

Your Unique Web Proposition

By Scott T. Smith

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Your Unique Web Proposition (UWP)

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Introduction

Every week, tens of thousands of new people and organizations are jumping onto the Internet bandwagon. How can you ensure that you will be found, and better yet, stand out as unique among this rapidly swelling crowd?

The key is to clearly define your Unique Web Proposition (UWP). Your UWP defines your place in the Internet marketplace, making you separate — and better — than everyone else.

Three Basic Questions

Here are the three basic questions you must ask to separate yourself from the competition:

1. What are you selling?
2. What is unique about what you sell – or how you sell it? What do you offer that your competition doesn't?
3. How can you describe the answers to the above questions in one tight, persuasive line?

If your UWP feels narrow and restrictive, that's good- you have defined your market niche.

Finding Your Niche

Niche marketing is an essential element of your Internet success. Clearly define who you are, and right away you know which newsgroups to search for, where to post your classified ads, and how best to gather your leads. Nobody can ever market to everyone, everywhere. Being a jack-of-all-trades means you become a master of none, and mastery of your market niche is what you should strive for.

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The UWP Survival Questionnaire

The above questions are only a starting point for defining your UWP. But the paradox is that these are actually some of the last questions you ask. As a wise man once said,

"To know a lot,
you only need to know a little.
But to get to that little,
you need to know pretty much."

I urge you to take the time to put yourself and your business partners through this next series of questions, because it's key to your survival. The result will be true clarity on who you are and what you do, providing the razor-sharp definition you absolutely must have to find leads and customers on the swelling Internet.

Your Company

1. What is the history of your business?
2. What is the philosophy of your business?
3. How and why has your business grown?

Your Product & Services

1. What problems does your business solve for the customer?
2. What are the unique advantages of your products and services? (prioritize)
3. What are the problems and weaknesses of your products and services? (prioritize)
4. Where and how are your products and services sold?
5. How were your products and services originally launched? (marketing/advertising strategies)
6. How have your products and services performed? Have they been altered or improved? Is your share of the market improving?
7. What is your product/service image?
8. How does your product respond to changes in: pricing? promotion? advertising?
9. What are the current and future marketing conditions for your products and services?
10. Is your product and service category static or growing?
11. Is your category one of high or low interest?
12. Are there any regional or seasonal considerations?

Your Competition

1. What is the competition for your products and services?
(brand/company/market share)
2. How does your product stand in relation to competitors?
3. Which competitors pose the greatest threat? Why?
4. Are there important differences between your products and services, and those of the competition?

5. How do your competitors differ in their advertising and marketing strategies? Price?
6. Have all possible brand positions been covered, or is there a unique niche for your product?
7. What is the size of the overall market in units and dollars?

Your Target Market

1. Who will buy your products and services? (demographics)
2. Who influences buying?
3. Who will actually be using your products and services?
4. Who are the heavy users of your products and services?
5. Why would someone choose not to buy your products and services? (price, lack of awareness, etc.)
6. What kind of emotional sell would motivate someone to buy your products and services? (prestige, security, etc.)

Finally, ask yourself again:

1. What are you selling?
2. What is unique about what you sell -- or how you sell it? What do you offer that your competition doesn't?
3. How can you describe the answers to the above questions in one tight, persuasive line?

Your objective should be to establish your business as a lighthouse beacon sweeping across the darkness of the Internet. You are the expert in your field ready and waiting to solve your customer's problems. You have all the right solutions, and your success will be theirs, too. Clarify who you are first, and every marketing step you make from now on will be targeted like a laser beam.

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