

## Positioning in Small Business Marketing

Positioning is another one of those marketing jargon words that everybody throws around and is important to understand. It's also important to understand how positioning specifically applies to your small business marketing.

Basically a marketing position describes your unique place in the market. The key word here is unique. What makes you different from your competitors? What features and benefits do you offer your target market that the other players don't?

Here are a few things that may go into your positioning:

-Price Point - This doesn't necessarily mean you have the lowest price. You may be the most expensive in town, and that's OK if you convince your customers you're worth it.

-Service - Almost every business claims they have great service. If you can provide exceptional service compared to your competitors, your customers will remember you. I'll never forget calling a surly plumber to try to get him to my house for an emergency on a weekend. He acted like he didn't want my business and then told me it was going to be \$200 for him just to show up, no thanks. I called roto-router who gave me amazing service, a guarantee, and the whole bill was less than \$200. I now use them for all my plumbing.

-Features and Benefits - Positioning is not just about what makes you different, it's also about what you emphasize. Folgers announces to the world that it's "mountain grown coffee" (a feature). Guess what? All coffee is mountain grown. Folgers just claimed this feature first. What's something that none of your competitors are talking about?

-Credibility - Legal Seafood's clam chowder is served at every presidential inauguration. Many products get celebrity endorsements. Many companies tout how long they've been in business. All of these things build trust in the mind of the consumer. What trust-building factors do you have that the competition does not?

-Negative Features - Is there something you don't have that annoys customers of your competitors? I'm not saying use negative advertising, but just mention the feature and tie it to a benefit. I'm annoyed when I have to pay for parking to go shopping at Mall. Instead of touting free parking, a mall that wants to speak to me might declare, "you'll never have to pay for parking". This drives home the pain of shopping with a competitor without going negative.

-Anything Else - Literally anything that differentiates you from your competitors can be part of your positioning strategy - your location, your hours of operation, the way your office smells. Small business owners need to think creatively here.

In a great article by John Jantsch he states that a positioning strategy must answer the question, "why should I buy from you?" This is brilliant in its simplicity; it cuts through all the strategic junk that complicates marketing. If you can't answer this question, your customer is not going to do the work to figure out an answer on his own.

## About the Author

About the author:

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