

Checklist: Brand Positioning Statement (BPS)

Type of model: Checklist
Domain: Brand positioning



A Brand Positioning Statement (BPS) consists of one or two sentences expressing a brand's positioning. The following lists the different elements that can be part of such a statement. The elements listed below are intended as a checklist; when formulating a BPS, these can be used to get the formulation just right.

A BPS will at least have to address the following three points:

- Brand product: a good BPS starts by formulating the brand product's core features. These features will have to be real (i.e. the product has to be able to live up to the statement) and described accurately.
- Relevant competitive edge: a BPS has to make clear how the brand product differs from competing brands. This difference can be a rational, but also an emotional benefit. Customers have to experience such a benefit as highly relevant.
- The reason why a potential customer would buy the brand. This reason can be captured in a kind of homespun logic (such as in the example of an exfoliating facial gel: 'the micro-scrubs ensure smooth skin').

Besides the above core elements, a BPS can also contain information on:

- Target group: this requires clear identification of the targeted buyers of the brand, but also of which buyers are *not* targeted. Describing buyers that do not fall into the target group is important, because the criticism of this group will be handled differently than criticism from potential customers. Target group description should stick to attitudes and purchase motives, as demographics have little predictive value these days.
- Usage situation: the description of the desired usage situation can involve identifying the 'problem' or the (latent) need of the consumer, and subsequently defining the brand's role in that. Some brands choose to stray from the category on this point; examples are Cup-A-Soup (soup at four o'clock in the afternoon instead of at dinner time) or Friesche Vlag's Breaker yoghurt drink ('a quick snack you will always find time for').

- Brand personality: this is where the personality traits of the brand in question can be highlighted.

A BPS is the basis of the brand's advertising strategy. A BPS can also serve as a basis for the formulation of:

- A tagline: literally a subtitle (as in foreign-language films); in the case of brands, this tends to be a reference to the product or product class in question. For example:
 - FedEx Kinko's: Office and Print Services.
 - KLM: Royal Dutch Airlines.
 - Xerox: The Document Company.
- A payoff: a catchy sentence or slogan. For example:
 - Nike, just do it.
 - L'Oréal, because you're worth it.
 - Philips: Sense and Simplicity.