

Why Customers Choose You

Understanding Value Propositions & Brand Perception

LESSON GOAL

By the end of this module, you will understand why a strong value proposition is the foundation of all effective marketing, how to analyse customer jobs, pains, and gains, how the Value Proposition Canvas works, and why great brands compete on meaning -- not features.

VALUE PROPOSITION CANVAS

CUSTOMER JOBS . PAINS . GAINS

BRAND PERCEPTION

3 LAYERS OF VALUE

Part 1-2 . The Customer First

- Why most businesses sound the same
- What customers actually buy (not features)
- The Value Proposition Canvas explained
- Customer Jobs, Pains & Gains in depth

Part 3-5 . Design & Strategy

- Designing your Value Map
- Food delivery app -- real-world case study
- The 3 layers of value: functional, emotional, self-expressive
- Common mistakes & how to avoid them

Core Truth: Customers don't buy products -- they buy outcomes, emotions, and meaning. Products compete on features. **Brands compete on meaning.**

Illustrated VPC Reference

- The Osterwalder Value Proposition Canvas
- Both sides mapped with guiding questions

Fillable VPC -- Your Business

- Map your own Customer Profile
- Build your own Value Map

Why Most Businesses Sound the Same

And why customers make decisions that have nothing to do with your features

Walk into any market or browse any industry online and you'll notice something: most businesses sound remarkably similar. They talk about their features, years of experience, "high quality," "professional team," or "competitive prices."

But customers don't buy features. They buy outcomes, convenience, confidence, emotional comfort, trust, status, identity, and transformation. If your value proposition is vague or generic, you become invisible.

THE ROOT PROBLEM

What Most Businesses Get Wrong

x What Weak Businesses Do

- Try to appeal to everyone at once
- List every possible feature and benefit
- Focus on what they want to sell, not what the customer wants to buy
- Lead with "We are the best..." or "20 years experience..."
- Create a slogan instead of a real value proposition

v What Strong Businesses Do

- Get extremely focused on one specific customer
- Communicate the outcome, not the feature
- Speak the customer's language -- their words, their fears
- Build meaning, not just utility
- Are impossible to confuse with a competitor

THE RESULT OF WEAK POSITIONING

Weak positioning = forgettable brands + higher marketing costs + price wars. Strong positioning = lower acquisition costs, loyal customers, and the ability to charge premium prices.

A Powerful Value Proposition

A powerful value proposition doesn't just describe what you do -- it clearly explains **why you matter to a specific customer**, at this moment in their life, better than any alternative.

1.

Focused

Sharp on one segment, one outcome, one moment

2.

Specific

Concrete and clear -- never vague or generic

3.

Customer-Centred

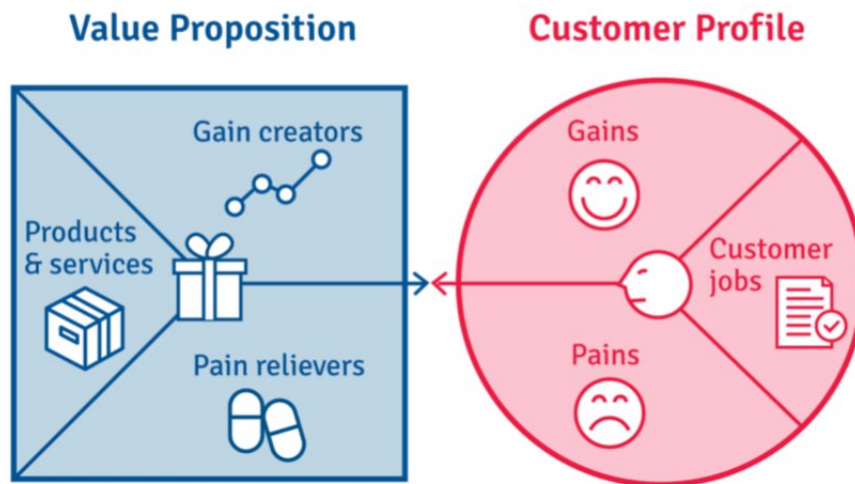
Always about their world, their language, their needs

MY NOTES

The Value Proposition Canvas

Does your offer truly fit what the customer actually cares about?

The Value Proposition Canvas, by Alexander Osterwalder, is one of the most practical tools in marketing. It forces you to step outside your own perspective and map the gap -- or the alignment -- between your offer and your customer's real world.



Value Proposition Canvas -- Alexander Osterwalder & Yves Pigneur, Strategyzer

[Left Side -- Value Map (Your Offer)

- **Products & Services** -- What do you actually offer?
- **Pain Relievers** -- How do you eliminate frustrations?
- **Gain Creators** -- How do you deliver desired outcomes?

[Right Side -- Customer Profile

- **Customer Jobs** -- What are they trying to accomplish?
- **Pains** -- What frustrates, worries, or blocks them?
- **Gains** -- What positive outcomes do they desire?

THE CLASSIC EXAMPLE

People don't buy a drill -- they buy a hole in the wall. And often they want that hole so they can hang a picture and create a beautiful, welcoming home. The job is functional. The gain is emotional. Both matter.

The Goal: Strong alignment between the customer's world (right side) and your offer (left side). When the two sides fit perfectly -- that is your value proposition. When they don't -- that is your marketing problem.

MY NOTES

Food Delivery App

Mapping a full Value Proposition -- from customer job to brand meaning

CUSTOMER JOB

"I want fast, hassle-free food delivery without wasting time -- and I want to know exactly when it will arrive."

Customer Pains

- Uncertainty about arrival time
- Unexpected delays and excuses
- Hidden fees revealed at checkout
- Complicated or slow apps
- Unreliable or rude drivers

Customer Gains

- Convenience -- no effort, no stress
- Predictability -- know exactly when it arrives
- Simplicity -- one tap, done
- Feeling in control of the experience
- Delight -- discovery and personalisation

THE VALUE MAP

How the App Responds

Pain Relievers

- Live order tracking on a map
- Transparent, all-in pricing upfront
- Driver ratings and arrival guarantees

Gain Creators

- Personalised recommendations based on history
- Loyalty rewards and saved favourite orders
- Seamless, delightful interface experience

THE 3 LAYERS OF VALUE

From Functional to Self-Expressive

Layer of Value	How the App Delivers It
Functional Value	"This solves my problem" -- Real-time tracking, predictable times, simple ordering, fixed fees
Emotional Value	"This makes me feel something" -- Reduces stress and anxiety, creates peace of mind and trust
Self-Expressive Value	"This says something about who I am" -- Signals a modern, tech-savvy, organised lifestyle

THE FINAL VALUE PROPOSITION

"Fast, transparent food delivery with real-time tracking and no surprises." -- Simple, specific, customer-centred, and impossible to confuse with a generic alternative.

Why Branding Matters

Brands live in the customer's mind -- not in your logo

A brand is far more than a logo, colours, or slogan. Brands exist in the minds of customers -- they are mental constructs made of associations, emotions, expectations, and accumulated experiences. This explains why two nearly identical products can create completely different reactions.

KEVIN KELLER -- CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY

The real power of a brand lies in how customers think, feel, and behave toward it. Strong brands enjoy higher awareness, trust, preference, and loyalty -- and can charge more for the same product.

THE FOUNDATION

The 3 Layers of Value

1.

Functional Value

"This solves my problem"

Practical, reliable, does what it promises. The baseline every product must clear.

Customers Say

"Practical and reliable"

2.

Emotional Value

"This makes me feel something"

Confidence, trust, comfort, joy. Drives loyalty far beyond functional benefits.

Customers Say

"Confidence, trust, comfort"

3.

Self-Expressive Value

"This says something about who I am"

Status, identity, lifestyle signal. The highest level -- and the hardest to copy.

Customers Say

"Status, identity, lifestyle"

Products compete on features. Brands compete on meaning. Value creates the foundation. Branding amplifies it. The strongest brands operate at all three layers simultaneously -- they solve a problem, make you feel something, and say something about who you are.

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

What Kills a Value Proposition

✗ Trying to appeal to everyone instead of a specific segment

✗ Focusing on features instead of customer outcomes

✗ Listing too many benefits -- it weakens the message

✗ Being internally focused ("We are the best...")

✗ Creating a slogan instead of a real value proposition

✗ Ignoring emotional and self-expressive value

✗ Copying competitors instead of differentiating

✗ Being vague and generic ("high quality service")

PRO TIP

Key Takeaways

What to remember -- and your fillable Value Proposition Canvas is on the next page

* MODULE 1B -- CORE LESSONS

- * Customers don't buy products -- they buy outcomes, emotions, and meaning
- * A strong Value Proposition is focused, specific, and customer-centred -- never generic
- * The Value Proposition Canvas helps align your offer with real, verified customer needs
- * Customer Jobs are functional, emotional, and social -- all three matter
- * Branding lives in the customer's mind -- it is built from associations, feelings, and experiences
- * Great brands operate at all 3 layers: functional, emotional, and self-expressive value
- * Products compete on features. Brands compete on meaning. Value creates the foundation.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

Map Your Own Value Proposition

- 1 Choose one business -- your own or one you know well
- 2 Fill in the **Customer Profile**: list their Jobs, Pains, and Gains honestly
- 3 Build the **Value Map**: Products/Services, Pain Relievers, Gain Creators
- 4 Identify which of the **3 layers of value** your offer currently addresses
- 5 Write a one-sentence value proposition using the canvas insights

Reflection Questions

- Does your current VP sound like a competitor's?
- Which customer pain do you relieve best?
- Do you address emotional value -- or only functional?

Strong VP Checklist

- Focused on one specific segment
- Addresses an urgent, real pain
- Clearly differentiated from competitors
- Impossible to apply to a generic business

MY REFLECTIONS & ACTION POINTS

Up Next -- Module 1C: Where Digital Fits in Your Overall Strategy. We map every digital channel to your business goals and build a strategy that actually compounds over time.

Value Map
Your Offer

Customer Profile
Their World

Gain Creators -- How do you create desired gains?

Gains -- What positive outcomes do they want?

Products & Services -- What do you offer?

Customer Jobs -- What are they trying to accomplish?

Pain Relievers -- How do you reduce frustrations?

Pains -- What frustrates or worries them?

