Know what your business is for: the crib sheet

Positioning is the place your business holds in your customers' minds, compared with the other choices they could make. You earn your position by being clear about who you are and consistent in everything you do. Work through these in order.

1. Start here

Talk to the people you want to serve before you write anything.

- Who exactly do you want to serve?
- What problem do they say they have? Use their words.
- What are they doing about it now? That's your real competition.
- How will you hear from them cheaply and honestly?

> *If your answer is a list of what you can do, you haven't said who it's for yet.*

2. Who it's for

Build personas, not a list of individuals.

- Why should they be your customers? Why have they chosen you?
- What problems do they have, and how do you help solve them?
- Job title, size of business, what they're trying to do, likes, dislikes, motivations.

3. Who you are

Purpose, mission, values and priorities.

- Purpose: one line. It can fail, it shows the way, it tells you what to say no to.
- Mission: two or three sentences. Could it describe your biggest rival? Rewrite it.
- Values: three to five. Each one must be at the expense of something.
- Priority: your number one. Not money: money is the outcome.

4. Your message

Translate your mission, values and priorities into something outward-facing.

- What does this mean for the customer?
- Is it reassuring and easy to grasp?

5. How you come across

Personality and benefits.

- Style: the words you use. Tone: your attitude. Voice: what you stand for.
- Benefits are the effect of your values on the customer.
- Your price comes from your benefits.

6. Make it visible

Physical branding and proof.

- Name, colour scheme, logo, tagline, style guide.
- Your tagline is your message condensed into a few words.
- Start collecting proof from your very first customer.

7. Check it against the market

- Why would your customers use your biggest rival?
- Where don't you quite stack up, and what will you change?

8. Take it to market

- Which type of strategy, aimed at which market, and why?
- Two number-based goals and one effect-based goal.

Finish: your position on a page

- Purpose, mission, values, priority, message, who you're for, how you come across, what customers get, why they choose you over your biggest rival, tagline.
- Would your team and your customers recognise it? Could it describe your biggest rival?

Not having a mission statement is bad. Having a bad one is worse.

The full guide and workbook, and a review of your answers: Lewis English, Underpin Consultants · underpinconsultants.com · lewis@underpinconsultants.com · 07399 004 175