

Unmistakable: Using Research to Make Your Difference Clear

A guide for experts who want their perspective to be recognized, remembered, and repeated — not just stated once.



If You Took Your Name off Your Website... Would Anyone Know It Was Yours?

Most expert-led businesses are genuinely different.

The challenge is that difference often gets buried under familiar language like “we care,” “we’re strategic,” and “our process sets us apart.” If that feels familiar, it’s probably not a quality problem. It’s a visibility problem — the kind that research is built to solve.

If you’ve already done the work to understand your audience, the more useful question becomes this: Is your perspective showing up clearly enough for prospects to recognize and remember it?

Where Differentiation Breaks Down

Positioning that’s built internally — around your tools, your team, or your process — can feel accurate. But if it doesn’t reflect how your audience actually thinks, evaluates options, and makes decisions, it won’t stick.

You may get polite nods.

The Research Advantage

But not momentum. Not excitement. And not the “we’ve been looking for someone like you” messages that signal real differentiation is landing.

Audience-focused research gives you insight you can keep using, allowing you to:

- Understand what your right-fit clients actually care about
- Uncover the beliefs, priorities, and objections shaping their decisions
- Shape messaging that reflects those mindsets consistently over time
- Speak in a way that builds both recognition and resonance, not just initial interest

When differentiation is grounded in insight and reinforced consistently, it becomes easier for prospects to recognize, remember, and repeat.

A Real-World Example

Claire Burke

With a decades-long reputation in luxury home fragrance products, this brand believed their key differentiator was fragrance quality and complexity.

It was their passion. Their story. Their internal rallying cry.

But their segmentation research revealed that only 25% of their audience actually cared about fragrance.

The rest were buying for entirely different reasons:

- Design and gifting appeal
- Emotional connection and nostalgia
- Consistency and brand trust

That insight reframed how the company understood its audience — and how it showed up in the market.

They reframed their messaging to center on what mattered to their segments, not just to their team.

Their content finally connected. Their most profitable segment grew. And they stood out in a crowded category by changing how they communicated what mattered — without changing their product at all.

“Our research sparked a stronger, more meaningful connection with our customers. Response to our marketing became more effective, and our bottom line reflected that.”

*Mark Grodsky
Claire Burke*

Differentiation Exercise: The Perspective Builder

Differentiation doesn't come from clever wording.

It comes from perspective — how you consistently see the problem differently because of what you've learned from your audience.

This exercise helps you surface a perspective your audience can recognize, remember, and encounter more than once.

Step 1: Name the Thing That Bugs You

Think about something in your industry that quietly frustrates you.

Not a competitor. Not a tactic.

A belief or assumption that keeps showing up in conversations.

Examples:

- “Everyone says strategy is the answer, but no one talks about readiness.”
- “Agencies promise transformation without acknowledging internal resistance.”
- “People act like content alone builds trust, without understanding timing or context.”

Write it down in one sentence:

“I get frustrated when people assume that ____.”

Step 2: Anchor It in Audience Reality

Now ground that frustration in what you know about your audience.

Ask yourself:

- What do my best-fit clients struggle with before they hire me?
- What do they say they’ve already tried?
- What surprises them once they’re inside the work?

Complete this sentence:

“Our audience is actually dealing with ____, even though most people focus on ____.”

This step is critical. Differentiation only works when it reflects the audience’s lived experience — not just your opinion.

Step 3: Translate It Into a Point of View

Now connect the two.

Use this structure:

“We believe ____ matters more than ____, because our research shows ____.”

Examples:

- “We believe relevance matters more than frequency, because our research shows people tune out content that doesn’t reflect their actual concerns.”
- “We believe trust is built before the sales call, because our research shows buyers are already forming opinions long before they reach out.”

This is not a tagline. It’s a lens you can use everywhere — content, pitches, conversations, and referrals.

Step 4: Pressure-Test for Differentiation

Before you use it, ask:

- Could a competitor say this honestly?
- Would my best clients recognize themselves in this?
- Does this help someone understand how we think, not just what we do?

If the answer is yes to all three, you're onto something real.

Step 5: Make It Visible

Pick one place to use this perspective publicly:

- A LinkedIn post
- A short blog
- The opening of a pitch deck
- Your homepage intro

Don't explain it to death.

Show how you see the problem — and let the right people encounter that perspective again over time. Why This Works

This exercise doesn't ask you to invent a differentiator.

It helps you recognize the perspective that already exists — and gives you a way to reinforce it consistently through experience, research, and empathy.

That's the kind of difference prospects trust. And the kind competitors can't copy.

How Else Can We Help?

At Audience Audit, we help agency leaders, consultants, and other experts use original research as a foundation for perspectives that stay clear, relevant, and recognizable over time.

It's not magic. It's a method that keeps working when insight is used well.

[Let's talk about what original research could unlock for you.](#)

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