

# How to make sure your new product fills a need

[Business](#)



Every product must be desirable. If not, no one will hand over their hard-earned cash for it. Someone who says they'll buy a product and someone who does are very different; one shows general interest. The other is a customer.

In business you either have customers, or you don't. It's black and white. If you don't have customers, you have a hobby. Unless you can:

- Develop a competitive advantage.
- Understand your target market.
- Know what channels to market.

When all three conditions are fulfilled, you have a smart business that's built on the foundation of analytic information. It'll help you expand when the time comes.

## **The Competitive Advantage or What Your Competition Wishes They Had**

A competitive advantage or edge has at least one thing that sets your product apart from the competition. It's the reason customers turn their back on products they've endorsed for years. When they get their hands on your product, they never want to go back.

Sometimes, finding your competitive advantage is simple. People develop products because they couldn't find what they needed. What they needed is the pain point.

Your competitive advantage could be based on several things:

The people you address: In the last few years, there's been an influx of interesting fitness wear for plus size people. Why? Because before, their only option was oversized T-shirts, but not anymore.

The materials you use: Organic is in because health nuts really dig it. They also like to support causes to make a difference in the world. But for a time organic was different and hip and cool. People wanted on the new trend, so they did.

Your message: As stated above, some people buy into products because they feel strongly about the message. If you're knitting sweaters for tiny kittens... well, people want to save the poor, shivering, helpless kittens. Not to mention tiny sweaters automatically create an adorable image in your head.

Get creative if your competitive advantage isn't obvious.

## **Do You Know All About Sally?**

Sally is your target customer.

She's a lovely lady, married, with two kids but no dog. Her favorite snack, after hitting the gym twice a week, is apples with peanut butter. On Sunday she cleans the house from top to bottom, and on Wednesday's she the host of Girl's Night. She and her three best friends come over for Wine and Whine, where they release all the tension built up from the week.

It's all great, sure, but Sally wants more. Since Bob Jr. and Sarah are now in pre-school, she's yearning to go back to work. But what to do about her blank resume? Luckily, you provide resume writing services for mothers  
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gearing up to return to the workforce. You know Sally needs your services more than ever.

Seems like a lot of detail, doesn't it? Knowing her kids' names; keeping track of how many times she goes to the gym; hearing about girl's night. It all seems pointless. Especially since all she wants is her resume written professionally.

But you're wrong. You want to know everything about your target market. The more you know, the better your message will be when marketing. You want to know all their pain points. What drives her to your product? Well, her best friends complain about work but she craves it. Why is she ready now? The kids aren't in the house as often.

And that's not all. You need to know more. Like where she hangs out online — Facebook? Pinterest? — and whether she avidly uses her smartphone or a tablet.

No one has ever said they know too much about my customer. And you won't either.

## **To Market, To Market, We Go**

Now it's marketing time. This is the fun, but often frustrating, part of owning a business. Especially when just starting. But since you know your unique offering and who wants it, it's a lot easier this time around.

You first have to decide what type of marketing to do. Offline, such as brochures and billboards? Or online, such as email or social media

marketing? This is the most critical step. Because if you select the wrong method and channel, no one will know your product exists.

At least, no one who will be a customer. And the only money you'll see is the bills flying out of your hand into the fireplace — all been burned away.

You'll need to research.

Ask questions in public forums, such as Facebook groups or even Reddit. But also be quiet, listen, and take notes. Check out social media platforms and see how much engagement there is in your industry. Test drive some ideas for low or no costs and see what the response is.

Marketing is about data, but it's also about experimenting. There isn't a one-size-fits-all approach. Experiment and make sure your product fills a need.

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