

WHAT IS USP?

It stands for Unique Selling Point or Proposition

For exporters from developing countries wanting to penetrate the EU market, it is highly important to think about their typical strengths and highlight these in all their promotional activities and actions.

Promotional activities may be:

- The making of brochures, catalogues and flyers
- Composing a website or web-presence
- Any e-commerce activity
- Introduction letters and letter heads
- Footnotes on any publication
- Making of posters and banners
- Any verbal conversation or discussion

To understand what can be called unique in your company's processes or products, one has to understand the present situation in the target market. For that it is wise to talk to your consultant who knows this market. Your own experience in the target market is also valuable to take into account. Benchmarking with large and well known players in that market may also give direction to your thoughts and analyses.

Some examples of Unique Propositions are:

- Ultra short delivery times
- 100% guaranteed timely deliveries
- Full responsibility to deliver at the client's doorstep (INCOTERMS)
- Instruction books in the country's language
- Compliance to EU technical legislation (CE marking)
- Full compliance to EU standards (European Norms EN)
- Regular personal meetings at the customer's place
- Distinct price advantage

- Third party pre-export inspection
- Your amortization of die cost in the offered prices
- Immediate and effective responses
- Real partnership building
- Ability to comply with any packaging requirement
- Etc

So not the regular standard promotions for deliveries which everyone in Europe is now offering like: high quality, low prices and dedicated workforce. These will not contribute to giving you the benefit of the doubt, doubt that we all have here in Europe if we have to rely on sources outside the EU. If only it was because of cultural differences, customs and expectations.

Do not forget that buyers, big or small, are avoiding risk in the first place and new suppliers have to earn their place in the chain that they are part of.

How to find your Unique Selling Points (USPs)?

1. First talk to your present and domestic customers and find out what they appreciate most. Use your Customer Satisfaction system (ISO9001:2008).
2. Consult your CBI experts for their views, based on the audit.
3. Open up the discussion internally so that you have no difficulties later to make adjustments and all are working in the same direction to make exports happen.
4. Have a thorough study of your competitors and learn from their promotional strengths and maybe mistakes.
5. Which Points of Difference (PoD) can you detect, develop and subsequently promote?

In fact USP should be read as UPD, meaning Unique Point of Difference. Difference is what Europeans are looking for, but in a positive way.

Two important aspects should, during this exercise, always be observed by you.

1. What will be noticed positively in my promotions?
2. Are these valued as benefits by my target group?

Make sure you have several examples ready to prove your statements as being unique and beneficial for clients.

Whatever you highlight as the Unique Selling Points or Propositions to your potential customers should be backed-up by your performance. Anticipate to the reactions that you may get from your audience and have all organized internally. It is worthwhile to rehearse these actions and have try-outs with some business friends or good clients.

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