

12 STEP PLAN
GETTING READY TO GO TO MARKET
by Creative Junction

7 August 2007

CONTENTS

- 12 STEP PLAN - GETTING READY TO GO TO MARKET
- WHAT'S IN A BUSINESS NAME?
- WHAT'S YOUR USP?
- YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW
- SIGN UP TODAY TO CREATIVE JUNCTION & THE M.A.D. BUGLE

12 STEP PLAN - GETTING READY TO GO TO MARKET

By Matthew Tibble

1st Step – Research the Industry

- It is important to understand the broader industry, what are the influences in your industry, and how to allow for them
- Review the characteristics in the industry, how many competitors there are, etc
- Discover the Demand Vs Supply

Where to search for the data

- State Government – <http://www.business.vic.gov.au/>
- ABS - <http://www.abs.gov.au/>
- Google

2nd step – Defining Your USP

- USP stands for Unique Selling Proposition, and it represents what sets you apart from your competitor
- It is your competitive advantage, a marketable difference
- You can discover your USP by:
 - o Looking at your services, products and see if there is a difference
 - o Looking at your experience
 - o Looking at your business – is there a difference in price, quality etc

3rd Step – Defining Target audience

- This will have a strong influence on how you take your business to the market
- Marketing is about matching a product to a need
- The ways to get into the heads of your customer:
 - o survey your customers or potential customers – understand what they want and how they find the solutions to this need
 - o review any secondary research gathered already

4th Step – Developing a Brand, tag line, personality, etc

- This is the perception that you want the market to receive of your business
- It will be used in all promotional activities you do – web, print, etc
- It must be memorable

5th Step – Setting tangible business goals and objectives

- This is a vital part of marketing your business - what do you want and when do you want it
- You know the end result, and where you are now. Your goals and objectives are the steps between here and there
- They are not set in concrete, but it will give you the direction that you need as you grow your business

6th Step – Defining the Product Strategies

- What it is you do now that generates the income – which products and services you provide now, and what percentage of the business is attached to each of these areas
- Identifying what you need to do, and what product or services you will add in the future – satisfying the need of your customer

7th Step – Defining the Pricing Strategies

- What price position do you want to adopt? – value added, price competitive, premium, etc
- What margins you have and fixed costs, to help set your pricing?

8th Step – Defining the Operational Strategies

- What you will do to manage the processes – the service process, providing the product or service to the customer, assessing suppliers and sourcing new suppliers, etc
- Any OH&S procedures etc
- Staff manuals and goods handling

9th Step – Defining the Promotional Strategies

- Creating awareness, encouraging trial, and reminding your customers about you – 5-6 times to see your message before it sinks in
- This relates to what your customer has already told you about how you need to talk to them
- Define which promotional activities match how they research for a solution to their problem – TV, radio, newspapers, web, etc

10th Step – Options For Traditional Marketing

- This will depend on what impression you want your customers to perceive of you – premium, value-added, price competitive
- Print advertising – colour, black and white, magazine or newspaper
- Call to Action – Different call to actions for different messages or promotional campaigns
- Get 1-2 strategies working well if your marketing budget is low, BEFORE venturing into other strategies

11th Step – Reviewing process and adjusting to the demands of the customer

- Adjust your approach to suit the changing needs of your customer
- Be prepared to try something new

12th Step – The Cohesive Marketing Approach

- Integrated marketing message and brand
- The same message about your business repeated in the various promotional elements you use
- offline and online

WHAT'S IN A BUSINESS NAME?

By Matthew Tibble

Before you were born, your parents most likely spent considerable time in deciding what name to give you. Reviewing books with name suggestions, thinking about other family members or influences in their lives, and wanting to give you a label that you would be proud of were all considerations that weighed on their minds. Let's face it, choosing a name for something that will have a life of its own carries a fair amount of responsibility, as usually names stick for life.

Business names are no different.

Yet, how much time is given to the planning and development of a business name. If you are in business, or are about to go into business, how much time have you spent on thinking about what you should call your future venture?

When you are planning this part of your business, here are some useful considerations to be aware of:

Is it memorable?

Obviously, you will want the name to be memorable. It is often the first thing that your client or customer will see about your business, and the last thing they will too. Usually short or rhyming names are memorable. If the name can tell a story (when explained by your marketing material or yourself, if you are in a service-based industry), then this will also serve as a way that your name will be memorable.

Is it too obscure?

Acronyms, Latin names, or any other name that you choose needs to make sense – at some level – to the customer. Unless you have a massive pool of marketing dollars to educate your target audience that your name equals your business (such as Nexus Energy – Oil Company), you will need your name to be readily understood. For example, if you are in the design industry, words such as art, creation, image, and so on can be incorporated into your name to explain what you might provide the customer. "Nexus Designs" might be a name you choose, and it is most likely that your customer will think that you operate in the design industry.

Does it reflect the personality of the business?

Your business is a reflection on you - period. If you are passionate about life, helping others and so forth, your business will reflect that in its levels of customer service and satisfaction from the customer. If you are lack-lustre with life, your business will most likely reflect that with a relaxed attitude to marketing, and perhaps a low level of customer satisfaction. So, make sure your name captures the "feel" of your business personality.



Is it proactive? Is it energetic? Is it detailed and thoughtful? It may seem weird trying to capture feelings in words for a business name, but it is important to consider this when deciding on your name. After all, it will be around for a long while, and if it doesn't reflect the personality of the business from the start, it might cause trouble for you later on.

What tag line does it match with?

Often, business name development doesn't include the tag line or by-line that sits underneath or very near the name. This is a vital part of the branding and business name process, because it is a chance for you to explain a bit more about the business, the services you provide, the personality of the organisation, and so on. For example, Microsoft's tag line is 'Your Potential, Our Passion'. In this line, they are letting the customer know that they are committed to seeing the customer's potential achieved through the Microsoft products and services.

You might find as you work on different name options, certain words or phrases will pop into your mind that could work as this tag line. Be sure to write them down and review them in the context of the name, the industry, and other aspects of your future business.

Are there any quirky aspects of the name that will lend itself to a good logo?

A business name is more than just a name. Obviously, the words will carry a message, and should consider the areas mentioned above. But, what about colours, shapes, and other parts of the business name? You might be thinking – this is a name, not a picture. But, a business name *becomes* a picture

So, do the words you have chosen lend themselves to some interesting shapes, fonts, colours and so on? What aspect of your name can readily be utilised in creating an image that also captures your personality and supports the brand of the business?

Often, the best approach for developing your name is to sit down with a piece of paper (make that a few sheets of paper), and begin brainstorming. The key is to not stop until you have produced a list of – say – 35-45 options. Then, leave it for a while. Possibly come back and review it the next day. Show it to those that you trust with your business interests – those that support your endeavours. Listen to their feedback. Then, brainstorm some more. Keep going until you have a short list of possible names that meet the above criteria. Once you have done this, then you are in a position to check which of these names are legally possible to register.



WHAT'S YOUR USP?

By Matthew Tibble

Has anybody ever asked you that question before? What's your USP? Was it a client, your friends of family, or even your competition? If not, then today is the day that you are asked, and hopefully will be the day you can define it too.

USP is an acronym for **Unique Selling Proposition**. What this means in everyday terms is it is that element about you, your business, or your product that is unique to you. *That part that no one else has and it sets you apart from your competition.*

The reality is that there is someone else "out there" that is already servicing your customer with the same or similar product or service. Okay, it may be so remote that you and they will never cross paths – online or otherwise – but the odds of your business having competition is very high. Defining your USP and then channelling your marketing efforts to promote it will mean ***the difference between having a mediocre business, or a successful one.***

To give you an idea about what various USP's can be developed, have a look at this list below. Some of these may ring true for you:

A new method or system

You provide a new method or system to solve a customer's problem that is different to others. Let's say that a business needs to have a Procedures Manual written in such a way that it makes sense from the CEO down to the janitor. And other products or services on the market make it too difficult to understand for the majority of the employees of the business. Your system breaks the process down into achievable steps and engages everyone in the process. At the end, a Procedures Manual is delivered, but it works better, has a greater impact for the customer, and sets you apart from others who might have delivered a manual to the same customer.



A new design

This USP can be a bit more challenging, but still achievable. You have taken an existing product or service and made it better by changing the design or functionality of it for the customer. For example, you are a manufacturer of potato peelers. But, your peeler has a special hand guard which stops you from peeling your own skin as well as the skin off the vegetables. I know I would love one of those, and odds are so would other customers. What is it about your product that is different to others on the market?

A brand new product

This is an obvious USP. If you have created a product or service that meets a recognised need in your customer's lives, and no one else is providing the same thing, then make sure others are aware that you are the only available choice for this solution.

A new target market

What about marketing the same or similar products/services to another target market? Maybe you have been able to alter the implementation of a product or service so that it fits the needs of a different segment of the market? What about an MP3 player with bigger buttons for the elderly or poor-eyesight customers? What about a book with a different angle on a popular topic?

There are many ways you can differentiate yourself from your competitor in the eyes of your customer. Another USP that is often overlooked is that you have a different background, a "voice", and view on an issue than your competitor. This will resonate with some people more than others. An example of this is all the self-help books available in the bookstores. Many of these products address the same or similar issues, but are still making substantial sales **sitting on the shelf next to their competition!**

What works for one person may not work for another. And this is why **it is vital to communicate your difference, or USP, to your customer so they can discover if your business is the solution they are looking for.**

Here is a very simple equation that illustrates the importance of defining your USP:

USP + Recognised need = \$\$\$\$

It's about that simple. If you are able to clearly show that your USP will solve a problem that someone has, then you will definitely make money and create a successful business.

Ask your friends, family and current customers what they think you are best at. What question are you commonly asked to provide an answer for? This could well be your USP in hiding. Then, work on a way to communicate that to your target market.



YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW

By Matthew Tibble

You don't know what you don't know – what the heck does that mean?

Of course you don't know what you don't know, but in business, this could have unforeseen and often negative results.

When you are starting out a new venture, project, or completely new business, it is your goal to gather as much information about your target market, potential demand for the product or service, and any other news or information that you need to make the project a success.

You work at finding out what you don't know. And this process is an ongoing one.

Let me give you an example of what I mean:

Jane has decided to open up a hair salon in her neighbourhood. She has the training, and can cut a stunning hair style with her eyes shut. She does some research and discovers that there are a few competing salons in the market, but her research shows that there is more demand for what is currently serviced by these salons. After compiling her business plan, she sets up her shop and begins cutting the hair of her clients.

After a few months, things are moving along nicely. She has some clients that come in on a regular basis, and slowly her reputation of a knock-out stylist is growing to other areas. She thinks her business is financially sound, and decides to put on some more staff to help with the increase in work.

Fast forward 6 months.

Jane is wondering why business has been slow. The rate of new clients has slowed, and as a result, she has had to reduce her staff numbers. The bank is telling her that the financial position of the business is not as good as she had hoped – she is only one month away from closing the doors. Despite Jane thinking she knew enough about the financial side of her business, she faces the prospect of closing her business before it even reaches a year old!

This example highlights something that many business owners overlook – the need to discover and learn about those areas that they do not know about.

If you are thinking of running a business, or already do, what areas of this business do you know, and what areas don't you know about? Do you understand in details the financial side of the business – can you interpret numbers, reports, and make an assessment of how the business is trading on paper?

Do you know what your competitors are doing? Not just now, but in 3, 6, or 9 months time? Are you actively searching out new methods of delivering your product or service to the market?

The ultimate question is this:

“Are you finding out what you don’t know about, and sourcing a solution so you can empower your business?”

If not, then you need to be doing that now.

It isn’t a crime to not know everything (newsflash - that would make you human). However, it is a crime to take on the risk of a business without recognising that you don’t know everything, and that you either must find out what you don’t know, or have other people assist you with discovering these gaps of knowledge and providing an answer for you.

Your role is as the guiding force behind the business or project. And as such, must have access to the information you need to make the best decisions about your business.

Make the decision today to plug these gaps, and no longer be at risk of floundering because you didn’t know.



SIGN UP TODAY TO CREATIVE JUNCTION AND THE M.A.D. BUGLE!

Are you looking for a no-fluff, laymen's terms periodic newsletter or update service that keeps you informed of events and advances in the Marketing and Design field? If not, you should - for the simple fact that these two areas of your business evolve the quickest, and have the greatest potential to positively (or negatively) impact your business performance.

Visit CreativeJunction.com.au

