



Brand Positioning Explored (Part III)

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Key Components in Developing

In Parts I and II of this series, we examined exactly what Positioning is, as well as why it's important to have one in increasing the level of sales success in what has become a universally competitive sales environment across all categories. Now, we'll touch on the essential fundamentals involved in constructing a meaningful Positioning that carries with it energy beyond its final collection of words.

As discussed previously, the very essence of Positioning is about how the consumer of your brand perceives it in relation to your competitors. It is the key activity you use in outwardly managing and influencing your consumer's mental map of a category. Your Positioning provides a guide in helping consumers define who you (brand) are, why it should be so important to them and how they should respond. In the end, Positioning is all about overtly conditioning consumers to view your brand in the manner in which **YOU** want them to perceive it.

The Right Road To Get You There

Developing a positioning strategy is one of the most critical steps in branding. Companies like Apple, Nike, Starbucks, Rolex and others have succeeded in no small measure as a result of fostering authentic, well-defined Brand Positioning. And although they are large corporations with vast resources available to them, size and economic base are not prerequisites to solid positioning. What is requisite and what great brands do very well is to first listen and learn from the target market regarding all of the key elements that go into constructing a meaningful Positioning. Internally, it is equally imperative that you take on a willingness for critical and honest introspection into your business and product. This external and internal work requires equal part research, judgment, experience, creativity and debate.

The basics of this work, at its simplest level, starts with analyzing four key elements:

- A definition of your target audience
- The competitive frame of reference
- The key competitive benefit and point of difference
- The key reason for consumers to believe (why you can make the claim you do)

In a template form it might look something like this:

Positioning Statement

"For *Customer Segment*, your product/service
is *One or Two*
Most Important Benefits - Reasons to Buy,
because compared to *Primary Competition / Alternative*,
Key Reasons for Differentiation from Competitors."