

REPOSITIONING

Marketing in an Era of Competition, Change, and Crisis

JACK TROUT with STEVE RIVKIN

JACK TROUT is a Forbes.com columnist and president of Trout & Partners, a marketing consultancy firm he founded. In 40 years of experience in the advertising and marketing fields, Mr. Trout has consulted with companies such as AT&T, IBM, Southwest Airlines, Merck, Procter & Gamble and many others. Mr. Trout's career started in the advertising department of General Electric and included a stint as an advertising manager at Uniroyal before starting his own firm with Al Ries. Mr. Trout is the author or co-author of fifteen books including *Positioning*, *Marketing Warfare*, *Big Brands Big Trouble* and *The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing*.

STEVE RIVKIN spent fifteen years as executive vice president at Trout & Ries Inc. before leaving to start his own marketing and communications consultancy, Rivkin and Associates, Inc. in 1989. He is now a widely recognized expert on brand and product naming. Mr. Rivkin, a graduate of the University of Missouri, has co-authored three books with Mr. Trout: *The Power of Simplicity*, *The New Positioning* and *Differentiate or Die*. Mr. Rivkin is a frequent keynote speaker on marketing and communications topics.

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MAIN IDEA

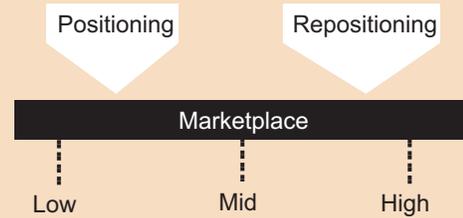
Positioning is all about how you differentiate yourself in the mind of prospective customers – the process of creating mental links so whenever people think about your product category or line of business, your company’s name will spring to mind. Positioning is the logical end result of how you communicate with the marketplace. Repositioning is all about how you adjust and fine-tune perceptions about your company or your competition in order to make your marketing strategy work.

In an era of rapid technological change – such as exists at present – repositioning comes into its own. You can and should use repositioning again and again to actively cope with change and to ensure your firm remains relevant and viable.

Repositioning is what helps keep well-managed firms atop their industries. Repositioning can be used to cope with the arrival of new competitors, the sudden availability of new technologies and the evolving dynamics of the marketplace with equal effect.

In a nutshell, you simply have to keep repositioning all the time. If you don’t, the inevitable result is you will stall and die in the marketplace. More savvy firms will hijack your position and siphon off the customers you need to move forward. Become adept at repositioning and use it well to prosper.

“If there’s one thing that has changed dramatically during my many years in business, it is the amazing increase in the level of competition. Now it comes at you from every part of the world and shows no signs of decreasing. Competition isn’t difficult when markets are growing. In other words, all boats are rising. But what happens when all boats are going down? Where do you get your business? The answer is obvious: from other boats. You can see why repositioning is a strategy whose time has finally come.”
 – Jack Trout and Steve Rivkin



1. The foundation concepts of positioning – why and how it works Page 2

Positioning (and also its twin repositioning) works because of the way people are naturally and genetically hardwired to think. It is the direct result of five key facts:



In total, positioning is a mental device we all use to help us live and act more efficiently.

2. The Urgent Need for Repositioning Pages 3 - 5

Companies need to keep repositioning themselves all the time because of the three drivers which are strongly evident in today’s marketplace:



3. The Art and Practice of Repositioning Pages 6 - 8

While repositioning sounds easy in theory, it’s actually quite difficult to pull off in practice. There are four rules which come into play when you’re attempting to reposition your enterprise:



