

# POSITIONING

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## PERCEPTION IS EVERYTHING

*“In marketing, positioning has come to mean the process by which marketers try to create an image or identity in the minds of their target market for its product, brand, or organization.”*

WIKIPEDIA

While branding and positioning are closely related they are very different animals. **Branding** is the place your company or product occupies in the mind of your customer. It is the emotional connection your customer has with your organization and as such belongs to the consumer even though you make have make great efforts to inform and shape it.

**Positioning** is what you own and control. It is the way you want your organisation or product to be perceived, relative to the needs of your target customers and the positions claimed by your competition. It is developed by you and it is up to you to communicate it to your audience. Good positioning is:

- simple
- focused
- unique / differentiating (two objects cannot occupy the same space)
- better to be first than best
- translates into clever “tag lines”.

In developing a positioning there are a number of simple steps to remember that will help you ensure a unique market position, better uptake of your products and services, and lead to increased revenue:

1. **What needs are you satisfying?** List the needs and wants that you believe your products or services can satisfy.
2. **Who else is trying to satisfy these needs?** List any other (current or possible) organizations that may offer these same services and therefore may be vying to meet the same needs.
3. **Why do consumers use these products/services?** What are consumers looking for when they use your products/services? This will lead to discussion about the ways that you and suppliers are being evaluated.
4. **How are the other guys positioned?** Based on what you know and what you see in

the market place, what positions have the other “competing” organizations chosen to occupy?

5. **Where are the gaps?** List the possible positions that no one seems to have claimed. Be careful as to why the gaps exist. If you can find gaps, try positioning against or relative to a competitor.
6. **Choose your gap and a strategy:** Evaluate each gap or opportunity. Is it attractive to your organization or do-able? It might set you apart but will it resonate with your product/service values?
7. **Adapt your marketing mix:** Check all 4 Ps, particularly Place and Product. It may sometimes be necessary to tweak actual product or service offerings to bring your delivery in line with your positioning.
8. **Design a Promotion campaign:** You need to promote the position....Look for clever ways to interpret or to translate the position in your creative and media.
9. **Measure:** Watch your marketplace and see how “competitors” react. You may have to respond as they recalibrate their offerings or positionings.
10. **Learn, grow and adapt:** Positioning strategies normally need adjusting every few years. Make sure you maintain that keen competitive edge.

And just in case you still think positioning is not important for your organization, let me leave you with this thought:

***“The purpose of the positioning statement is to be borne in mind and conformed to in everything you say and do. And it should not be forgotten that, as in everything else in life, it may be a position you aspire to, as opposed to one you actually have.”***

**Drayton Bird**

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