

CEO Worldwide Expert File

WHY SHOULD YOUR CUSTOMERS DO BUSINESS WITH YOU?

Written by Joe Orlando

If you can't explain why customers should do business with you, how can you expect THEM to know!

Listen and look closely at advertisements that promote that they are the BEST – HIGHEST RANKED – MOST AWARDED – at something and it always comes with the key qualifier. Best “in class,” and most awarded “in their segment...”



THIS is the very key! Eliminate every opportunity to be measured on a level playing field with everyone else in your markets. Unless, of course, you are already the market leader with a substantial share...but I suspect, to achieve this, the market had to recognize uniqueness and a “bar” was raised with which to measure all others.

Create and play on a field that you know you dominate and force others to compete with you on your terms. One example from my past. Where IBM, NCR, Dell and HP were the recognized leaders in Point of Sale computers, a relatively unknown brand struggled to even be invited to bid. All of the others have nationwide and worldwide onsite repair capabilities with 8 hour response time offered. Too small to credibly compete, we redesigned a point of sale system that was the first and only blade based self service POS that was “purpose built” for POS with technical features (liquid cooled; flash boot; single module replacement from front of POS). The new challenge was a discussion around uptime, availability and purpose built design...something the bigger brand names struggled to adequately address for those who valued these aspects most. The company began winning contracts and industry awards and global recognition for innovation. **You want to win more? Change the game!**

It doesn't always mean you have to revamp your entire product offer. Much can be accomplished by better targeting your offer to a segment that values most what you have to offer – where others don't shine as bright due to their huge size; slow responsiveness; higher costs; or merely they don't value this segment as highly. Example? EVERYONE wants to use the biggest utility companies in the Country – Duke Power and/or PG&E for example. To compete head to head against the largest industry vendors can be both expensive and time consuming. Select the target who needs most what you readily have and can do better than the bigger competitors – say CoOp and Municipalities ... and strive to be the BEST... for this segment... and you may well enjoy more sales... shorter sales

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cycles... domino referral sales... greater brand awareness... more profitable deals... a broader customer base making you less vulnerable to fickle customers who change vendors every contract cycle.

So, how do we know which game to play? Everyone could use some help framing the following. You and your team are closer to your business than almost anyone. Your individual and collective perspective would be collected from all sources. Making an extraordinary effort to have these questions answered by a wide collection of sources is strongly advised. Feedback and input from customers; suppliers; sales partners; industry influencers and – ever more important – customers you are losing or have lost. **Their perception is their reality** – no matter what you say.

1. What do we do? “One sentence”

a. *“We make the best value priced metal soft drink can in the Americas.”*

2. What do we do *uniquely or better than anyone else?* (“We are the only one who...”) – a para max and try not to make it a catch all...like, “we are the easiest to work with, best priced...flexible...custom tailored... mass production...green (recycled)... lightest weight...most durable... stylish...”

3. What Specific Segments Do We Provide a Specialized Offer? Avoid “every customer with a pulse” mentality. Consider lifetime profitable customer profile. Rank and prioritize your segments.

4. What is our Value Proposition to 1) Financial Services (specifically subsegment Client Account Records); 2) HealthCare (specifically subsegment EMR); 3) Telecommunications/Utilities (specifically subsegment Subscriber Records)

5. Identify, Validate and Document (from the target’s perspective) THEIR Value Metrics (I need to manage costs down and I need an cost effective tool to help me); Buying Criteria (I don’t want to have to change everything I do to use that vendor’s product – the product should suit me and not force me to conform to it); Easy to Position the Benefits to my Stakeholders; ...

Position the Problem Statement – then - **Position the Value Proposition** — For example, as a customer, I struggle to integrate and make seamless disparate point products that actually create exposures. Where do other approaches fall short – what makes us the better way to go... - **one page.**

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Why YOU? 2-4 pages – brief non technical business case positioning paper to highlight the challenges; demonstrate how well you know their pain points and exposures; why the current and/or typical approach is insufficient; position against the competition (highlight the current and typical shortfalls for example – classic security rarely precludes the extraction of digital files on a USB or download from a USB); demonstrate how your offer came to be; the considerations; what was rejected; the rationale that drove the development of your offer – in terms that keep the customer pain point front and center.

Value Proposition	Ante (what it takes as a baseline to even be in the market)	Check (what competition does to win and differentiate themselves)	Fold (What business do we simply consider too distracting or costly to chase with low chances to win? and/or marginalized returns?)	Raise (what do we have to do to consistently win?)
Segment 1				
Segment 2				
Segment 3				

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About the Author: Orlando Joseph



Global Technology Executive with strong business and financial acumen. Strong ability to link marketing strategy and results directly to overall business strategy and company financial goals. Keen abilities to develop strategy from in-depth analysis of buyer and/or customer insights. Documented program development skills, from advertising to digital presence across all relevant marketing channels. Possesses excellent influencing skills and able to drive consensus. Able to recognize and articulate a future direction; provide strategic direction, and have the ability to direct global and localized products, brand, advertising and related specialties while managing budgets. A strong track record of new product development and demonstrated ability to forge strategic alliances with key partners. Accustomed to driving results and delivering return on investment.

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