

What makes your business different?

To succeed you have to market your business. You must also have at least one thing that causes your business to stand out from the crowd. “Differentiate or Die” needs to be your battle cry!

Even if your product or service is unique (most unlikely) at some point someone else will start-up in competition to you. Successful marketers always start with the end in mind so you would be wise to consider what sets your product/service apart from the others – “*The original and best*” is probably **not** going to cut it!

The marketing idea of a **Unique Selling Proposition** or **Unique Selling Point** was championed by television advertising pioneer Rosser Reeves (Ted Bates & Company) in the 1940's. Reeves defined it as:

1. Each advertisement must make a proposition to the consumer—not just words, product puffery, or show-window advertising. Each advertisement must say to each reader: "Buy this product, for *this specific benefit*."
2. The proposition must be one the competition cannot or does not offer. It must be unique—either in the brand or a claim the rest of that particular advertising area does not make.
3. The proposition must be strong enough to move the masses, i.e., attract new customers as well as potential customers.

This term has to a large degree disappeared from modern marketing terminology and been replaced with “Positioning” or a “Positioning Statement” – sometimes you will hear it referred to as “mindshare marketing”. The idea being that the brand should conjure an image in the potential buyer's mind and it's often linked to a slogan to help achieve that. Examples: “Walmart – always low prices” “FedEx – when it absolutely, positively, has to be there overnight” “Nike – Just Do It”

Building a “brand” should not be the main goal of your marketing. The objective is to find potential clients and then move them towards buying from you. However, in order to do this, you have to cut through all the “noise” in the marketplace and stand head and shoulders above your competition. Take time to work out what your existing differentiators are. What can you do to increase them? What is important to your clients?

Remember in a previous meeting I said in selling you should “*never ever talk about a feature without telling them the benefit*”? well that holds true here too – ask yourself from the client's prospective “So what?”

Here are some keywords and questions to help you as you brainstorm:

Service (are you better than the rest?) – Easy (you make it easy for *your* clients how?) – Unique (how and what's the benefit?) – What problem do you solve? – Benefits (how?) – Convenience – Worry Free Peace of Mind – Saves Time – Save Money – Good for Health – Preeminence – Expertise - Knowledge – Pain Free – What's the (product/service) outcome for your client?