

# A POSITIONING GUIDE FOR B2B SAAS COMPANIES:

*How to create clear and powerful  
positioning that makes an impact.*

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***In an ultra-competitive world, positioning matters more than ever.***

***If your company, brand, or product isn't differentiated, you're operating with one hand behind your back. A dramatic statement? Yes. True? Absolutely.***

Let's be clear; positioning is not a tagline, elevator pitch, or a list of benefits.

Positioning defines you in the customer's mind. It underpins your marketing, sales, customer service, HR, and capital-raising efforts.

Yes, it's that important.

Positioning answers these critical questions:

- What do you do?
- Who do you serve?
- Why does it matter?
- How are you unique?



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» **Many companies struggle with poor positioning and wonder why their marketing and sales struggle to attract and engage prospects. It happens for two major reasons:**

Companies don't invest the time, money, and effort to develop clear and powerful positioning. They expect that the product will sell itself, or that marketing and sales activities will attract prospects.

Many companies are product-centric, not customer-centric. They happily promote their technology, features, and prices but ignore the problems, needs and goals of customers.

This guide walks you through how to develop positioning that resonates. It provides insight into the following:

- The key steps to drive the positioning process
- How to effectively leverage positioning after it's developed
- How to measure the ROI of positioning; always a good thing!
- What to do if your CEO hates the new positioning; not a good thing!

Positioning delivers amazing ROI. There is so much value in clearly telling the world what you do and why you're the *only* option.

As important, positioning does the following:

- Turns your website into a conversion machine.
- Builds broader awareness via advertising, PR, and social media.
- Closes more deals with sales presentations that speak to your ideal customers.
- Reduces churn; your product meets expectations and it doesn't disappoint.
- Informs and improves your product roadmap with a clear direction.

Given the benefits, it's a no-brainer to improve or refresh your positioning. Even if you think your positioning is strong, there is value in reviewing it and getting feedback.

Curious or convinced about the power of positioning?

Now what?

**Positioning is where I start with most of my B2B SaaS clients.**

**Here are the 10 steps to create positioning that makes an impact.**

**1. State of the union:** What's your current positioning? What isn't working? Who within the company (e.g., CEO, CMO) wants to change it and what are their motivations? Is it a lack of leads, brand awareness, or competitors that are doing better and moving faster?

**2. The spotlight on you:** What do you do? How are you unique? What are your product's biggest benefits and features? What are your strengths and weaknesses?

**3. The people who matter:** Who needs your product? What are their problems, pains, goals, and, aspirations? What jobs do they want to do? How do they address or solve their problems now?

**4. Who else is out there?** What are the competitive alternatives; direct, and indirect? What are their strengths, weaknesses, benefits, and positioning?

**5. See the big picture:** Research the industry size, trends, and opportunities. Dig into how and why the market is growing. Who are the biggest players, and the companies emerging as threats?



**6. Take a strategic approach** aligned with your company, brand, and product. What angle will positioning embrace?

- Own a benefit (Volvo and safety)
- Customer's personality (Nike and the will to succeed)
- Price (Walmart's everyday low prices)
- Business approach (Domino's Pizza and speed)

**7. Boil down the ocean:** From interviews and research, focus on the keywords, phrases, ideas, and themes that emerge as intriguing, exciting, compelling, and engaging. Then, brainstorm and nurture them into positioning assets.

**8. Craft and draft:** This is where the rubber hit the road. Develop your positioning statement, value proposition, and a competitive audit.

**9. So, what do you think?** Get feedback, alignment, and agreement by testing and soliciting feedback about new positioning from key stakeholders (e.g., employees, customers, prospects, and partners). For positioning to succeed, everyone has to rally around and embrace it.

**10. Pollinate:** Don't let new positioning collect dust; a mistake made by many companies. Weave it into your sales and marketing, and spread the word.

### What's the difference between positioning and messaging?



Positioning is an internal exercise that enables you to articulate what you do and why anyone should care, and, as important, establish mental "real estate" with your target audiences.

Messaging is the key points that you want the audience to see; things like website content, key benefits, product descriptions, boilerplates, taglines, sales decks, and advertising copy.

Show and tell:  
Bad and good positioning



At its best, positioning makes it abundantly clear what you do, why it matters to your target audiences, and why you're *the* obvious choice.

Here's an example of bad and good positioning (see next page) from Chili Piper, which makes scheduling software for sales teams.

Last year, Chili Piper's home page featured this messaging.

## Complete meeting automation for revenue teams

Chili Piper is the #1 Meeting Lifecycle Automation platform, helping revenue teams connect with buyers faster across all stages of the customer lifecycle.

SIGN UP FOR FREE

GET A DEMO

In my opinion, the messaging was confusing and ineffective.

- "Complete meeting automation for revenue teams" is far from clear. What is meeting automation? What are the benefits? Why does it matter?

- Chili Piper describes its self as the "#1 Meeting Lifecycle automation platform". What is a meeting lifecycle automation platform and who says that Chili Piper is #1?



Earlier this year, Chili Piper changed its home page messaging.

## Make meetings happen

Chili Piper's advanced scheduling software helps B2B revenue teams double their conversion rates, increase customer satisfaction, and reach new levels of productivity.

[SIGN UP FOR FREE](#)

[GET A DEMO](#)

The copy is clearer and simpler....and much better.

- "Make meetings happen" is something that a person would actually say as opposed to marketing vernacular.

- Chili Piper makes "advanced scheduling software for B2B teams". This is much better than "meeting automation" or a "meeting lifecycle automation platform".

- The benefits are obvious: higher conversion rates, increased customer satisfaction, and new levels of productivity. It is an improvement over "helping revenue teams connect to buyers faster"

If you're a company looking to make your salespeople more successful, Chili Pepper's new messaging makes it a snap to quickly grasp whether signing up for free or getting a demo is a good move.

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## » The deliverables every company needs

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A positioning exercise is like watching a duck on water. On the surface, the duck is calm, elegant, and beautiful. Below the surface, its feet are moving furiously.

**The deliverables** for successful positioning appear relatively modest. They can include a:

- Positioning statement: what you do, who needs your product, why it matters to them, and how you're unique.
- Value proposition: why a customer would select your product and why is it *the* obvious choice?
- Elevator pitch: a corporate story delivered in 60 seconds or less. A good elevator pitch sparks questions, curiosity, and opportunities.
- A competitive audit that explores the positioning of key rivals. It identifies themes and keywords so you can craft differentiated positioning.

### **Behind the scenes, the process involves:**

- A deep dive into a company's product, customers, competitors, and market.
- Discussions with employees: senior executives, sales, marketing, product development, and customer success.
- Interviews with different customers: new, long-time, happy, and unhappy.
- Industry research, including analyst reports and review sites.
- An in-depth competitive analysis
- Brainstorming and ideation sessions.

At the end of the day, the magic of positioning is simplicity.

By eliminating the complexity and confusion, customers see your products' value faster and conversions jump.

Positioning makes a company's marketing (and sales) understandable, impactful, and memorable.

Your website, advertising, social media, and sales presentation work better and resonate.



## Now what?

The sad reality is most positioning exercises fail to deliver any value or move the needle.

It's not that good work hasn't been done, but next to nothing happens afterward.

The positioning isn't leveraged. It becomes a feel-good intellectual exercise rather than a business catalyst and a game-changer..

It is strategic and tactical mistake to not embrace new positioning, and a waste of money and time.

**The bottom line:** developing positioning delivers huge ROI if it's embraced and deployed.

## POSITIONING

defines your brand in the customer's mind. It underpins your marketing, sales, customer service, HR, and fundraising.



## Positioning ROI happens when it is weaved into:

- Your website, so users see themselves and the experiences that your product delivers.
- Sales decks that make it abundantly clear your product is *the* obvious choice amid a sea of options.
- A product roadmap that reflects your customers' goals, aspirations, and how they want to get jobs done.
- Content marketing that educates, engages, entertains, and encourages prospects and customers.
- A messaging document that features key benefits, Website content, a corporate boilerplate, mission and vision statements, and taglines.

## How to know if positioning is driving ROI

Better, more compelling positioning is a no-brainer. It differentiates your brand and makes you *the* obvious choice for prospects and customers.

But how do you measure the ROI? How do you know it is worth the investment in time, money, and effort?

You can tell that positioning is delivering when:

- 1** Website conversion rates increase. With better positioning, visitors quickly see your product's value. It drives more purchases, trials, downloads, and demo requests.
- 2** There are lower costs per acquisition/lead. If prospects understand how and why your product delivers, sales cycles are faster, and less time and money are spent nurturing and closing deals.
- 3** You attract better-qualified prospects and fewer low-potential, time-wasting tire-kickers. When people aren't clear or convinced about what you do and who you serve, you'll attract a mix of prospects rather than the right prospects.
- 4** There is a better trial to purchase conversion. The people taking your product for a test run will be qualified prospects rather than those who are simply curious.
- 5** Revenue increases. Better positioning means better prospects turn into rock-solid customers who love your product, recommend it to others, and stick around.



## What if the CEO doesn't like or, worse, rejects the new positioning?

Positioning “reluctance” often happens when CEOs are not engaged in the process. They don't provide enough insight, and they're not aware of other sources that are part of the mix.

You need to show them how competitors have positioned themselves and how it illustrates how your company must be differentiated. They need to understand the why what, and how of positioning.

They need to accept the idea that while their view of the world is essential, they're one of many stakeholders.

Hopefully, it convinces the CEO to embrace the new positioning. If not, that's a problem.

Then what? You accept their view of the world or come back with a revised version that reflects the CEO's thinking but contains the key components of the positioning exercise.



**Bottom line:** Make sure the CEO is not only committed to new positioning but they are, as important, engaged and involved in the process.

## Let's take a crack at your positioning

### **Use this template:**

For \_\_\_\_\_ (target audience) who wants to \_\_\_\_\_ (the job to be done), our \_\_\_\_\_ (product description) delivers \_\_\_\_\_ (the key benefits) without \_\_\_\_\_ (typical pain). Unlike competitors, we \_\_\_\_\_ (how you're different).

### **Example:**

For **content marketers** looking to **reach a bigger audience**, our **AI-powered distribution platform automatically generates updates** for blog posts, eBooks, infographics, and eBooks for all the major social media networks, **eliminating manual and time-consuming work**.

Unlike competitors, we give you **complete control** over when and where your content is distributed and how it performs.

## Final thoughts

In a fast-moving world, you often only have one shot at making a good impression.

If your marketing and sales resonate, it sparks opportunities for conversations, demos, trials, downloads, and sales.

### **Strong positioning makes that happen.**

Your marketing and sales are better and more successful and you can differentiate from competitors that walk, talk, and look just like you.

Even if you believe your positioning is clear and compelling, it needs to be explored and tested regularly.

Your product, the market, competitors, and customers evolve and change over time. As a result, your positioning has to be fluid and agile to stay relevant and effective.

If you haven't invested the time and energy on positioning, do it as quickly as possible. It's not only a no-brainer but a must-do.

### **Is it time to explore your positioning?**



## About Mark Evans

### Fractional CMO, Marketing Spark

Over the past 12 years, I've worked with 100+ B2B SaaS companies looking to make their marketing more compelling and successful.

My areas of expertise include positioning, planning, and tactical oversight. From my roots as a newspaper journalist, I'm a believer in the power of brand storytelling and content-driven marketing.

**If positioning is something you're exploring, or feel you might benefit from additional guidance to create and roll out an effective marketing strategy, let's talk.**



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