



Connect!

REAL RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IDEAS



Identify Your

Unique Selling Point

by CHAD RUEFFERT

During a creative brainstorming session with a new Braintree Marketing client, I asked one of my standard, and yet most important, questions, "What makes you different from your competition?"

He didn't have an answer, so we talked about it for a while. Their product was pretty much the same as the competition. Price was similar. Quality was comparable. Finally we struck onto something that WAS different. This client was not only the manufacturer of the product, but also the distributor and the installer. None of their competition offered installation services. Finally... a unique selling point (USP). This company had been in business for years and yet never talked about the one thing that set them apart from their competition. Finding a USP allows you to provide some differentiation between your company and your competition. It's the answer to the question, "Why should I buy from you?"

Having a USP is extremely important for real estate professionals as well, especially in larger markets. It usually takes the form of a specialty or a focus. If you're a specialist in a particular neighborhood, you have a solid reason why a homeowner in that

neighborhood should pick you over the competition. Condo specialist? Luxury home specialist? Foreclosure expert? All of those are unique selling points and should be the focus of your sales and marketing.

World renowned business consultant Jay Abraham says it this way in his book *Getting Everything You Can Out of All You've Got*: "How can you elevate yourself or your company to a position of notable superiority over your competition? In order to stand above the crowded marketplace, you or your company must offer your prospect or client a unique and distinctive benefit or advantage above and beyond that of your competitor. If you don't, people have no motivation to do business with you instead of your competition."

How do you determine your USP? The easiest way is to look at what your competition does poorly and offer a better alternative. If your competition is overpriced, offer a lower priced product. If your competition has slow turnaround time then offer faster service. You can create a USP on nearly anything, but you have to deliver on your promise.

"When you identify what that distinct advantage is, you then must integrate it into all your promotional, marketing, advertising, and selling operations... You don't just want to say it, you want to constantly demonstrate it. You want to live it. That means whatever your USP

stands for, you do at all times," says Abraham.

One of the reasons a USP is so important is that it provides you with a strategic direction from which you can make important decisions. If your USP is "low price" it's very easy to choose your target market – price conscious shoppers. It can help you determine your advertising message—save money! It can help you determine your physical location, your brand identity and your media selections. And once you begin making decisions based upon your USP you'll find it becomes more memorable, more powerful and easier to prove to skeptical customers.

Says Jay Abraham, "Most (business persons) have no USP, only a 'me too,' rudderless, nondescript business that feeds solely on the momentum of the marketplace... It's no surprise that most businesses lacking a USP merely get by. Their failure rate is high. Their owners and employees are apathetic. And they get only a small share of potential business."

There's only one way to stand head and shoulders above the crowd—find something tall to stand on. Your USP can elevate you above the crowd.

Chad Rueffert is the president of Braintree Marketing, Inc. and the creator of the From Your Friends Relationship Marketing program.

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