

~ Begin Sample Excerpt ~

Begin with a Message

In order to properly put together a marketing plan you first have to figure out your message. You need to decide on what you want your business to say to people. This message will be laced through everything you do.

The message needs to grab the attention of people and make them want to use your business. The message also has to set you apart from other people.

In order to help you come-up with a message go grab your local phone book. Turn to the yellow pages and look-up “Window Cleaners” (or whatever business you might be marketing). Now grab a pad of paper and a pen. You’re going to sit down and take a look at all your competition.

The key is to see how you’re competition is selling their services so that you can come-up with your own unique selling point or unique selling proposition. This is commonly called a USP and it’s essential to your marketing message. You need to set yourself apart from your competition. You need to have a USP.



To completely understand what a USP is let’s quickly breakdown each letter.

- The “**U**” stands for unique. This means you set yourself apart from your competition. Not only should you stand apart from your competition, you need to actually stand above your competition. You need to rise above them.
- The “**S**” stands for selling. It convinces people to buy what you’re selling. So in this case you are convincing people to buy your window cleaning services.
- The “**P**” stands for position or proposition. Position is just where you place yourself in relation to your competition. You want to place yourself above everyone else. Proposition is trying to sell something to others. In this case, you’re trying to sell something that is a cut above everything else.

Now that you we’ve broken down USP, let’s get back to the yellow pages.

When you’re ready with the yellow pages and your pad and pen, go to the first advertisement. List all the promises and benefits that are made in the first advertisement. For example, if they promise quick service then list that. If they guarantee their work then list that. Write down every statement that tells something good about the business.

Now go onto the next ad and put a put a mark beside each time one of the benefits or statements you wrote down appears again. If a new one pops up then write that down.

Keep going through each ad and repeating the process. When you've covered all the ads you'll have a list of promises and benefits along with how many times they each appear in all the ads for window cleaning.

It's more than likely that all the ads are shockingly similar, right? All your competition is saying the same thing. Sure, there are probably great benefits that are being advertised but if they're all the same then how can any one business hope to be successful with their ad? Obviously they can't.

If you want your marketing plan to be successful then you need to stand out from your competition. This means you have to be unique. You need a USP. But how do you get your very own USP?

~ End Sample Excerpt ~