



# Allen Media Strategies

Media and Marketing Consultation and Strategy

"Positioning" is not a "Statement"

We always advise our clients who want to *Become Semi-Famous* to seek a unique, compelling position in the marketplace. Positions exist in the minds of the audience, not in the taglines of your advertising.

It was Al Ries & Jack Trout who many years ago who proclaimed the importance of owning a word in the prospect's mind. I think Reis and Trout are marketing geniuses, but under their theory, what is the "word" owned by Apple? Or Amazon? Or Samsung, Yahoo, Goldman Sachs, Caterpillar, Canon, or Motorola? None of these brands "own a word"...yet all are rising stars in Interbrand's 2004 ranking of Top Global Brands by dollar value. How do you explain this?

Here's the common mistake: We confuse TRYING to position with HAVING a unique, compelling position. We confuse a positioning STATEMENT with having an actual position. What we say in interviews and on the air may not be the same as what's in the listener, viewer or reader's mind. You need to be congruent with your position and your message and the consumer's expectation and understanding of your message and position. Unless media consumers view you differently from others in your field of expertise (your competition) you do NOT have a position, no matter what fancy words you use.

John Zagula, co-author of the forthcoming book "The Marketing Playbook" has a handy shortcut called "Positioning XYZ's". Fill in the blanks: "We are the only X that solves Y problem in Z unique way," where X is the category you are in, Y is the unmet need of your target audience, and Z is the differentiation, advantage, or key positive distinction you have over your competition. Examine what you do...can you fill the XYZ's? If not, what modification can you do to your image or product to enhance it's market viability?

A radio station owning the phrase "10 in a row" doesn't mean that station owns the "Most Music" image. The same is true for you; owning a word or phrase is meaningless unless you own a unique and compelling audience expectation. The very mention of your name or your program should create a distinct and desirable image which listeners want to affiliate with. That's what a position is...whether or not you have a "line" or "own a word or phrase."

To your success!

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