

The UVP Concept

by Neil Guilmette

Executive Director, CPA Network Inc.

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In business, standing out more favorably, advantageously and appealingly, in the prospect or client's eyes is a large part of being chosen over your competition. The more succinctly you communicate what makes you the better choice, the more often you will be chosen over your competition. To do so, you must consciously, consistently, and continuously create maximum and real perceived advantage in the minds of your staff, clients, prospects and centers of influence (COIs).

Developing, identifying and incorporating your personal (firm's) Unique Value Proposition (UVP) into everything you do is challenging. But the rewards will far exceed the efforts. ***It will give you differentiation from, distinction from and the advantage over everyone in your market.*** So don't hurry. Measure twice and cut once. Think about the ***value and/or results*** of what you do. And think about what your competitors do, and do not do, and how you could provide more value and do it better. It's best to adopt a UVP that addresses an obvious dynamic void in the marketplace that you can best fill. Be cautious – if you are going to talk the talk, you must also walk the talk.

When you ask most business owners or their staff to articulate, clearly and concisely, in one paragraph or less, his or her company's UVP, most are unable to do so. Why? Because they have never thought about or offered a specific Unique Value Proposition! Most businesses have no UVP, only a "me too" rudderless, non-descript business which feeds solely on the momentum of the marketplace. There's nothing unique, nothing distinct, no promise of great value or benefit from the perspective of the prospect or client – just "buy from us" because we want you to.

It is not surprising that businesses lacking a UVP just get by. **Why should they get more than "their fair share" of the market if they offer nothing unique, different or special?** The small minorities of business professionals who adopt a UVP fare immeasurably better and have a profound advantage over those who do not.

How do you choose a UVP? You must first identify which needs and wants are going unfulfilled in your industry! You must think of them *from the perspective of the prospect or client*. Your UVP must somehow be directly connected to impacting the prospect or client's quality of life and income and communicated in a manner to create an awareness of them in the prospect or client's mind. Focus on the market need that is sorely lacking – provided you keep the promise you make. Be sure it's unique and that you consistently fulfill it for your prospects, clients, staff, and Centers of Influence.

The more measurable, comparable, demonstrable or quantifiable your advantage, the more powerful it is.

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At this point you should have developed the awareness that your newly adopted UVP must be integrated into the entire fabric of your company. It should be the foundation of all communication, both verbal and written. When calling on prospects, everything you discuss should reinforce your UVP. You must be able to explain your UVP to anyone, anywhere in a clear and concise statement that encourages further discussion and/or inquiry. Always help the prospect understand how it is in their best interest to take advantage of your UVP in terms of how it would impact their quality of life and income. Do not make the mistake of assuming they will make the connection. Don't try to wing it! Do your homework. Create word tracks which express the essence of your UVP. Make sure your entire staff is capable of powerfully expressing your UVP in 30 seconds, and then compellingly state how the prospect would benefit from the perspective of *their perception of value*.

Remember, you cannot appeal to everybody. There is a huge gulf between the upscale buyer and the bargain seeker and you probably cannot reach them both. Which market niche do you want to stake out as your own? There is no reason that you can not, by creating different UVPs, develop different niches or divisions within your company that compete against one another. You could develop an exclusive and upscale boutique operation to go after low volume, high-profit segment of your market. At the same time, you could create a discount department to pursue the mass market or bargain shoppers while simultaneously creating a super service operation to go after people requiring special attention or accommodation.

Your entire staff – everyone who has public contact or client interaction, or anyone who impacts your business- must fully understand, embrace, believe in and live your UVP. It cannot stop with sales rhetoric. It must become the company culture and conduct. Talk to your staff, write scripts and word tracks, hold contests, and reward people who distinguish themselves in promoting your UVP. Set an example so your staff can see the UVP in action. Most people are silently begging to be led and supported-especially your employees. Teach them how to be perpetual extensions of your UVP.

Thus your UVP will become the foundation for the value you choose to bring to the marketplace and will become a benchmark for operations, marketing, selling, customer relations, production, and day to day problem solving.