

Marketing & Advertising / Brand Positioning

Stop sounding like everyone else — identify category clichés, uncover your unfair advantage, run a reverse differentiation exercise, and stress-test your claims.

Difficulty: Advanced

Model: GPT-4 / Claude / Gemini

Use Case: Brand Differentiation, Competitive Positioning, Messaging

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Why This Prompt Exists

Most brands sound the same because they use the same words.

You get:

- “high quality” (everyone says this)
- “great customer service” (table stakes)
- “innovative” (meaningless without proof)
- “best in class” (no one believes it)
- differentiation that’s actually just category entry requirements

But differentiation is not a claim.

It is something only you can say.

- Category clichés are words you should never use
- Your unfair advantage is something competitors can’t copy overnight
- Reverse differentiation: what if you did the opposite of the category?
- The “so what” test turns claims into benefits

Without differentiation, you compete on price.

This framework forces AI to find what makes you genuinely different.

The Prompt

Assume the role of a differentiation specialist who helps brands stop sounding like everyone else.

Your task is to generate a differentiation analysis.

Generate:

1. CATEGORY CLICHÉS (list of 5-7)

Words and phrases every competitor uses (avoid these)

2. YOUR UNFAIR ADVANTAGE

Something only you can claim (IP, data, community, unique process, founder story)

3. REVERSE DIFFERENTIATION EXERCISE

- What would make you different if you did the opposite of the category?

- Example: Category says "We're easy to use" → Opposite: "We're powerful, not simple"

4. "SO WHAT" TEST (for each current claim)

- Claim: "High quality"

- So what? → "You won't replace it for 10 years"

5. NEW DIFFERENTIATOR STATEMENT (one sentence)

What no competitor can say

INPUTS:

Your Category:

[E.G., "Email marketing software" / "Accounting services"]

Main Competitors (3-5):

[LIST]

Your Current Claims (what you say in marketing):

[E.G., "Easy to use, great support, affordable"]

Your Unfair Advantage (if known):

[E.G., "We have 5 years of proprietary data on open rates" / "Our founder wrote the book on this topic"]

What Customers Complain About Competitors (optional):

[E.G., "They're too complex" / "Support takes days to respond"]

RULES:

- Category clichés must be specific (e.g., "high quality" not "clichés")
- Unfair advantage must be something competitors can't copy in under 6 months
- Reverse differentiation must be a genuine alternative, not just contrarian
- The "so what" test must turn a feature into a customer benefit
- The new differentiator statement must pass the "only you" test

How To Use It

- Remove category clichés from your website and ads — they’re wasted words.
- Your unfair advantage is your primary messaging pillar — lead with it.
- The reverse differentiation exercise often reveals a real opportunity.
- Use the “so what” test on every claim before publishing.
- The new differentiator statement becomes your headline test.

Example Input

Your Category: Project management software for agencies

Main Competitors: Asana, Trello, Monday.com, ClickUp

Your Current Claims: “Easy to use, great support, affordable, flexible”

Your Unfair Advantage: “We built the software while running an agency — we know exactly what agency owners need because we were one”

What Customers Complain About Competitors: “They’re built for tech companies, not creative agencies” / “They’re either too simple or too complex”

Why It Works

Most brands fail to differentiate because they don’t know what not to say.

This framework improves outcomes by forcing:

- category cliché identification (stop wasting space)
- unfair advantage articulation (what only you have)
- reverse differentiation (new angles)
- “so what” testing (feature → benefit)
- new differentiator statement (clear positioning)

Great differentiation doesn’t claim to be better — it claims to be different in a way that matters.

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