

Your Dental Practice Needs a Unique Selling Proposition

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Always remember that you're unique, just like everyone else. This paradox may refer to personal individuality, but it also is applicable to business. In fact, it is at the heart of every effective marketing plan.

Odds are, yours isn't the only dental practice in town. It might not even be the only one on your street. Patients have more choices than ever, and many of them are willing to travel a distance for high-quality care. Why should they choose yours? The answer to that question is your unique selling proposition (USP).

What USP Really Means

At first thought, you can probably offer many answers to the question of why patients should choose your dental office. Your clinicians are skilled and experienced, you offer amenities, you provide a variety of services, you strive for good customer service, and so on. However, other dentists in town would likely have similar lists.

The idea of a USP is often misunderstood to encompass the greatest benefits of a product or service. However, the key here is the word unique. The USP is a summary of what genuinely sets you apart from the competition, usually focusing on just one selling point. In dentistry, it is very likely something that other practices also have, but something that you genuinely do better than anyone else. Potential dental USPs include:

- **Convenience:** Most practices claim convenience and attempt to work with their patients' schedules, but you really focus on it. You've invested in a CEREC machine, you accommodate multiple family members' appointments scheduled on the same day, you're open on weekends, and you have an unusually generous cancellation policy.

- **Affordability:** You don't settle for standard policies. Your practice accepts as many types of insurance as possible, your office staff will advise patients and help them sign up for third-party financing, you have very flexible in-house financing, and you offer stainless steel crowns and other "economy" treatment options.
- **Quality:** Everyone strives to do good work. You go above and beyond using only the best materials, you use wax-ups and multiple models to design detail-perfect restorations, your work is automatically warranted, you've invested in the latest 3-D imaging technology for better treatment planning, and you work with vetted specialists for treatment that is beyond your scope.

Simple Steps to Defining Your USP

There are a few important qualities of a good USP. First, it needs to be unique. Next, it needs to be of value to your patients. As you can see from the examples above, it isn't actually about your service.

Charles Revson, the founder of Revlon, is known for saying that his company does not sell cosmetics. It sells hope. Similarly, you aren't really selling dental services. You are selling better health, the confidence of a nice smile, a great patient experience, and so on.

Identifying your USP off the top of your head can be more daunting than it sounds. But it isn't hard if you take the process step by step.

First, define your target market. Who is your typical (or ideal) patient? Adults, kids, senior citizens, or families? High or low income? Busy professionals in a hurry, or retirees who appreciate a slower pace?

Next, identify the problem you solve. Again, don't think about problems like cavities or missing teeth, because any dentist can solve them. The problem might be lack of time or money, or dental fear, or a distaste for the clinical atmosphere in a typical office.

Third, explain how you solve the problem. What exactly makes your dental care less scary, more affordable, more kid-friendly, better looking, or more high-end than other practices?

Then, refine and revise. After completing the first three steps, you probably have a lot of notes and a rather lengthy explanation of what sets you apart. Distill it into a succinct statement that would speak to patients and that someone uninvolved with your practice can easily understand.

Finally, put it to use. Of course, you will want to promote all of the benefits of your practice and all of the services you offer. However, your website and marketing materials should consistently convey your USP.

If you handle all or part of your marketing in-house, discuss the USP with those involved. Let your office staff know that this concept should be conveyed to new leads that call. It is especially important to provide this information to any contracted professionals or marketing companies you work with, because those outside your practice don't know what makes you unique unless you tell them.

Conclusion

There is a very good reason that your dental practice is the very best choice for your target market. Yet people won't know that unless you tell them. And before you can do that, you need to define it.

Mr. Arulrajah, president and CEO of [Ekwa Marketing](#), has been a leader in medical marketing for more than a decade. Ekwa provides comprehensive marketing solutions for busy dentists, with a team of more than 180 full-time professionals, providing web design, hosting, content creation, social media, reputation management, SEO, and more. If you're looking for ways to boost your marketing results, call (855) 598-3320 for a free strategy session with him.