

What Makes Your Business Unique?

Ask a hundred business owners in a category what their points of distinction are.

You'll hear adjectives like high quality, affordable, fast, reliable, convenient or experienced.

These are all good, but how many of their competitors are claiming to deliver the same things?

Your business and marketing plans should consider what makes your business unique.

Defining your ideal customer and your unique value proposition are parallel tasks. Many businesses try to appeal to the widest possible audience, for fear of losing sales.

A business that is well-positioned does one or two things excellent, and is known as the best in a specific part of their industry.

An unremarkable business tries to do everything under the sun, and does not excel in any of their offerings.

It is counter-intuitive to narrow your focus on your main offering, but it does two things. First, positioning yourself as the expert for specific offerings ensures that you will be top of mind for people who are looking for that specific service. Second, it enables you to serve your ideal customers better, as your time and efforts are now focused on them. The broader the offering, the harder it is to be excellent at all of them.

An Example of Unique Positioning

Here in Sacramento, there are dozens upon dozens of doughnut shops. They are indistinguishable from one another, except for one. Doughbot Donuts offers unique recipe and hand crafted donuts that would be extremely difficult for other shops to duplicate. Their shop has simple decorations, retro science fiction adornments that reinforce their branding. They charge a premium price for their unique products. Customers travel from all over the city to buy their products, and most days they sell out by 11am. This is an example of a business with a unique position and offering, that stands out from their competition.

How Do I Make This Work For Me?

Think about what sets you apart. Refine what it is you do that no one else or very few other people can do. How does that relate to the customers that you want to attract? If you had just these ideal customers, would you be able to sustain your business?

Play to your strengths. Downplay or marginalize your weaknesses. Ask yourself if that the work that you want to be doing in a few years time. If you can answer affirmative to all of these, you have the beginnings of a unique value proposition.

Conclusion

Don't be a commodity that customers can find anywhere. Position yourself as something unique, and show people you are unique, don't just tell them. Deliver value to your target customers, and you won't be one of the choices, you'll be the only choice.

Source: John Locke, Lockedown Design & SEO