HOW TO WRITE A
Value Proposition Statement

ALL AG MEDIA MARKETING WORKSHEET

What the heck is a value proposition?

Most definitions are pretty bland. Here's my favorite from Peter Sandeen, who says a value proposition is, "A believable collection of the most persuasive reasons people should notice you and take the action you're asking for." A value proposition answers the basic question: **why should they choose you?**

VALUE PROPOSITION STATEMENT WORKSHEET

The following steps will help you create your value proposition. It's ok to work on this over several days as you think about each prompt. This isn't just some internal statement that you file away in your business plan. This is your unique advantage in the marketplace and should be the first thing people understand when they interact with your brand.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR IDEAL CUSTOMER

Always start from your customer's shoes. You probably started your business because it was something you had a passion for. The things that get you excited aren't necessarily the things that get your customers excited, though. The first thing you need to do is identify **your ideal customer**. Don't be afraid to get really specific. The more targeted you are, the better the chance you have for making a connection.

In the space below, describe your ideal customer. Who are they? What do they do? And most importantly, what do they need?

STEP 2: FEATURES VERSUS BENEFITS

Closing sales is about winning customers. You do that when they've decided you are the best one to fill their need. Let's say you have a vineyard/winery. I've been told by more than one winery owner that 2/3 or more of sales come from on-site purchases. This tells you people aren't buying convenience or even wine, they're buying an experience. The value these businesses deliver is experiential -- they provide a place for friends to connect while relaxing and enjoying a glass of wine.

Great sales people understand the difference between features and benefits. Features are specific attributes of your business. **Benefits are why they matter.** The benefits are the value you provide or the way you solve your customer's problem. They connect on an emotional level.

Here's an example: Ag Tourism

Feature: Curriculum based farm field trips

Benefit: Engaging learning experience* tied to classroom objectives*

**Note - the engaging learning experience appeals to the customer (the teacher) who is thinking about the end user (the students) AND being tied to classroom objectives appeals to the customer (the teacher) who needs to meet certain criteria for his or her job.*

FEATURES: List the features, or specific attributes of your business and/or the product you sell. For example, "grass-fed beef," "certified organic," "family owned," etc.

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BENEFITS: Now translate those features into the intangible benefits. These are the outcomes or results that your customers will (hopefully) experience by using your product or service – the reason **why** a prospective customer becomes an actual customer.

Consider Apple for a moment. When they released the ipod, they didn't sell it as 1GB of storage for MP3s...they sold it as 1,000 songs in your pocket.

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STEP 3: WRITE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION

We live in a world where people are pressed for time. They want answers. They want things simple. Don't expect them to understand how you're different unless you tell them.

Tiffany's isn't the least expensive jewelry brand and Apple doesn't have the largest selection of products. Both companies are successful because they focus on benefits - the motivation behind making the purchase. **There's a reason you stand out.**

A COMMON VALUE PROPOSITION FORMULA IS: **WE HELP X DO Y BY Z.**

For example, "We help families make memories at Old McDonald's farm."

ANOTHER APPROACH IS: **VERB, APPLICATION, DIFFERENTIATOR.**

For example, a sweet corn grower might say, "Taste summer in every bite."

OR, YOU CAN TURN YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION INTO **A QUESTION.**

For example, a lamb producer might ask, "Want to impress your dinner guests?"

Use the space below to draft your Value Proposition Statement. See examples of other companies Value Proposition Statements on the next page.

EXAMPLES OF VALUE PROPOSITION STATEMENTS

Reading other value proposition statements can help with the creative process. But remember to keep yours unique. There is no right or wrong way to write your statement. Just remember to answer the magic question, "What's in it for me?"

1,000 songs in your pocket.

APPLE'S IPOD

Manage your business in one place.

QUICKBOOKS CLOUD-BASED ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

Send better email.

MAILCHIMP

A great shave for a few bucks a month.

DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB

Soundtrack your life.

SPOTIFY

Make any idea beautiful online.

SQUARESPACE

Cooking as easy as eating.

HELLO FRESH