

Book: 'Positioning'

Definitions of positioning invariably take the perspective of the receiver, with a central focus on the creation of a differentiating position in consumers' minds. The book 'Positioneren', on the other hand, chose to tackle this subject from the perspective of the brand manager. That resulted in a five-part roadmap that starts off with an analysis of the corporate identity. By taking this inside-out route, there is less chance of a chosen positioning lacking internal support.

'Positioneren' comprises six chapters, five of which describe the steps to take in the devising of a positioning statement. In the first chapter, the authors outline a number of developments that make effective positioning even more imperative. This chapter also provides a definition of positioning, and introduces the roadmap.

Chapter 2 explains an analysis model for corporate identity. This model defines six aspects of a corporate identity (including corporate orientation and core competencies). The added value of this chapter comes in the form of a model that links corporate orientation, core competencies, vision & mission, corporate culture and corporate and customer values.

Chapter 3 focuses on a second aspect of the internal side of positioning: an analysis of a company's own brand portfolio. When a company has several brands and/or uses corporate endorsement, all brands involved have to be harmonized. This chapter illustrates that through a range of real-life cases.

Chapter 4 deals with target group analysis. It first explains a brand's mental environment: apart from values and attributes, this also links back to the product class. Every positioning process requires the brand manager to weigh up whether to emphasize so-called points of difference or points of parity (i.e.: to what extent can a brand stray from the product class, and on what points should the brand tie in with the product class?). This chapter also describes an analysis method that can be used to link brand values to concrete attributes.

Chapter 5 deals with the analysis of the competition. Widely-used positioning approaches are outlined for fast-moving consumer goods, durables, business-to-business and not-for-profit brands using a practical model.

The last chapter (6) leads up to the formulation of a positioning statement and a brand essence. This chapter also discusses a number of practical issues (such as whether to have sales objectives reflected in a positioning statement).

Reference(s)

Riezebos, R., Van der Grinten, J. (2008), Positioneren; stappenplan voor een scherpe positionering [Positioning; A Roadmap for Targeted Positioning]. Uitgeverij Boom, Amsterdam. *

* : available in the EURIB library.