



THE CEO'S NUMBER ONE RESPONSIBILITY:  
IDENTIFYING AND ARTICULATING  
*Your Brand's Position*

by Dick Maggioro

PRESIDENT & CEO » INNIS MAGGIORE

The Nation's Leading Positioning Agency

I N S I D E T H E M I N D S

# Advertising Best Practices

*Industry Leaders on Creating Attention-Getting  
Platforms, Generating Profitable Campaigns, and  
Preparing for New Media Trends*



ASPATORE

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## **Introduction: The Role of CEO**

The foundation for effective leadership is thinking through your organization's *difference*, defining it and establishing it, clearly and visibly. For so many years, CEOs have focused on doing things *better*. For a long time, this approach worked. However, a problem has surfaced over recent years as we realize that this approach is simply not working anymore. Connecting with customers is no longer just about being better: it is about being *different*. Being better has become a basic requirement: it is what it takes just to stay in the game. Your prospects and customers have come to expect a higher level of quality and service, and, as a result, quality and service are no longer differentiators.

The many continuous improvement programs, Deming<sup>1</sup>-cloned workshops, the parade of process gurus, and the “next flavor-of-the-month fad” have resulted in commoditizing us. The same cast of characters surrounds your competitors, and they all have the same plaques wallpapering their hallways and boardrooms. At this stage, we all look alike. Yes, our processes are improved, but they simply had to be. Such improvement was—and continues to be—essential for survival. We are seeing greater productivity in almost every industry; we've dramatically reduced the manpower and time it takes to create products. We have fewer people producing more stuff. Those who didn't join the process-improvement-driven bandwagon are history.

However, we now have a problem. Because being better is no longer a difference, we all look very much alike. Our customers are now able to create competition by playing us against each other. Was this their plan all along? Our customers know that our quality and service are pretty much like the next guy's, so they are taking this opportunity to strongly negotiate price. This may even explain why so many CEOs are losing their hair!

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<sup>1</sup>**William Edwards Deming** (October 14, 1900 – December 20, 1993) was an American statistician, college professor, author, lecturer, and consultant. Deming is widely credited with improving production in the United States during World War II, although he is perhaps best known for his work in Japan. There, from 1950 onward, he taught top management how to improve design (and thus service), product quality, testing, and sales (the last through global markets) through various methods, including the application of statistical methods. Deming made a significant contribution to Japan's later renown for innovative, high-quality products and its economic power.

However, there is hope. There is a way to get a premium price for your product or service. The solution comes from finding your *difference* and then living it. You, the CEO, are responsible for defining what your organization's *difference* is and then communicating it within your organization as well as outside of your organization. This has absolutely become your number one job.

In 1981, I picked up a book at the local mall bookstore that totally transformed my thinking, career, and my advertising agency. That book was *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*, authored by Jack Trout and Al Ries. The concept and the knowledge have come to the forefront as the best marketing strategy in this century. The authors became immortalized as the world's best-known marketing gurus. Jack Trout is the acclaimed author of ten industry classics published in eighteen languages. I gratefully acknowledge, give full credit and deep appreciation to Jack Trout, my mentor and my friend and his former partner, Al Ries.

### **A Positionist's Point of View**

“Only two business functions produce new customers. They are marketing and innovation. All other functions are expenses.”

-Peter Drucker<sup>2</sup>, the father of modern management

Mr. Drucker was always ahead of the times. He knew many years ago that being different was the key to winning and keeping new customers. While it was always true, only now is it so brutally evident. While it is obvious to many in the field, I offer even more evidence to support Mr. Drucker's farsighted words of wisdom:

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<sup>2</sup> **Peter Drucker** (November 19, 1909 – November 11, 2005) was a writer, management consultant, and self-described “social ecologist.” Widely considered “the father of modern management,” his thirty-nine books and countless scholarly and popular articles explore how humans are organized across all sectors of society—in business, government, and the nonprofit world. His writings have predicted many of the major developments of the late twentieth century, including privatization and decentralization, the rise of Japan to economic world power, the decisive importance of marketing, and the emergence of the information society with its necessity of lifelong learning.



This model illustrates how having a differentiated product or service provides an advantage toward getting a prospect's attention. To appreciate this, it is first necessary to understand why attention or awareness is so important. If you are able to increase *awareness*, it follows that more people will try your product or service. If more folks try your product or service, then more will likely become users. This will result in increased *preference* or loyalty. With increased preference or loyalty, *market share* must increase, and, along with that, *profitability*, due to economies of scale. The math is simple.

Thus, the goal is to focus on how to increase awareness. With increased awareness, preference and market share, profitability will automatically increase. However, getting your prospect's attention has never been more difficult.

### **The “Hyper” Era**

Marketplaces are at fever pitch with the temperature rising. We're all inescapably bombarded with advertising messages and information at every turn. There are just too many products, too many companies, too much marketing *noise*. The marketplace is no longer responsive to the kind of advertising that worked in the past. In this environment, advertising simply does not work as it used to.

In 1965, Gordon Moore boldly predicted that the number of transistors in a given space would double each year, while the cost of each transistor would decrease, and at the same time increase its speed. More than forty years later, Moore's Law still holds, as well as his company, Intel, which sits at the heart of a revolution that is changing our lives in ways we have yet to fully realize.

We not only live in a world of *faster*; we live in a world of *more*. There is more of everything. For example, there are more than 40,000 items to choose from on the supermarket shelves, 500 new books published every day, hundreds of product-jammed catalogs published every year, and more financial transactions recorded in a single day than in all of 1965.

And then there is *feature* clutter. We need only compare the features of a traditional telephone with the features of a 2008 iPhone. With a growing list of features, companies are naturally more eager to communicate the resulting benefits. Add to this the fragmentation and proliferation of media touching us at almost every conceivable point of contact with our environment.

Hence, there's *advertising* clutter. This has led to a reported 3,500 marketing messages per day, per person, up from 1,500 at the time of Moore's Law.

While no one doubts the advertiser's financial ability to disseminate all this information, there is some question about the consumer's ability to take it all in. While the volume of information has increased copiously, our mental ability to pay attention to marketing messages has not grown at all. In 1900, John Wanamaker, a merchant, was quoted as saying, "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half." That's wishful thinking today, in a time during which an advertiser is doing well if ten percent of its advertising is recalled.

Finally, technology and competition have resulted in media clutter. In 1960, there were 8,400 magazine titles, 440 radio stations and six television channels. Today there are more than 12,000 magazine titles, 13,500 radio stations, and 500 television channels, as well as 30,000 Internet broadcast channels that didn't even exist a few short years ago.

The human mind deals with extreme clutter in the best way it can—by blocking it out. We are actually hard-wired to ignore. There are physical structures in our brain, such as Broca's area, designed to do just that, ignore everything that is predictable. Otherwise, we'd experience sensory overload. As a result, things that are familiar to us often grow invisible. Broca's area keeps the predictable from even entering our consciousness in the prefrontal cortex of the brain, marketing's nirvana. If we can get our message past this gatekeeper, only then do we have a shot at consideration. So what can we



do? The desired result can best be achieved by proper positioning, finding a relevant and meaningful difference.

## **Era of Positioning**

Positioning is simply concentrating or focusing on an idea—or even a word—that defines or differentiates your company, product, or service from the competition in the minds of your prospects and customers. When we look more deeply into what comprises a particular brand, we find, time and again, that brilliant positioning is absolutely crucial to any brand's success. Advertising strategies, creative executions, public relations programs, and even media plans must flow from the brand's positioning. Unfortunately, effective positioning is seldom easy to come by. With new products and services failing at rates of more than 90 percent, strategic positioning may be the only salvation.

Positioning is having a simple idea that separates or differentiates the brand from your competition. Differentiation is the art and science of standing out from the competition. Choosing among multiple options is always based on differences. Often, this is about finding a whole new market space you can own and defend, then aligning all communications and company behaviors around it. The key to successful marketing begins with positioning; in fact, positioning is the single most powerful concept in marketing. Positioning is simply concentrating or focusing on an idea—or even a word—that defines or differentiates your company, product, or service from the competition in the minds of your prospects and customers.

## **Ways to Differentiate**

There are many ways to differentiate your company, product, or service. The following illustrate some of the more common and effective strategies with respect to differentiation:

### *Being First*

Being first to the mind with a new idea is much easier than convincing someone you have a better product than the one that did get there first. This is an excellent tactic, yet it's not always possible to be first. The strategy of splintering markets into subcategories is a growing trend.

### *Attribute*

Consider owning an attribute. Attribute positioning may be the most common way to differentiate a product. An attribute is a characteristic, peculiarity, or distinctive feature. You can't own the same attribute or position that your competitor owns. You must seek another attribute to own. Rather than emulating the leader in a market, it's much better to search for an opposite attribute that will allow you to play off or against the leader. It is much better to be narrow and specific because specifics sell; generalities do not. As examples, Crest fights cavities and Listerine kills germs.

### *Leadership*

Leadership is the most powerful way to differentiate a brand, as it is the most direct way to establish the credentials of a brand. When you have leadership credentials, the prospect is likely to believe almost anything you say about your brand because you are the leader. There are different forms of leadership, including sales leadership, technology leadership, and performance leadership. Powerful leaders can take ownership of the word that stands for the category. Xerox owns copiers, Heinz owns ketchup, and Hershey is the chocolate leader just as Campbell's is with soup.

### *Heritage*

The heritage position lends itself to a natural psychological importance in having a long history, one that makes people secure in their choice. Heritage and trust work together. Decisions are made based on emotion (right brain) and then rationalized (left brain). Two examples of the heritage position are Steinway, "the instrument of the immortals," and Cross pens, "flawless classics since 1846." Coca-Cola's position is the "original." It is extremely difficult to top an original! Pepsi figured out a viable approach, though, when they went against the original with the "younger generation" position. In my opinion, this was not only a brilliant move but given the circumstance, the only right move.

### *The Specialist*

Consumers are impressed with brands that concentrate or focus on a specific activity or product, the specialist position. They are perceived as experts. Consider the retail category. Department store generalists are in trouble today. The big successes are specialists such as The

Limited, Victoria's Secret, Crate & Barrel, Banana Republic, and Bed, Bath & Beyond.

### *Preference*

People look for social proof and affirmation. Advertisers have used the "Join the Bandwagon" technique for more than a century, but, slightly more sophisticatedly, we have termed it preference positioning. Tylenol built its business by saying it is the pain reliever hospitals prefer. Testimonial campaigns leverage the preference position. Nike built its business around the idea that famous athletes prefer to use their sneaker. Choosy mothers choose Jif. Lexus built its business on claims from J. D. Power surveys on customer satisfaction preferences. It may be discouraging, but it is true that the general public is comforted by following the leader, and, in some ways, behaving (and being treated) like a herd of sheep.

### *Low and High Price*

Low price is a differentiator. While this is not an attractive position for most products and services for obvious reasons, Wal-Mart and Southwest Airlines have become very powerful and profitable brands. High price can also be a position. Orville Redenbacher's Gourmet Popping Corn, priced two-and-a-half times higher than the leading brand, became the nation's number one brand in four years in spite of the fact that the label said "World's most expensive popping corn." Actually, it is because the label said it was the most expensive. People associate high price with quality, class, and excellence. Häagen-Dazs, the super-premium ice cream, was the first high-butterfat ice cream. It outsold all other super-premiums combined— that is, until Ben & Jerry's arrival.

### *Being the Latest and Hottest*

Being the latest and hottest are also strong differentiators. People have become accustomed to the "next generation" of products. Rather than trying to be better, it is best to leapfrog to the "next." The psychology is obvious. Many are not satisfied buying what could be perceived as obsolete. They crave the latest or next-best thing. Strong leaders should, in fact, deluge themselves with next-generation products to maintain their leadership even if it means cannibalizing its own products. Better to take market share away from yourself rather than having the competition do it for you.

*Distribution Channels, Size, Create a New Category, and More*

Avon went door-to-door. L'eggs Pantyhose was the first pantyhose sold in a drugstore. Timex was the first watch sold in a drugstore. Dell sells computers direct online. Volkswagen, with their tagline "Think Small," made the small, cool cars, and GM made the big cars. Sony miniaturized a host of products including the "Tummy" television, the "Walkman," and the "Watchman." Seven-Up invented a new sub-category with the Uncola. Digital flanked IBM with a new category, the minicomputer as opposed to IBM's mainframes. Miller flanked the industry with Miller Lite. Considering that the market for a light beer was zero, this was a bold move. These are just a sampling of the innumerable innovative ways to differentiate.

While the following examples are consumer products, positioning works in just the same way with companies selling to other businesses and in local, national, or global markets. Here are some examples of brilliant positioning:

- Volvo—safety (owning a benefit)
- Domino's Pizza—delivery (a benefit and a form of distribution)
- Wal-Mart—low price (in the retail industry)
- Southwest Airlines—low price (in the airline industry)
- Xerox—copiers (product positioning)
- Dole—pineapples (positioning a commodity!)
- FedEx—overnight delivery
- Dell—buy computers direct (owning a form of distribution)
- Maytag—dependability (owning a benefit)
- Coke—original (heritage)
- Pepsi—younger generation (an "against" position, against the "original")
- Listerine—kills germs (in your mouth)
- Lysol—kills germs (in your bathroom)
- Heinz—ketchup (an example of owning a category)
- Tide—whitening power (owning a benefit)

Two brands cannot share the same positioning, at least not in the same category. Here's an example of how brands within the same category, in this case toothpaste, learn to coexist successfully. Each brand has its own positioning, often a word, concept, or phrase:

Crest—fights cavities  
Aquafresh—tartar control  
Close-Up—fresher breath  
Colgate—whitening

Thus, the fundamental principle of positioning is that a brand can only stand for *one* thing in the prospect's mind. A brand is the customer's gut feeling about a product, service, or company: in many ways, the brand is the perceived personality of the product or service. People create brands to bring order out of clutter. To a great degree then, the creation of the brand lies outside your control; however, you can strongly influence it. The goal of branding is to get more people to buy more stuff for more years at a higher price.

Rosser Reeves worked at the famous Ted Bates Advertising Agency, and in 1961, wrote a book called *Reality in Advertising*. He introduced a new term to our marketing lexicon: Unique Selling Proposition (USP). The USP is the one thing from an advertisement—one strong claim, or one strong concept—that the consumer tends to remember. Today, the “unique” or differentiated part of his claim still rings true. However, consumers do not like to be sold—they like to buy. For this reason, I would update his term to *Unique Buying Position*, or UBP. USP was about pushing products. UBP is about pulling customers to your products and services.

The brand is the most important asset that a company has. Half of Coke's total value is attributable to its brand, over \$70 billion. Disney's brand contributes 68 percent to its overall value. McDonald's brand contributes an astounding 71 percent! A brand is not just the logo or name for a product or service. Brands that are built to express the differentiating idea, inherent to a specific business model and its resulting product, will create value beyond what the product was originally designed to deliver. Genuinely differentiated brands deliver a disproportionate amount of actual business value, resulting in a greater price premium.

## **Four Steps to Differentiation**

It is essential to create and articulate a brand that is genuinely different from the other brands in the marketplace. The following are four key steps in the effort to achieve clear differentiation:

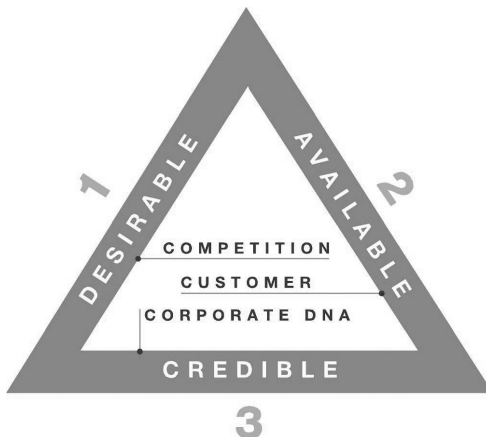
1. Start by carefully considering the marketplace and the competition. Begin with what is going on in the market, what positions are already held, what the trends are, what is happening and why. Gather all the secondary (existing) research possible on your industry. In these efforts, determine what you “can do” as well as what the competition will “let” you do. We call this process “rolling around in the mud of the marketplace.” Determine what your product or service can bring to the party. What idea can you pre-empt? What attractive difference can you own in the mind of your prospect? Often, the best advertising works against ideas and concepts that already exist in the mind. An example of this strategy can be seen with the war of the colas. Coke’s position is the “original.” Pepsi went against the “original” with the “younger generation.” It worked. Pepsi outsells Coke in grocery stores. If you have a weak or non-existent position in the mind of your prospect, find a way into the mind by hooking your product or service to some concept or idea that is already there. Alternatively, if everyone is talking about one thing, maybe we can come in with something different.
2. Find a differentiating idea with an obvious benefit. This is where the customer comes in. We have to offer something that meets customer wants and needs in a way that is different from the competition. The idea has to be attractive; it should be something prospects naturally want, or would want, given the right circumstances and prompting. The more meaningful the point of difference to the prospect, the higher the marketing value. This will likely involve primary research (qualitative and quantitative). We generally begin with qualitative research such as focus groups to determine “what” we should quantitatively (statistically prove) research through phone, mail, and/or web surveys.
3. Support the idea with tangible claims to create credibility. People are skeptical of advertising. You have to prove that what you offer is real. Never make unsubstantiated claims. Consumers need to believe you

can be counted on to deliver on your difference. You must establish the credentials and concrete supports that make your positioning promise credible. Volvo's position is in safety. Recall Volvo's television commercials using crash dummies. Volvo pioneered the passenger side air bag among many other safety features. Volvo's automobiles really are safer!

4. Communicate the idea with enough resources to get the job done. Positioning is what happens in the mind of the prospect, not in the boardroom. You have to be willing to invest to make your idea known. The marketing battle is not won just because you have created advertising. It is only won when your idea is burned into the mind of the prospect. Without proper resources, even the best idea will fail to get off the ground. Too many marketers fall short of getting their message into the mind of the prospect. They think, "What will this cost me?," rather than, "What will this make me?" In category after category, the winners are the ones who poured it on when others were hesitant or failed to notice the opportunity. Think of the nail as the positioning idea. The hammer is what drives it into the mind.

### **The Positioning Filter Test**

Innis Maggiore has developed its proprietary Appreciative Discovery™, a marketing report delivered to the client at the conclusion of the agency's strategic positioning work. It may not come as a surprise to learn that our agency's position is positioning! To be successful, even advertising agencies need to be positioned. As part of the Appreciative Discovery, the following filter was developed. It is a three-part filter, a proof, for validating the positioning idea. Only ideas that score 100 percent pass. We call it the 3-Cs test:



1. **Competition:** Is the idea available?

*The filter for obvious newness.*

Positioning is essentially a competitive strategy. Two companies cannot own the same idea in the mind of the prospect. If a competitor already owns an idea in the mind of the prospect, you are better off finding a new idea you can own. Minds do not change easily, if at all! It is easier to displace a competitor with a new idea than dislodge one with a “me-too” idea. This approach also costs less.

2. **Customer:** Is the idea desirable (meaningful and relevant) to the prospect? How?

*The filter for customer relevance.*

The positioning idea not only has to be available, but it has to offer an obvious benefit to the customer. They have to find the idea naturally attractive. In other words, they have to want it! Otherwise, what you have is meaningless difference. The more unique (Filter 1) and desirable (Filter 2), the higher the marketing value.

3. **Company:** Is the position credible? Can and will your organization commit to it?

*The filter for authentic commitment.*

The positioning idea has to be true to you and who you are, what you value, and where you want to go (vision). It must be something the market can trust in you to deliver. The idea must be something you can and will commit to, at every level of the organization. The company must be passionate about the position. Volvo is passionate about safety. Domino's Pizza is passionate about pizza delivery. The more unique (Filter 1) and desirable (Filter 2) and true to you (Filter 3) the brand is, the greater the opportunity to create fierce loyalty to your idea for years to come.

The positioning *idea* provides the organizing principle. Positioning directs the execution of all marketing communications, including advertising, public relations, web and interactive, and direct sales, as well as every other touch point with prospects and customers. Positioning goes beyond the marketing communications. Positioning is prescriptive and pervasive throughout the organization. Positioning strategy is business strategy. Positioning directs the



entire organization. Positioning is the backbone. It's anatomical. It provides a tether for all decision-making within the organization.

Consider Volvo. Its position is safety. Accordingly, its advertising and all its communications are directed by the positioning strategy. You may recall the use of test dummies in its television advertising, which dramatized the superior safety of the Volvo automobiles. But just as important, for example, is the message that its R&D department is charged with developing an even safer automobile with more safety features and benefits for its automobiles and its customers. The CEO considers its strategic position when making all decisions, from the type of people he or she hires to the color the walls are painted. Positioning is prescriptive for decisionmaking throughout the organization.

Positioning helps guide and bring consistency to marketing's four Ps: product, price, place, and promotion. Positioning provides guidance beyond the marketing arena. Positioning is a pervasive strategy to be executed throughout the entire organization engendering a cohesive and consistent direction. In addition to guiding the CEO in his or her daily decisionmaking, all employees have a compass helping to show them the way.

Companies that advertise without a clear notion of the organization's positioning strategy are, essentially, putting lipstick on a pig. It does not look right and it embarrasses the pig. This can be avoided by getting the "idea right," which is what advertising execution is truly about. Getting the "idea right" will consume 99 percent of the company's time, attention, activity, and money. However, positioning strategy begins with getting the "right idea." The "right idea" is the idea that gives your company, product, or service a distinct advantage over the competition. With all that is at stake, you can see how vitally important it is to put your resources behind the "right idea" from the very beginning.

According to Jack Trout, the man who coined the term *positioning* in his book *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*, the objective is the prospect's mind. The enemy is the competition. Without a motivating (differentiating) idea, people will stick with what they know. Unless your advertising positions your product in relationship to the competition, it is doomed to failure. Few markets are virgin. You cannot advertise in isolation. For most marketers, the only way to grow is to take business away from the competition.

The majority of businesses focus on driving the demand curve by seeking ubiquitous appeal and striving for volume growth from a broader audience. Interestingly, this broadening of relevance is often done at the expense of potential margin, as it undermines the very nature of the brand's unique point of difference. Positioning requires sacrifice. You cannot stand for everything, and you absolutely cannot go after everybody. When prospects know who you are and what you stand for, they seek you out. The Chinese philosopher Sun Tzu, author of *The Art of War*, taught that if you are positioned correctly, you can win before you fight.

At the heart of any great brand lies differentiation. As long as the brand is different in a relevant way with tangible differences, a distinctive personality and a unique aura will encourage selection resulting in premium pricing. If the delivery and experience are aligned with expectations, then loyalty will follow along with higher profitability.

As a CEO, you have worked hard for so many years making it *better*. Now it's time to work on defining and communicating clearly and visibly your competitive *difference*, the CEO's number one job. Positioning is the single most powerful concept in business today. Positioning is foundational to the effective leadership of an organization, especially in this era of "hyper everything."

### **About the Author: Dick Maggione**

Dick has been the president and chief executive officer of Innis Maggione, the nation's leading positioning ad agency, since 1989. He joined the firm in 1974 and has guided its growth to earn recognition not only as Ohio's fastest-growing ad agency but also in the top 10 percent of the nation's AAAA agencies.

Acknowledged as one of America's leading positioning practitioners, Dick worked firsthand with Jack Trout, the "Father of Positioning."

Dick writes a weekly newspaper column on topics related to business development and marketing and is a frequent lecturer at audiences that include corporations' employees, associations' members and universities' marketing classes.

An ad industry “Hall of Famer” for his pioneer work in dimensional outdoor advertising, Dick also has been recognized as Ad Person of the Year by the American Advertising Federation Canton Chapter, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year and Kent State University Distinguished Alumni of the Year.

He serves (or has served) on numerous boards of directors: AultCare, Child Welfare League of America, Kent State University, Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce, Stark Development Board, American Association of Advertising Agencies (4A’s), Cleveland Council Board of Governors Chair, FirstMerit Bank, Canton Advertising Club, Players Guild Theatre of Canton, Pathway Caring for Children and more.

Dick holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from San Francisco State University and teaches marketing strategy at Akron, Walsh and Kent State universities. He lives in North Canton with his wife Kathi. They have two grown sons.

### **Special Dedication**

Author Dick Maggiore wishes to acknowledge agency principal Lorraine Kessler. A leading positioning strategist, Lorraine leads Innis Maggiore’s exclusive Appreciative Discovery<sup>®</sup>, a proprietary marketing report and recommendation delivered to clients at the conclusion of extensive discovery discussions, thorough research and analysis.



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The Nation's Leading Positioning Ad Agency

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

*Dick Maggiore* is an industry "Hall of Famer," for pioneering dimensional outdoor advertising. Dick has served as president and CEO of Innis Maggiore since 1989. Under Dick's leadership, Innis Maggiore has become recognized as the nation's leading positioning agency. Innis Maggiore was named Ohio's fastest growing agency three years in a row and ranks in the top 10% of the nation's AAAA agencies.

He serves as one of the agency's primary positioning experts, a positionist®. He often worked with the "Father of Positioning," Jack Trout. Innis Maggiore has developed a proprietary process resulting in a report, the Appreciative Discovery®, uncovering your brand's unique positioning.

You may contact him directly (and he'll answer you himself) to talk positioning — dick.maggiore@innismaggiore.com or call 1-800-460-4111. To learn more about positioning, visit [www.innismaggiore.com](http://www.innismaggiore.com).

Marketing battles are fought in the minds of your prospects. That's where you win. That's where you lose.

Positioning is therefore aligned with how the mind works. For example, the mind will only allow a brand to stand for one thing! Getting your brand's "one thing" into the mind has never been more difficult.

We're in an era of hyper everything. The marketplace is at fever pitch with the temperature rising. We live in a world of faster and more. There's feature clutter, advertising clutter, media clutter — everything clutter. And the mind is hard-wired to ignore. It's a mess. Our only hope is to find a truly differentiated strategy.

Positioning is the single most powerful concept in marketing — a competitive strategy — a way to separate your brand from the competition.

This book lays out all the known ways to differentiate. It will help you navigate the process of finding your unique selling proposition, your competitive mental angle, your differentiated strategy — your positioning. Only then will you be able to effectively execute and win in the marketplace.