

# The Enrollment Marketer's Guide to a Winning Value Proposition

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# CONNECT WITH MORE STUDENTS THAT VALUE WHAT YOU HAVE TO OFFER.



The decision around which institution to attend is a really big and important one - from both a rational and an emotional standpoint. At the end of the day, most students need to make a connection with an institution before they'll take the leap.

So - how do you know what makes your school different from the rest? What is it about a prospective student that signals they are the right fit for one of your programs? Once you've identified a right-fit student, how do you convince them that your school is better for their needs - in a way they'll understand and connect to? These aren't easy questions to answer, and they're even more difficult to answer concisely - say, in the eight seconds your online display ads have to grab a prospective student's attention.

Defining your institution's value proposition - and just as importantly, an individual value proposition for each of your programs - can be one of the most difficult aspects of your enrollment marketing and student recruitment strategy. However, it's also one of the most critical.

As competition between schools continues to grow, prospective students see the same information and supposed benefits from schools over and over again. To really stand out from the competition, you need to determine what makes your school different - starting with your holistic brand messaging and working down to the smallest details of each individual program - and you need to be able to express those differences quickly and concisely. Figuring out what truly makes your institution and education stand out will help you reach and engage those students that value what you have to offer.

So where do you start? And how do you differentiate your true value proposition from the benefits that your competition offers, too? Archer can help you answer these questions and more. We've designed a free, downloadable worksheet that will help your institution establish its value proposition and core differentiators to reach and engage more right-fit students.

# Discover Your Institution's Value Proposition



## How to Use The Worksheets

Use the worksheets on the following pages to define your institution's value proposition(s), then use them to articulate to your prospective students in a way that will effectively capture their attention and interest. Here's a quick summary of what you'll do at each step.

Define Audience

## Step One



1  
Define the types of students your institution serves.

Define Goals

## Step Two



2  
Define what your students are trying to accomplish.

Define Barriers

## Step Three



3  
Define the barriers that keep them from succeeding.

Define Features

## Step Four



4  
Define the tactics you use to help students overcome these barriers.

Define Differentiators

## Step Five



5  
Define what is most valuable to the students who attend your institution.

Begin by completing the brand-level worksheet to discover your institution's holistic value proposition(s), then complete the program-level worksheet(s) to discover how to differentiate your program offerings.

Finally, follow Archer's guidelines for turning this newly-unearthed information into actionable messaging that works to bolster your institution's enrollment marketing.

**For optimal results, make sure any and all vendors (especially your marketing/enrollment vendors) have a copy of these completed worksheets and action plans, and hold them accountable to using them.**

# Value Proposition Worksheet

## For Your Institution's Brand

### 1. Define Your Audience(s)

**Questions to ask:**

What types of students does your institution currently enroll?  
Which types of enrolled students are the most successful?  
Which categories of students are growing at your institution?

**Example:**

Adult students in the Dallas, TX area.

**Audience:**

Type here.

### 2. Define Your Audience's Goal(s)

**Questions to ask:**

What are your students most typically trying to achieve?  
(List all that apply, beginning with achievements that apply to the largest segment of students.)

**Example:**

Career advancement / a promotion.

**Goals:**

Type here.

### 3. Define Your Audience's Barriers

**Questions to ask:**

What barriers keep your audience from achieving their goals?  
(List all that apply, beginning with barriers that apply to the largest segment of students.)

**Example:**

Time, money, and understanding the enrollment process.

**Barriers:**

Type here.

## 4. Define Institutional Features

### Questions to ask:

What tactics do you used to help students / prospective students overcome these barriers?

### Example:

Flexible learning formats, small class sizes, personalized learning, programs that are in high demand.

### Features:

Type here.

## 5. Define Institutional Differentiators

### Questions to ask:

When students enroll and attend your institution, what do they report to be the most valuable?  
(You'll need to then question whether these are unique to your institution to determine if they are truly differentiators.)

### Example:

Easy **access** to a highly **valuable** education for **in-demand** programs.

### Differentiators:

Type here.

# Value Proposition Worksheet

## For Your Programs

### 1. Define Your Audience(s)

**Questions to ask:**

What types of students does your institution currently enroll?  
Which types of enrolled students are the most successful?  
Which categories of students are growing at your institution?

**Example:**

Mid-level managers who want to advance their careers

**Audience:**

Type here.

### 2. Define Your Audience's Goal(s)

**Questions to ask:**

What are your students most typically trying to achieve?  
(List all that apply, beginning with achievements that apply to the largest segment of students.)

**Example:**

Career advancement to help eliminate debt and allow a spouse to work part-time.

**Goals:**

Type here.

### 3. Define Your Audience's Barriers

**Questions to ask:**

What barriers keep your audience from achieving their goals?  
(List all that apply, beginning with barriers that apply to the largest segment of students.)

**Example:**

Time, money, family responsibilities.

**Barriers:**

Type here.

## 4. Define Program Features

### Questions to ask:

What tactics do you used to help students / prospective students overcome these barriers?

### Example:

Flexible learning formats, program value

### Features:

Type here.

## 5. Define Differentiators

### Questions to ask:

When students enroll and attend your institution, what do they report to be the most valuable?  
(You'll need to then question whether these are unique.)

### Example:

Easy **access** to a highly **valuable** education with a track record of **career advancement** for graduates.

### Differentiators:

Type here.

# Craft Your Value Propositions

After you've completed worksheets for your institution and all of your programs, put the findings to work for you. Once you've completed the exercises, you can create a value proposition for each audience within each worksheet.

Each value proposition can follow this format:

"We help (audience), achieve (goal) by (differentiators) with (features)."

We put this into practice for our own [Audience Targeting](#) campaigns. See how our value prop came to life below.

## 1. Audience

Colleges & universities in the US.

## 2. Audience Goals

Seeking to reach new audiences of prospective students to help grow enrollment.

## 3. Audience Barriers

Cost-effectively expanding brand reach, finding new, untapped audiences of higher education seekers, and converting traffic to inquiries while maintaining or reducing costs-per-enrollment.

## 4. Program Features

Archer's Audience Targeting campaigns help engage with new audiences of prospective students on social media platforms, delivering high-quality, high-converting inquiries.

## 5. Differentiators

No one else can offer access to our exclusive audience and social media advertising on a performance (cost-per-inquiry) basis.

## The Value Prop:

Archer helps colleges and universities seeking to grow enrollment reach and engage new prospective students with access to our **exclusive audience** of education seekers on social media channels, providing both brand exposure and inquiry generation on a CPI basis.



# Now What?

## Make them actionable

Now it's time to translate your value proposition(s) into compelling marketing messaging. Our experts recommend speaking first to the goals and barriers your prospective students face. Once you get in front of their hesitations, you can quickly connect how your institution excels at helping them overcome with its unique features and differentiators.

Create several messages in a variety of formats designed to appeal to your target audience. Speak to the barriers and 'pay them off' with your newly-discovered value proposition. To hone in on your value proposition even further, you can A/B test these messages to see which resonate most with your target audiences.

Get real feedback from current students and graduates. Consider surveying your students and asking them directly what their perceived barriers to enrollment were and how your institution helped them overcome those barriers. In addition to gleaning valuable information that you can use to understand what sets you apart AND how you might be able to improve, we find that you can often get 'sound bites' to use as testimonials and identify success stories to highlight. Then, you can connect a human element to your value proposition by telling the stories of students you've helped succeed.

## Still not sure where to start?

Our enrollment marketing experts are skilled at helping institutions discover and market their unique value propositions. If you need additional assistance uncovering what is unique about your school and its offerings, [reach out](#) to our team. We'd be thrilled to help you discover your winning value proposition.

