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## DECIPHERING MARKETING LINGO FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

Maybe you've heard these different marketing terms, maybe you haven't. Either way, let me help to clarify the difference between them, because you should have all three if you want to market successfully. And knowing what they are may be your first step to accomplishing all three for your business.

### Unique Selling Proposition

A unique selling proposition, sometimes referred to as a USP, is the one thing that is unique and valuable about your business, product or service? And it must be unique and valuable to your prospects or ideal clients, not just to you.

It may be an inherent attribute of your product or service (it's the only blue widget available and blue is the color your ideal customers prefer) or it may be something you create. I created the USP for my business, 10stepmarketing.

There are many marketing training programs and educational products available. But there were none I could find that taught small business owners how to create and implement their own marketing plan using a simple, step-by-step, question-and-answer method.

So I created my marketing training program (name and all) to fill this void in the marketplace. And it became my "created" USP. It didn't exist when I first started training 5 years ago — I created it and built my business around it.

Your USP is an idea or a concept. It is not the exact words you feature in your marketing. You will however use it to write and create your marketing messages.

### Single Message

This is what you say about your business, product or service when you market. It is the one key idea or message you include in all of your marketing. It may be very closely related to your USP, but it may not be exactly the same.

You will determine your single message AFTER you determine your USP. Additionally, look at your single message as the one thing you could tell your prospects to change their mindset about your product or service, from what they currently think to what you WANT them to think.

It is usually written in the form of a short statement or sentence. Its job is to take your prospects from what they think now to what you want them to think. Most likely you will NOT feature your single message in your marketing materials exactly as you have written it in your marketing plan.

The idea will be communicated, but you will very likely use different words in your actual marketing materials. For 10stepmarketing, my single message is "If you can answer 10 questions, you can successfully market your business." (In my case, I turned my single message into a tagline because it was succinct, it communicated exactly what I wanted, and frankly, it just WORKED!)

### Tagline

Your tagline is an actual line of marketing copy you write to sum up what you do, or what you want your prospects to know about your product or service, or a key benefit they will reap if they purchase. You will draw on your USP and your Single Message to help you craft your tagline.

This is the only one of all three (USP, Single Message, Tagline) your prospects will see exactly as you have written it in your marketing plan. As stated above, my tagline for 10stepmarketing came directly from my single message. This is not usually the case, but it just happened to work out that way.

You may have the same situation. Your USP or your Single Message may be so spot-on you choose to use it as your tagline. As long as your tagline communicates a customer-focused message that's great.

Always ask yourself the question "What's so great about that?" when you are thinking of putting a tagline or any other message or copy in front of your prospects. If "what's so great" is obvious, your copy or tagline is probably already very customer-focused.

If you can further drill down to a more specific customer benefit when asking this question, then you are still in business-owner "feature-land" and you will want to keep asking "What's so great about that?" until you can't drill down any further.