

# Sales & Marketing



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By New Zealand Trade and Enterprise

## How to attract consumers in a new export market

A good value proposition will significantly boost your chances of success in a new export market.

Being able to clearly articulate why your customers want your product or service is a powerful selling tool. To do this, you need to develop a value proposition.

Your value proposition will help you get to grips with who you are selling to and what problem they want to solve. You can then match up their needs to what your product or service can do.

### What is a value proposition?

A value proposition is a single statement that answers the following questions:

- What is the product or service on offer?
- Who is its target customer?
- In what circumstances would they use it?
- How will it benefit them?

Buyers are interested in what they can get out of your product or service. They have a problem that needs a solution, whether they realise it or not. You must reveal the problem – the job to be done – and convince them your product/service is the answer. As Harvard marketing professor Ted Levitt says: “Nobody wants a quarter inch drill bit, but they might want a quarter inch hole.”

Value propositions should be tailored to suit different markets – and different segments within each market – because each has unique needs and aspirations.

### Articulating your customer’s needs

To develop your value proposition, you need to articulate why your customers need what your product or service can deliver.

### Make a customer profile for each segment of your market.

You should have identified market segments already. Apartment-dwellers aged 30 to 40, for instance, or high-income, environmentally

conscious women. The next step is to create a customer profile for each segment. This will include age, gender, education level, shopping habits, job, and interests. Field research is important when making customer profiles. You want them to reflect your target customers as realistically as possible.

### Identify the job to be done by your product or service.

Make a list of the tasks your customer/end user is trying to perform and the problems they need to solve. These could be functional, social and/or emotional. Getting something from A to B is a functional job. Changing how a person is perceived by their colleagues is a social job. Stopping someone’s anxiety over being late is an emotional job.

### Identify the customer pains to be overcome.

What negative experiences is your customer looking to avoid in the process of getting the job done? These might include logistical hurdles, financial costs, physical discomfort, irritation or risks.

### Identify the customer gains to be made.

What benefits will your customer get by using your product? Think about what will delight your customer and boost your chances of conversion. Gains might be concrete results your customer would expect, such as an increase in room temperature if you’re selling heaters. They can also be aspirational, or surprise advantages that a customer might not have associated with buying your product, such as helping the environment.

### Articulating your product’s benefits

Next, succinctly explain how your product/service matches your customer’s needs. Keep in mind information you’ve gathered about your competitors. Try to make potential customers question your competitors by

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a lush green forest. In the foreground, there are several shipping containers and cardboard boxes. One large orange container is on the left, and a green one is on the right. In front of them are several brown cardboard boxes of various sizes. The text is overlaid on this background.

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