



# **The Ten Best Positioning Strategies**

**Owning a Winning Position**

**positioning**

## › Ideas to Develop a Winning Position for Your Business

A position is a simple, credible story that can be summarized in one or two key words. It's about owning a big idea in your marketplace. The most successful and recognized companies have strong business positioning. Volvo owning "safety" and Nike owning "performance" illustrate this idea.

In order for your business to succeed, you need a winning position to distinguish your brand. To begin the journey of writing your positioning story, we have compiled a starting point for finding some of the best "tried and true" approaches for picking a winning market position.

## › The World's Best Positioning Strategies

To define your position, match your small business strategy with one of the following approaches, shape it to fit your business characteristics and community and launch your idea into the marketplace:

*“Pick one important attribute that will help you differentiate your company from the competition and go with that.”*

—Bob Lamos  
*The Case for B-to-B Branding*

For more information, read our white paper titled "The Positioning Funnel," which explains in depth about developing specific position statements.

### 1. Find a Niche

What niche in your chosen profession is missing in your market? Can your business fill a specific need? For example, if you sell auto parts, you could specialize in providing parts, services and expertise for vintage car enthusiasts. Find a way to differentiate yourself from the competition and build credibility.

### 2. Steal Niche Business Customers from Your Biggest Competitors

Now that you have a niche, steal those customers from your biggest competitor by becoming the local expert in that niche – you can't be beat if you are known as "the" local expert. The more knowledgeable and passionate you are about your business, the more people will trust your information and services, especially when you are more familiar with your community than a big corporate entity.

### **3. Steal Unhappy Customers from Your Local “Giants” by Providing What They Cannot**

Every big box store and every giant competitor has thousands of dissatisfied customers who are looking for other options. This could be due to these “megastores” lacking personal, one-on-one relationships with consumers. Maybe their prices are low, but their poor service and long wait times are unacceptable. The key is to find out the source of this dissatisfaction and deliver an alternative.

### **4. Never Compete on Price**

Instead of involving your business in a pricing war, rise above the competition in these areas:

- Expert advice (share your knowledge)
- Intimate relationships (engage your customers personally)
- Unique experiences (offer something different by way of service, shopping environment or promotions)
- Emotional attachments (make a connection so your customers will want to return)

### **5. Become a Community Star**

We all know of successful businesses in our communities where the owner or the brand has become a community star. Everyone knows their name and what they stand for. One way to do this is to involve yourself and your business in community events. Be a sponsor for a community festival or donate some of your products to a charity auction. Get your business identity out into the streets of your neighborhood. Become the “go-to” option locally.

### **6. Out-design and Out-innovate Everyone**

The future will belong to small, fast, design-friendly and innovative companies that use their creative abilities to make themselves memorable and impress their clients. You can showcase your business with a specially designed logo or with a creative, efficient Web site. The best way to

outperform a competitor in this area is to align yourself with the services of a professional graphic designer or technology expert.

### **7. Use Intimate Customer Knowledge**

Most big competitors are extremely poor at really knowing their customers and using this information. If you run a business with 100 key customers, you can get to know them so well that you send a card on their birthday or send your V.I.P. customers Christmas ornaments branded with your logo to promote a special holiday sale. Your big competitors just can't match this and, therefore, can't match the relationships you can develop, especially around seasonal events like birthdays and holidays.

### **8. Have the Best Web Site in Your Market and Make it Really Easy to Use**

When it comes to shopping the Web, small, "boutique"-type sites are growing in popularity. Online shopping is a huge convenience for many people, so try to reach out and make a connection with these consumers. Ask an expert or professional to help you design a branded Web presence. Use e-mail marketing to give customers special incentives to check out your site, like specialized online-only sale events or holiday giveaways. This is a huge opportunity for you to be a local/regional online service that no one can match.

### **9. Build an Incredible Customer Experience**

Build an experience so great that people say "WOW." Give them little extras that they can't find anywhere else, like free coffee and pastries in your lobby or extended delivery hours convenient to their schedules. Go beyond expectations when it comes to service. Over time, this will result in repeat business, word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers and great loyalty.

### **10. Look to Future Trends and Demographics to Build Your Positioning**

Every business looking to redefine its position should spend time understanding demographics, future trends and should make sure its new

position will work both today and tomorrow. This will keep you ahead of the curve when it comes to your business identity. There are many books and Web sites available that you can use to research. You can also go to [deluxesmallbusiness.com](http://deluxesmallbusiness.com) and check out our White Paper “Market Trends.”

› **Put Yourself Ahead of Over 50% of Businesses**

A strong, simple, credible position will put you ahead of more than 50% of businesses who do not have a unique selling proposition and ahead of 80% who do not have a defined position in the marketplace!

You just can't go wrong investing time in developing a credible position. If you are willing to live this position and back it up with a strong execution and incredible customer service, you can virtually guarantee your business results will improve.