What is brand positioning?

Defined as the space a company owns in the mind of a customer and how it differentiates itself from competitors, brand positioning is a marketing strategy that helps business set themselves apart. From cell phone manufacturers to online retailers to even nonprofits, brand positioning helps customers instantly recognize and connect with a company. One of the most important factors of success is how well, and how many, people know your brand. It's not enough to set up a generic website and hope people flock to it by the millions. In fact, no company is able to truly thrive in the marketplace without an established brand position.

What Is a Brand Positioning Statement?

Implementing a brand position for your business all begins with a statement. A brand positioning statement is a description of your target market that also includes a holistic picture of how you'd like your brand to be perceived by customers (based on research and data).

Simply put, this statement is the who, when, where, why, and how of your [brand's identity.](#)

How Important Is Brand Positioning?

With [89 percent](#) of brand marketers concerned about creating engaging brand experiences and [77 percent](#) of B2B marketing leaders convinced that branding is critical to growth, it is clear to see just [how important brand positioning is](#). In addition to the critical element of customer recognition, brand positioning is important for your business in these four ways:

- Market differentiation: Showing the uniqueness of your product in any industry creates a major advantage. When you use your brand positioning to celebrate how your product solves a particular problem or need differently than your competitors, customers will take notice.
- Easy purchase decisions: By clearly defining your product and how it can benefit your customer, you take the guesswork out of the purchase process. When you give customers the answers to questions they are looking for, they will be quicker to trust and buy.
- Value confirmation: A strong brand doesn't have to rely on pricing wars with competitors. Instead, great brand positions establish the high value of their product, making customers want to buy it no matter what (even if it isn't the cheapest on the market),
- Magnified messaging: A clear brand positioning statement gives you a springboard for compelling creative storytelling. By having a concrete vision, you can elevate each additional piece of marketing to further solidify your place among the competition.

How to Create Strong Brand Positioning

Any skilled marketer can develop a brand positioning strategy. The real challenge? Making it lead to real business results and resonate with your target audience.

You'll need more than a carefully created statement. To create strong brand positioning, you'll need research, customer data, authenticity, and flexibility.

Here are three tips to help you along the way:

- **Do your research**: Benchmark all of your competitors to determine what their brand position is, how well it is doing, and how you can outdo it. By constantly knowing where you stand among your competitors, you'll be able to position yourself in a way that makes customers pay attention.
- **Be authentic**: Your brand positioning is what you want people to think of when they see your company, so be sure it's authentic. Develop a story that captures your mission as a company and incorporate your own values so that you can always be relatable and trustworthy when speaking to it.
- **Adjust accordingly**: Having a set brand position doesn't mean that it can't change. When you identify flaws in your statement or uncover less-than-stellar customer feedback, don't be afraid to adjust your messaging accordingly.

Brand Positioning Examples

From behemoth companies to growing startups, any business in any industry can benefit from brand positioning.

These three companies prove that a great story can help accelerate your brand and establish your place in the market:

1. Cell phone company Verizon Wireless has established themselves as "America's Largest, Most Reliable 4G LTE Network." Emphasized through billboards, television ads, and more, Verizon has backed up their claim with countless data points that are not only impressive, but also gain the trust and dollars of many Americans.
2. A niche online marketplace, Etsy has made it their mission to be the go-to place for all things handmade, vintage, and unique. Etsy has set themselves apart in the market through clever partnerships and ad placements, as well as regular appearances on television shows like NBC's reality craft competition "Making It."
3. A nonprofit organization, The Ellen Degeneres Wildlife Fund, has positioned themselves as a way to help protect endangered gorillas in Rwanda. This organization is committed to following through with their brand positioning statement by supporting the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund through money raised in their online shop and donations page.

How to Improve Brand Positioning

Your brand positioning should be dynamic and fluid. This doesn't mean you have to do a major overhaul every year, but you do need to revisit it at least every quarter to see how you can make it better.

Here are three ways to improve your brand positioning:

- **Listen to your customers:** Don't create your brand positioning in a vacuum. In order for it to resonate with your customers, make sure you are listening to what they have to say. Set up focus groups, send surveys, or simply talk to customers at events and use all those insights to improve your message.
- **Refocus your statement:** Does your brand positioning try and do too much? Have you lost sight of the one or two things that truly make you unique? If your statement has lost its focus, get back to the basics by revisiting your initial research (or conducting new research) to see if your statement is still effective.
- **Create some buzz:** If you're a small company just starting out, you may not have a large enough following to test your brand positioning. If you need more eyes on your messaging, run some paid ads to A/B test a control statement (perhaps a generic statement about your business) against your brand positioning statement to see how people react.