



20 Getting clear about what you are selling

What do you need to be clear about?

Having done your market and customer research and decided on your niche market, the next task is to clarify exactly what it is that you are going to be selling to this market. You will need to be clear about:

- the appropriate products and services
- the appropriate packaging of your products and services
- the appropriate pricing structure.

Why is it important?

It is vital to be clear about what it is that you are actually selling and the value you are offering. Your communication with your customers will be influenced by your own level of clarity. It is much easier to sell your products and services when you are clear what they are and how they link together. Have you ever not bought from somebody because they were too confusing or offered too much that you just felt overwhelmed. Sometimes less is more. There is a huge marketplace out there and a tremendous amount of choice. So buying from someone who is totally clear about what they have, how it can be of benefit and is able to put that information across in a straightforward manner can be a godsend.

Your challenge

Be careful of expanding and tailoring your services to suit every customer request that you get. Of course having the flexibility to adapt and package your services in the exact way that your customer requires adds considerable value to your offering, however there must be limit to how much you expand your portfolio of services. If you do simply say yes to every request you get you may end up with a lot of stress and a lot of extra work on your hands. If you are not careful you could end up spending all your time delivering something completely different from what you initially decided to sell. This is fine if it works for you, but not if you have deviated a long way from your core business and are out of your area of expertise.

HOW TO GET CLEAR ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE SELLING – SPECIAL RESPONSE CHECKLIST

- ▶ Study your market, customer and competition research.
- ▶ Focus on your list of major customer problems that need a solution.
- ▶ Remind yourself of what it is that your target customers are actually buying from you. Refer to the section in the book 'Understanding what people buy' (Chapter 5).
- ▶ Look at how your products and services can provide the solution.
- ▶ Make a list of the appropriate products and services you can offer.
- ▶ Circle the products and services you want to sell.
- ▶ Consider how your customers may want to buy these products and services.
- ▶ Consider ways to package your product and service to facilitate customer choice.
- ▶ Consider your prices. How do they compare with those of your competitors? Are you charging too much or too little?
- ▶ Test out some product packages and some prices with your customers.
- ▶ Listen to feedback from your customers. Notice what people repeatedly ask for or have problems with.
- ▶ Could you expand your product and service portfolio to accommodate those needs? Make sure you properly assess demand before you jump!

How to use this information

Once you are clear about exactly what you are selling you are in a position to move forward and create your unique selling proposition, your brand, your strap-line and all your marketing messages. To do this beforehand would be like closing the stable door once the horse has bolted.

Think clearly and sell clearly