

You Cannot Buy Differentiation

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Differentiation in business is not something you go out and buy off the shelf and plug into your company. It's something you have to strategically identify, develop, refine and promote. The best place to start is looking at your competition. What is it you offer that none of those other companies do? What is it about your business that makes you stand above the rest in the eyes of your customers?

Whatever THAT thing is, you need to hang your hat on it and shout it from the rooftops. That is your differentiation! This discernable difference or characteristic between you and the other vendors in your space is what will convince clients to choose you over them. Business is no place for modesty.

Here is a quick test to assess just how differentiated you really are:

1. Visit the websites of your top 3 competitors
2. Read their intro copy on their home page
3. Read your intro copy on your home page
4. Temporarily disassociate yourself from your business (just pretending) and ask yourself this question: do any of the four companies (yours included) really stand out from the others?

If you are lucky enough to be able to say that your business does in fact stand out, then congratulations! You are in fact communicating differentiation. For those of you that aren't so lucky, please consult a professional.

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