise.

Most business owners don't have a USP, only a "me too," rudderless, nondescript, unappealing business that feeds solely upon the sheer momentum of the marketplace. There's nothing unique; there's nothing distinct. They promise no great value, benefit, or service -- just "buy from us" for no justifiable, rational reason.

It's no surprise then that most businesses, lacking a USP, merely get by. Their failure rate is high, their owners are apathetic, and they get only a small share of the potential business. But other than a possible convenient location, why should they get much patronage if they fail to offer any appealing promise, unique feature or special service?

Would you want to patronize a firm that's just "there," with no unique benefit, no incredible prices or selection, no especially comforting counsel, service or guarantee? Or would you prefer a firm that offers you the broadest selection in the country? Or one with every item marked up less than half the margin other competitors charge? Or one that sells the "Rolls Royce" of the industry's products?

Can you see what an appealing difference the USP makes in establishing a company's perceived image or posture to the customer? It's ludicrous to operate any business without carefully crafting a clear, strong, appealing USP into the very fabric of the daily existence of that business.

The point is to focus on the one niche, need or gap that is most sorely lacking, provided you can keep the promise you make.

You can even create hybrid USPs -- combinations that integrate one marketing gap with

another. Before you decide on a USP, though, be sure you can always deliver that USP through your whole organization. You and your staff must consistently maintain high levels of quality or service.

If you decide your USP is that your company offers the broadest selection of products or services "instantly available" or "always in stock," but in reality you only stock six out of 25 items and only a few of each item, then you're falling down on the essence of your USP promise, and your marketing will probably fail. It is critical to always fulfill the "big promise" of your USP.

If you don't honestly believe you can deliver on your USP, pick another one to build your business on. Just be sure it's unique and that you can fulfill it.

Remember, the USP is the nucleus around which you will build your success, fame, and wealth, so you better be able to state it. If you can't state it, your prospects won't see it. Whenever a customer needs the type of product or service you sell, your USP should bring your company immediately to mind.

Clearly conveying the USP through both your marketing and your business performance will make your business great and success inevitable. But you must reduce your USP to its sinewy bare essence.

Try it. With paper and pen, prepare a one-paragraph statement of your new USP. At first, you will have trouble expressing it tightly and specifically. It may take two or three paragraphs or more. That's okay. Ruthlessly edit away the generalities, and tenaciously focus on the crispest, clearest, most specific promise you could possibly hold out. Then, rework it and hack away the excess verbiage or hazy statements until you have a clearly defined, clearly apparent Unique Selling Proposition a customer can immediately seize upon. And then, integrate your USP into every marketing aspect of your business, such as display advertising, direct mail and field selling.

Let's say you run display-type ads, and your USP is that you have better selection and follow-up service than any other competitor. There are several ways to integrate these qualities into your ads. For example: State the selection USP in the ad headline:

"We Always Have 168 different Widgets in No Less than 12 Different Sizes and 10 Desirable Colors, in price ranges from \$6 to \$600."

Or, if good service at an affordable price is your USP, use this as a model:

"ABC Tree Trimmers will trim and maintain your trees and shrubs six times a year, once every two months, and all it costs you is \$16 a month, billed quarterly."

By now you should have the general idea that you should carefully integrate your newly adopted USP into the headline and body copy of every ad you run. And in every direct-mail piece you send out.

You can read Mr. Abraham's entire article at

www.abraham.com/articles/How_To_Create_A_Unique_Selling_Proposition.html

Mr. Abraham's remarks are mainly directed at integrating the USP into ad copy and direct mail marketing. It goes without saying, however, that since your website is your most important marketing tool, the USP should be an integral part of your website's home page.

If you have a small business and think that a professional website is too costly, help is here. **Mercury WebDomain** develops effective and affordable websites for small businesses, with prices starting at just \$29 per month

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