Building Your Local Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

Webinar #2
July 8, 2024
ICCB Team

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Topics

• Quick Review: Webinar #1
• Why conduct a competitive analysis
• How to use a competitive analysis template to identify your unique selling proposition (USP)
• Deep dive into toolkit items & messaging deconstruction
• How to tailor the toolkit items using your USP
• Sequencing your employer lead follow-up using the toolkit
• Next Steps
Webinar #1 Review: Campaign Summary

**Goal:** To make the Illinois system of noncredit and adult education providers top of mind with employers when considering solutions to help them compete.

**Strategies:**
1. Increase awareness about the collective employer solutions of noncredit and adult education providers for Illinois employers.
2. Improve employer market penetration for noncredit and adult education providers.
3. Increase employer engagement across the state by building the capacity of noncredit and adult education providers to have an “employer first” mindset.

**Tactics:**
Statewide lead generation digital campaign
Campaign toolkit
Professional development webinars
What are Touchpoints and Why Does Each One Count?

Toolkit Summary:

- Campaign Logos & Usage Guidelines
- Ready-made Fact Sheets & Flyers
- Editable Fact Sheets & Flyers
- Guide: How to Edit Fact Sheets
- eNewsletter Template with HTML Code
- eNewsletter in PDF Format
- Ready-made Social Media Posts & Graphics
- Editable Press Release
- Campaign Video
B2C & B2B Messaging Differentiators

Engagement Fueled by Emotion & Basic Human Needs

Brand Appeal: Personal & Emotional

Engagement Motivated by Business Goals, Budgets & Relationships

Brand Appeal: Competency, Expertise, Problem-Solving
Competitive Analysis

A competitive analysis is the process of examining similar brands in your industry to gain insight into their offerings, branding, sales, and marketing approaches.

In the private sector, knowing your competitors is important to increase market share and sales.

It’s just as important in the public and nonprofit sectors because as a noncredit and/or adult education provider, there are for-profit schools and programs that offer similar education and training services. And, even if your services are free, the employer still evaluates the benefits of engaging with you based on their time that they need to engage with your program.

How do you stack up against these options in the mind of employers?

Competitive Analysis helps you answer…

Why would an employer want to partner with your organization versus a competitor?

What do you do different and/or better than your competitors?

Is engaging with you worth their time?
Poll #1: Competitive Analysis

Have you ever conducted a competitive analysis?

Yes
No
Not Sure
Competitive Analysis Benefits

- Differentiate your services against those who provide similar offerings
- Fulfill customers’ desires and solve their problems better than competitors
- Distinguish your brand
- Stand out in the market
- Identify your USP
- Develop critical marketing messages
Getting a Handle on Your Competitors

• Conduct a Google Search of key words likely used to find your programs/services to identify competitors within your service area. Start with general search terms like “training for employees [insert your county]” or “workplace literacy for employees” [insert your county]” to identify similar organizations in your service area.

• Make a list of organizations that directly compete for employers’ attention and offer similar services as noted on the campaign landing page.
Competitive Analysis Grid

Use your template to start the Competitive Analysis.

- ✓ Company Name & Location & URL
- ✓ List service/program offerings
- ✓ Review online footprint including website, social media accounts
- ✓ Ranking in search engines
- ✓ Brand narrative/story
- ✓ Defined Unique Selling Proposition (USP)
Example: Visalia, CA
Online Competitor Research

Search Term: “training for employees Visalia CA”

Paid ads will be displayed first. Review these competitors as well as those that come up organically in the search engines.
Example: Visalia, CA
Online Competitor Research

Search Term:
“training for employees Visalia CA”

Organic results are followed by “sponsored” paid ads
Example: Competitor Online Footprint
Brand Narrative & Benefits

This particular company leverages high powered celebrities to teach employees online as “next level learning.”

While noncredit doesn’t have celebrities, your instructors are “hometown heroes” that know your unique market which could flip this particular USP on its head.

How might the benefits statements on this slide be applicable or reframed to describe the benefits for your noncredit programs?
Let’s say you considered this company a competitor, ask yourself what does noncredit program do different or better?

Example: You latest grant to design unique offering to support employers.

Make a list of what you believe is your USP to test with your current customers (slide 15 details the process for testing).
Example: Competitor Online Footprint
Website and Social Accounts

Also look at social media accounts to examine types of posts, hashtags utilized, followers.
Potential USP:
What we do different & better?
Over 95% of our instructors are from Tulare County so they understand the local market challenges you face firsthand & the skills your employees need to help you compete.

About us
Welcome to the College of the Sequoias Training Resource Center. By working closely with employers, the Training Resource Center provides local and regional businesses with industry-relevant, customized training and education that enhances employees’ skills and develops a competitive and productive workforce.

- Our mission is to advance the economic growth and global competitiveness of business and industry in our region.
- Our vision is to be the preferred partner and provider of training and consulting services.

2019-2020
- Over 2,400 employees trained
- Over 240 employers participated
- 53% increase in learning

Training Topics
- Soft Skills & Leadership
- Food Safety
- Computer Software Skills
- Manufacturing & Automation
- Quality & Improvement
- Compliance

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Why Should I Train my Employees?
Benefits
- Reduced employee turnover
- Reduction of errors & accidents
- Improved employee performance
- Improved employee satisfaction & morale
- Addressing weaknesses
- Consistency
- Enriched talent pool & employee potential
- Increased productivity & adherence to quality standards

Check out the stats*:
- 94% of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it invested in their training
- 76% of your employees are looking for career growth opportunities
- 40% of employees leave their job within the first year unless they receive training and education from their employer
- 74% of employees feel they are not reaching their full potential unless they receive training from their employer
- 87% of Millennials state that having access to training is very important to their decision of whether to stay in their jobs

"Companies that offer training have a 218% higher income per employee than companies without formalized training; and, they have a 24% higher profit margin"**

"Why More Training?" (FPSA News, September 15, 2020)
Brand Narrative
Using a USP to tell your story

**Without USP**

About us

Welcome to the College of the Sequoias Training Resource Center. By working closely with employers, the Training Resource Center provides local and regional businesses with industry-relevant, customized training and education that enhances employees’ skills and develops a competitive and productive workforce.

**With USP**

The College of Sequoias Training Resource Center offers industry-relevant, customized training and education that elevates the skills of your employees.

Over 95% of our instructors are from Tulare County so they understand the local market challenges you face firsthand and the skills your employees need to help you compete.

**COS Training Resource Center**

*Where local instructors grow local success*

*Or*

*Train Local*
Testing Your USP
Qualitative Interviews with Current Customers

Script & Questions:

I’m conducting a few informal interviews with our current customers to identify how we can improve our services. I’d like to ask you a few questions. Your candid input is truly valuable.

- You have utilized our (XXXX) training programs. Have you used other training providers in our area for similar programs or any other programs?

If yes:
- May I ask the name of the provider & how they helped you?
- How would you compare the programs in terms of what worked best for your organization? Are there things that we do better or differently?
- Would you say that we are an organization that (insert your USP that you want to test)?
- Why or why not?

If no:
- What benefits did you derive from our program?
- Are there things that we could improve upon?
- Would you say that we are an organization that (insert your USP that you want to test)?
- Why or why not?
B2C & B2B Messaging Differentiators

**B2C**
Engagement Fueled by Emotion & Basic Human Needs
Brand Appeal: Personal & Emotional

**B2B**
Engagement Motivated by Business Goals, Budgets & Relationships
Brand Appeal: Competency, Expertise, Problem-Solving
Turnover got you down? Over 94% of employees, in a recent survey, said they would stay if the company invested in their training.

Our industry-relevant menu of customized training options deliver results. Over 95% of our instructors are from Tulare County so they understand the local market challenges you face firsthand & the skills your employees need to help you compete.

Examples:
- Contact XXX at XXXX
- Go to www.TrainLocal.com

COS Training Resource Center
Where local instructors grow local success
Tailoring the Toolkit

You have flexible options to tailor the toolkit using your organization’s logo, using your USP and messages that are specific to your service offerings.

OR

You can use the ready-made assets.
What are Touchpoints and Why Does Each One Count?
Touchpoints & Your Toolkit

Your goal in the campaign is to “get the sit” with the employer, meaning you want to be able to have a time to either conduct a zoom or face-to-face meetup with the employer.

Best practices for what occurs during that meetup is covered in Webinar 3, but for now, let’s get the sit. You do that by contacting them by phone, email, text and through the items in the toolkit to help you reach the necessary number of touchpoints.

When you receive a lead from the campaign that means a prospective employer has seen the ad at least one time or more!

That’s one to two touchpoints down and at least 6-7 more to go to get a possible “sit” with the employer.

Let’s give you an example of how to execute touchpoints with your tailored messaging. These are only examples so you’ll need to edit the content and tactics to your communication style.
Touchpoint #1
Ads

Connect With Us To Keep Your Business Competitive

Largest Workforce Training Provider in Illinois
Example: Touchpoint #2 Email

When you receive a lead from the ICCB campaign team, you need to follow up as quickly as possible!

Craft an email that aligns with your personal communication style. Here’s an example.

Hi (Employer Name):

We are excited that you’d like to get more information about (insert what they are interested in which will be noted on the leads sheet). As a proud partner of the Behind Every Employer Illinois campaign, our organization is known for (insert your USP).

I’ve attached a link to our short video as a starting place for you to learn more and I would like to set up a zoom or face-to-face meeting to get started on finding the right solutions to keep you competitive.

What works best for you? (provide 3 meeting days and times)

Looking forward to connecting with you, (insert your name)

(insert signature line)
(insert proud partner Behind Every Employer logo)
Opt In to our eNewsletter (link to your eNews sign up)
Example: Touchpoint #3
LinkedIn

After you send your initial introduction email, search for your prospect on LinkedIn and ask to connect with a note:

Hi (insert name): I’m part of the Behind Every Employer Illinois network at (insert your organization). I just sent you an email to provide more information about (insert what they are interested in). Looking forward to connecting with you.
Example: Touchpoint #4 - Phone

48 hours later if no response to your email, give the prospect a call and leave a message that is different than your email.

Hi (Employer Name). This is (your name) from the Behind Every Employer Illinois campaign and (insert your organization’s name).

I sent an email on (date) as I know you were interested in getting more information from our network about (insert what they are interested in).

We’ve successfully worked with more than XX employers in our area to provide this exact service, helping them (insert data point about the results of your efforts).

I would like to set up a Zoom or face-to-face to discuss how we can execute these results for your company.

(Provide name/number and available times to connect).
Example: Touchpoint #5 - Email

48 hours later if no response, send another email using the fact sheet.

Hi (Employer Name). I left a message for you and sent a request to connect on LinkedIn.

Given busy schedules, I’ve included a fact sheet on (insert what they are interested in), along with a few customer references and quotes that provide insight into how we’ve helped other companies be competitive.

I would like to set up a Zoom or face-to-face to discuss how we can execute these results for your company.

(Provide name/number and available times to connect).

(insert signature line)

(insert proud partner Behind Every Employer logo)

Opt In to our eNewsletter (link to your eNews sign up)
Privacy laws are getting extremely complex so always get people to opt in to your eNewsletter. You can send your prospect an email with some excerpts from your eNewsletter as a start and ask them the following:

Hi (Name): I thought you might enjoy this article from our latest eNewsletter that shares more information about (insert topic the prospect is interested in).

If you’d like I can subscribe you to the (insert cadence, e.g., monthly) eNewsletter for our valued business community.

All the best, (insert name)

(insert signature line)
(insert proud partner Behind Every Employer logo)
Opt In to our eNewsletter
Example: Touchpoint #7
LinkedIn

Back to LinkedIn! If the prospect has connected with you on LinkedIn, send another note to see if you can get a time to connect via Zoom or a face-to-face meetup.

If they haven’t accepted the invitation, look to see if you have common connections and ask for an introduction through your connection.
Hi (Employer Name). This is (your name) from the Behind Every Employer Illinois campaign and (insert your organization’s name).

I just wanted to make one more attempt to see if you’d like to get a quick consult with me to discuss (insert interest area).

We just received a new grant to support employers in this area and I would really like to make sure you can leverage this opportunity.

(Provide name/number and available times to connect).
## Summary Touchpoint Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Touchpoint Number</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Next Step</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>You receive a lead from the ad campaign</td>
<td>Follow up immediately via touchpoint #2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Email/Video</td>
<td>Follow up 24 hours later via touchpoint #3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Follow up 48 hours later via touchpoint #4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Phone Call</td>
<td>Follow up 48 hours later via touchpoint #5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Email/Fact Sheet</td>
<td>Follow up 48 hours later via touchpoint #6</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Email/eNewsletter Opt In</td>
<td>Follow up 72 hours later via touchpoint #7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>LinkedIn</td>
<td>Follow up 72 hours later via touchpoint #8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Phone Call</td>
<td>Re-assess</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Next Steps

• Conduct a competitive analysis to determine your USP & tailored messaging
• Start editing the toolkit
• Identify your touchpoint sequencing
• Set up a leads team as to who will be following up with the leads
• Attend Webinar #3: Consultative Sales Process
Upcoming Webinars

Webinar #3: From Prospecting to Engagement
This webinar assists colleges and adult education practitioners in closing prospects from the campaign leads.

July 18th
3pm – 4pm CST
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Thank you!