



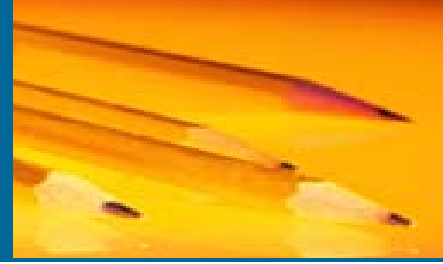
Building on Differentiation

*Focusing Your Client's Attention
on Your Strengths*

Tom Sant
Hyde Park Partners



Survey Says...



Most common complaints from evaluators about the proposals they receive.....

1. Vendor did not follow instructions
2. Vendor did not clearly demonstrate compliance
3. Vendor did not differentiate

Eight Differentiators You May Want to Drop Now



- Unique product features
- Quality service
- Best price
- Methods and tools
- Responsiveness
- Credentials
- Client importance
- Testimonials



Nine Differentiators That Are Still Strong



- Category authority
- Simplicity
- A real guarantee
- Giving something away
- Honesty
- Highly recognized third-party testimonials
- Being first (at something)
- Innovation
- Defying conventional wisdom

Common Mistakes In Positioning Product-Oriented Proposals



- Focusing on product efficiency
 - Superior product efficiency is a short-term advantage
 - The buyer may not care about your efficiencies
- Focusing on product features
 - Features are relevant only when they directly affect areas the decision maker cares about
 - Features must be linked to key decision criteria

Base Your Value Proposition On Your Differentiators



- Long-term competitive differentiation comes from systems or methods, not products or services
- Look at the entire chain of customer interaction for opportunities to differentiate



Showing Value In a Services Proposal



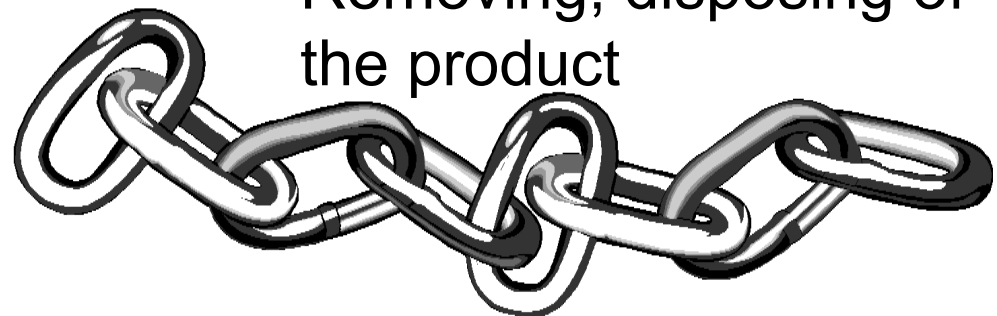
- Selling services = selling the invisible
- Where to focus:
 - How you will do the work
 - Methodology, processes, best practices
 - Prior experience
 - How you will manage the work
 - Planning, people
 - Detailed roadmaps
 - Who you will provide
 - Experience, skills
 - Special facilities or equipment you will provide

The Chain of Interaction: *Where do you add value?*



Focus on what you do that nobody else does, or what everybody does that you do in a different way.

- Learning about your product/service
- Ordering/purchasing your solution
- Payment options
- Delivery
- Installation
- Training
- Using your product/service
- Storing the product
- Transferring the product
- Getting help when using your product/service
- Repairing, maintaining
- Returning, exchanging, upgrading
- Removing, disposing of the product

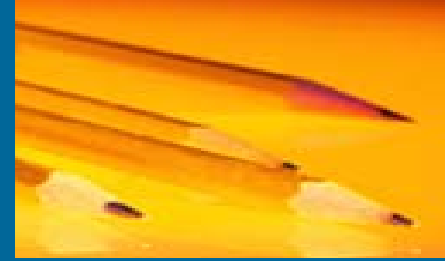


Differentiators vs. Competitors



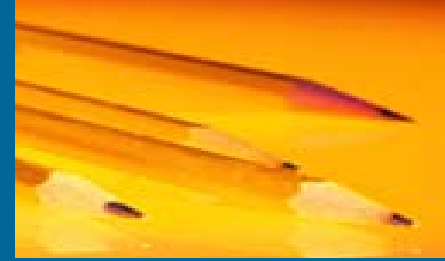
Competitors	Differentiators

Differentiators vs. Competitors



Competitors	Differentiators
KPMG PwC Cap Gemini	
EDI Oracle	
Niche players Web development firms	

Differentiators based on the typical cycle of interaction with clients



Points in the customer life cycle	Differentiators
<p>Learning about your services</p> <p>Ordering, purchasing, contracting for your services and/or related products</p> <p>Terms and conditions</p> <p>Payment options</p> <p>Processes, methodology for delivering services</p> <p>Quality assurance</p> <p>Training the client</p> <p>Reporting</p> <p>Getting help</p> <p>Removal, disposal of any products or systems</p>	

Linking Your Differentiators With Your Strategic Value Positions



Differentiator/ Uniqueness factor	Cost	Quality	Technology	Industry Trends	Minimal risk	Competitive advantage
Awards for superior products						
True Web-based architecture						
Lease or buy options						
Standard code base						
Fastest loading and retrieval						
Open architecture						
Microsoft Solution Partner						
First to market						
Team functionality						

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Differentiator/ Uniqueness factor	Cost	Quality	Technology	Industry Trends	Minimal risk	Competitive advantage

Weight the Value of Each Differentiator for Each Value Position



Differentiator/ Uniqueness factor	Cost	Quality	Technology	Industry Trends	Minimal risk	Competitive advantage
Awards for superior products	1	4	5	2	3	3
True Web-based design	3	2	5	5	1	4
Lease or buy options	5	1	1	3	4	4
Standard code base	4	3	3	2	5	3
Fastest loading and retrieval	3	2	4	2	3	4
Open architecture	3	2	5	4	4	5
Microsoft Solution Partner	1	4	3	3	3	4
First to market	4	4	2	3	5	3
Team functionality	3	1	4	2	2	5

Let the Value Proposition Determine Which Differentiators You Use



Differentiator/ Uniqueness factor	Cost	Quality	Technology	Industry Trends	Minimal risk	Competitive advantage
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Support Your Differentiation with Proof

Forget the marketing “fluff”!



Here are a few examples....

Anything look familiar?

- Best of breed
- World class
- Leading edge
- State of the art
- Quality focused
- Uniquely qualified
- Innovative

- High performance
- Synergy
- User friendly
- Integrated
- Partnership
- Seamless
- Robust

Vague generalities. Undefined or unsubstantiated claims.
Grandiose promises without substantiation.

What Kind of Proof Matters?

Show You Can Deliver—On Time, On Budget



Stack up the proof:

- Case studies
- References
- Testimonials
- Team resumés
- Project plan
- Third-party validation (press clips, articles, awards, etc.)
- Company capabilities
- Management philosophy
- Guarantees
- Quality control methodology



Proving Your Differentiators: Top-Level, Strategy Positions



- Top-level substantiation = proof statements
- Areas of the proposal where you can tailor the content to support or substantiate a specific theme:
 - Case studies
 - PAR format
 - Opportunity to focus the Action and Results components on the value proposition
 - Customer testimonials
 - Project summaries
 - Corporate experience
 - Company history
 - Management plan

Supporting the Win Themes: Incremental Evidence



- Incremental evidence = places where you can reinforce the win theme
- Try to weave your differentiators into the proposal in these areas:
 - Cover letter: mention the top 2 or 3
 - Proposal title
 - Section summaries and/or introductions
 - Product service details
 - Resumes
 - Headings and subheadings, titles of graphics

Track Reality, Measure Results



Keep track of what works and what doesn't.



- Differentiators will change and evolve
 - Competitive factors
 - Internal developments
 - Customer values
- “What you cannot measure, you cannot manage.”
--Peter Drucker



Good luck differentiating your offer!

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