



Product v. Brand Positioning

What's the difference and why it matters



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Director of Brand & Product Marketing @ Shopmonkey



About me

- Strategy, production and program-focused
- Digital transformation in vertical SaaS is my jam
- Coming from a B2B, Series C lens
- Product marketer by trade
- Based in LA 🌞
- Mom x 3 under 3 = lots of patience, prioritization and ☕

Agenda

Product Positioning and Brand Positioning:

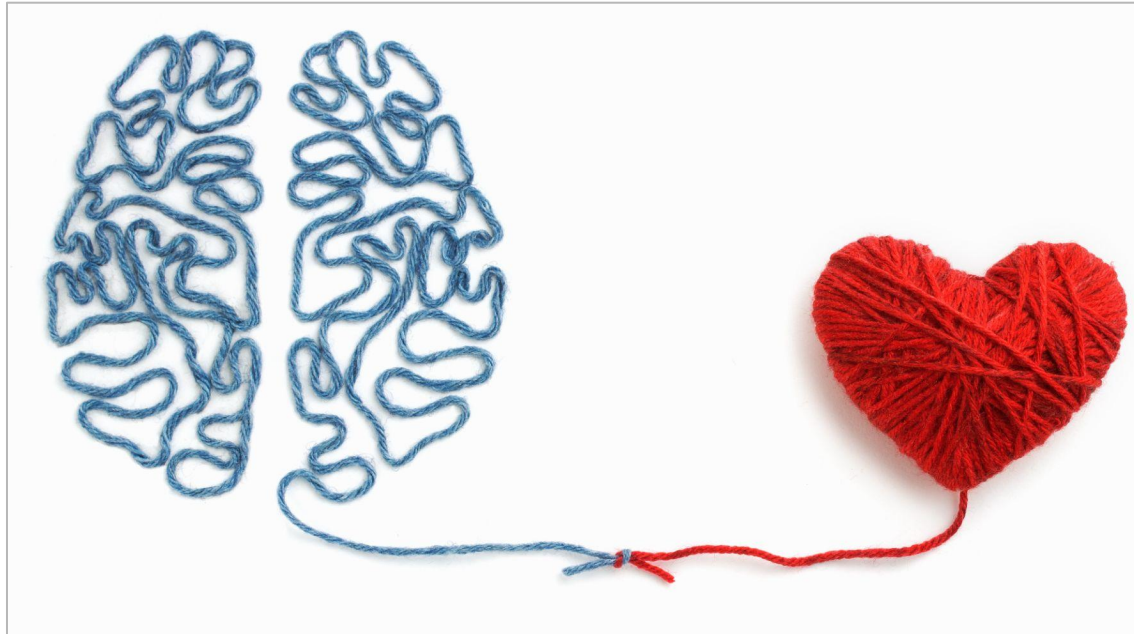
1. What are they
2. How to do it
3. What to do next

Wrap-Up

Q&A

Product Positioning & Brand Positioning: What are they?


Product and Brand



Product positioning

 How to be favorable in the commercial marketplace

Brand positioning

 How to be favorable in the eyes of your customer

To favorably position your **product**, you must answer these questions:

- What is your product is and what category does it play in?
- What's the strategic narrative, mission or problem space that communicates the “why?”
- Who is your best-fit customer and those within ICP?
- How do you want to be perceived within the competitive landscape?
- What are your product's unique capabilities and values?

To favorably position your **brand**,
you must answer these questions:

- Who is your greatest customer hero?
- What journey or mission are they on?
- What are your brand's differentiable, north star attributes?
- What is your brand's identity and what does it feel like?
- How does your brand show up across touchpoints and experiences?

Both your brand and product must be distinguishable things.

Product | Differentiated Value; Monetizable

Brand | Unique Perception; Sellable

Inspirational needs

Does this seem purposeful, hopeful or aspirational?

Individual needs

What's in it for me?

Business needs

What's in it for my business?

Functional needs

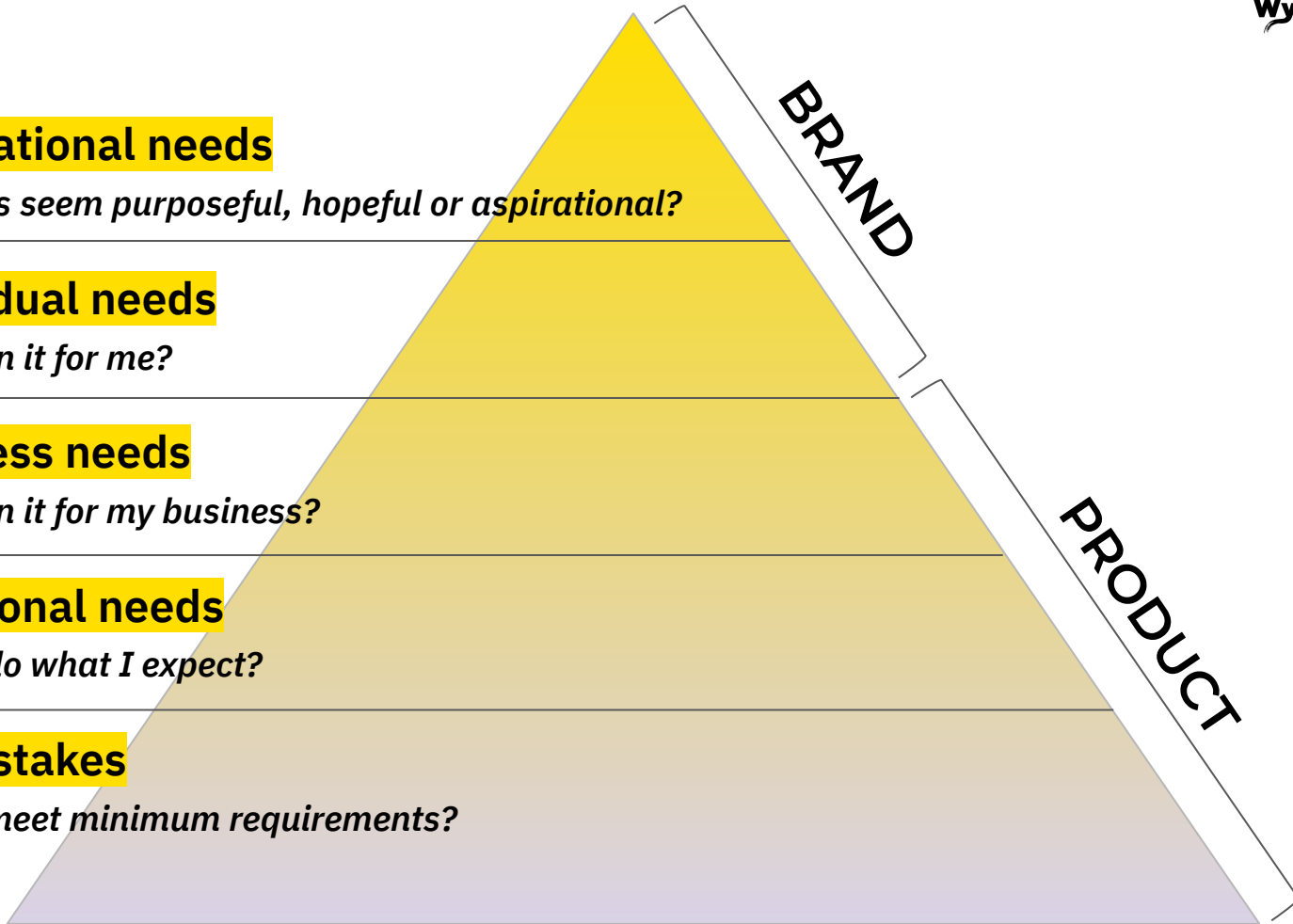
Does it do what I expect?

Table stakes

Does it meet minimum requirements?

BRAND

PRODUCT



Product & Brand Positioning: How, who, when?

Product positioning: Inputs

- Product knowledge: Utilization, cost, etc.
- Category knowledge: Assumptions and how they impact your favorable positioning
- What's the strategic narrative, mission or problem that communicates the “why”?
- Customer knowledge: Who they are, how they use the product, how they buy with what buying criteria
- Competitors and alternatives
- Differentiated capabilities: features, pricing, service, etc.

Product Positioning: Workshop

1. Workshop:
 - Paint the competitive landscape and unique buying criteria
 - Get tight on segmentation
 - Group differentiated value (no more than 3) and prove it
 - Agree on category POV
 - Map the sales story that ladders up to the larger “why”
2. Document
3. Align
4. Test

Product Positioning: Outputs

- Positioning frameworks (many out there)
- Personas-based pain points, opportunities and desires
- Value-mapping
- Proof points
- Competitive intel program
- Messaging
- Segmentation across Sales & Marketing

Product positioning: Who

Product value owner

Size and structure dependent. Most often Product Marketing. Sometimes Marketing, sometimes Product. Sometimes your CEO. **Always aligned with your C-suite.**

Internal or external?

- Always need an internal owner and evangelist

- Plenty of positioning advisors

- Newer product marketing consultancies

Brand positioning: Inputs

- Who is your primary audience, where are they, and what do they care about?
- What's the strategic narrative, mission or problem that communicates the “why”?
- What are the differentiable values that distinguish your company from all others?
- Based on what you know about your audience, what will your brand's visual style and voice be like?
- How do you show up?

Brand Positioning: Workshop

1. Workshop:
 - Define your hero as a human
 - Translate your differentiated product values and company values to several, 1-2 word brand north stars
 - Agree on visual identity
 - Agree on tone of voice and languaging
 - Agree on what an experience with your brand should *feel* like
2. Document
3. Align
4. Test

Brand Positioning: Outputs

- Positioning frameworks (many out there)
- Personas based on human behavior
- “Brand book” or “Brand guidelines”
- A hero’s customer’s journey narrative

Brand positioning: Who

Brand owner

Size and structure dependent. Most often a Creative team or a Brand team, almost always Marketing. Sometimes your CEO. **Always aligned with your C-suite.**

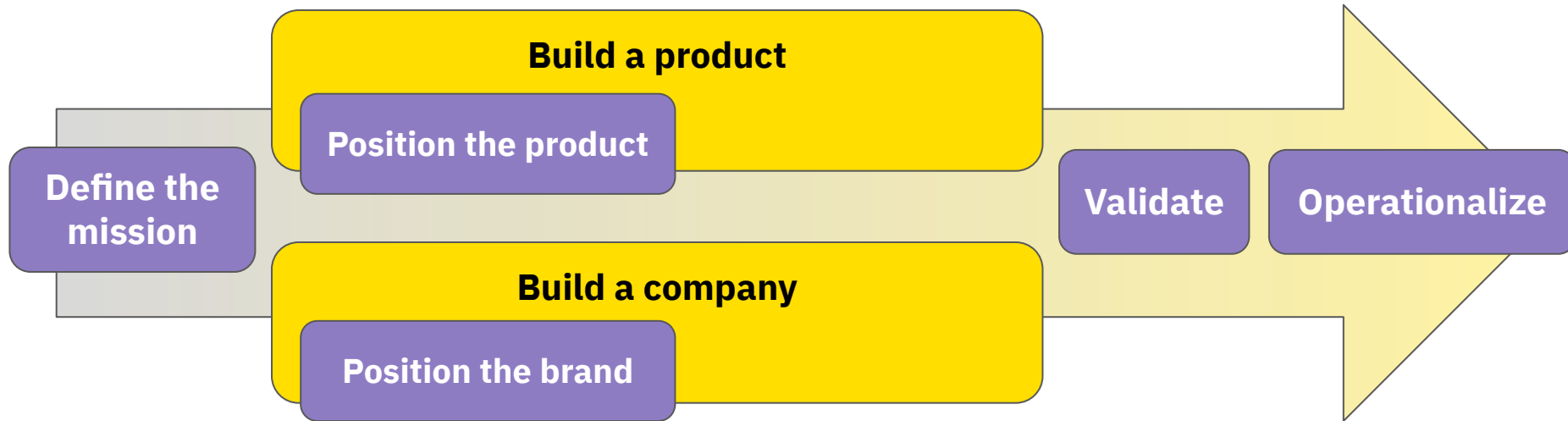
Internal or external?

- Always need an internal owner and evangelist

- Plenty of brand strategy advisors

- Plenty of creative agencies

Development cadence



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```
1  const stripe = require('stripe')('sk_test_BQokikJOvBi2H14...
2
3  await stripe.paymentIntents.create({
4    amount: 2000,
5    currency: 'usd'
6  });|
```

INSERT

server.js

100% ☰ 6/6 ln : 4

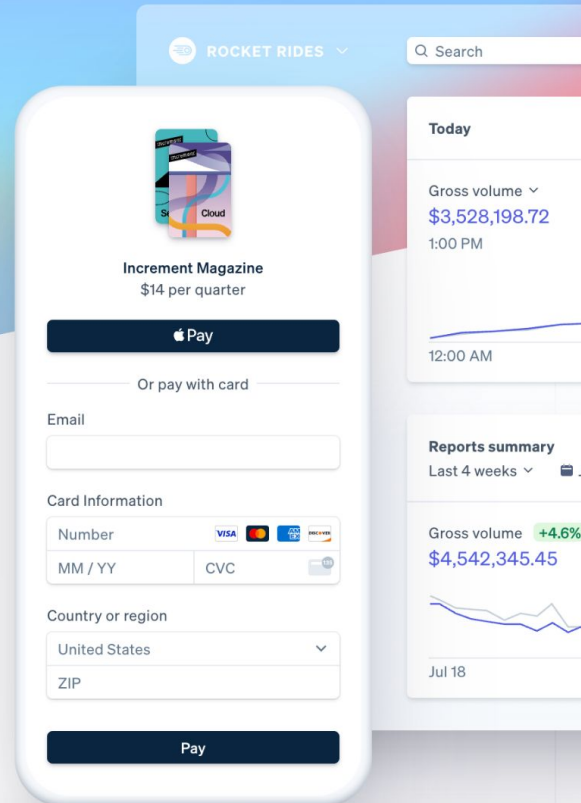
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For each exercise to be successful:

“To find a unique position, you must ignore conventional logic. Conventional logic says you find your concept inside yourself or inside the product. Not true. What you must do is look inside the prospect's mind.”

Positioning

Al Ries, Jack Trout and Philip Kotler

Product & Brand Positioning: What's next?

Validate & operationalize

Product positioning → Testing → Refine into product messaging and value proofing → Enable internal and external evangelists

Brand positioning → Testing → Integrate across all customer touchpoints → Market through every channel

Enable & integrate

**Your
Company**

**Your
Product**

**Your
Customers**

**Your
Market**

Shared mission, values and attributes

Measure

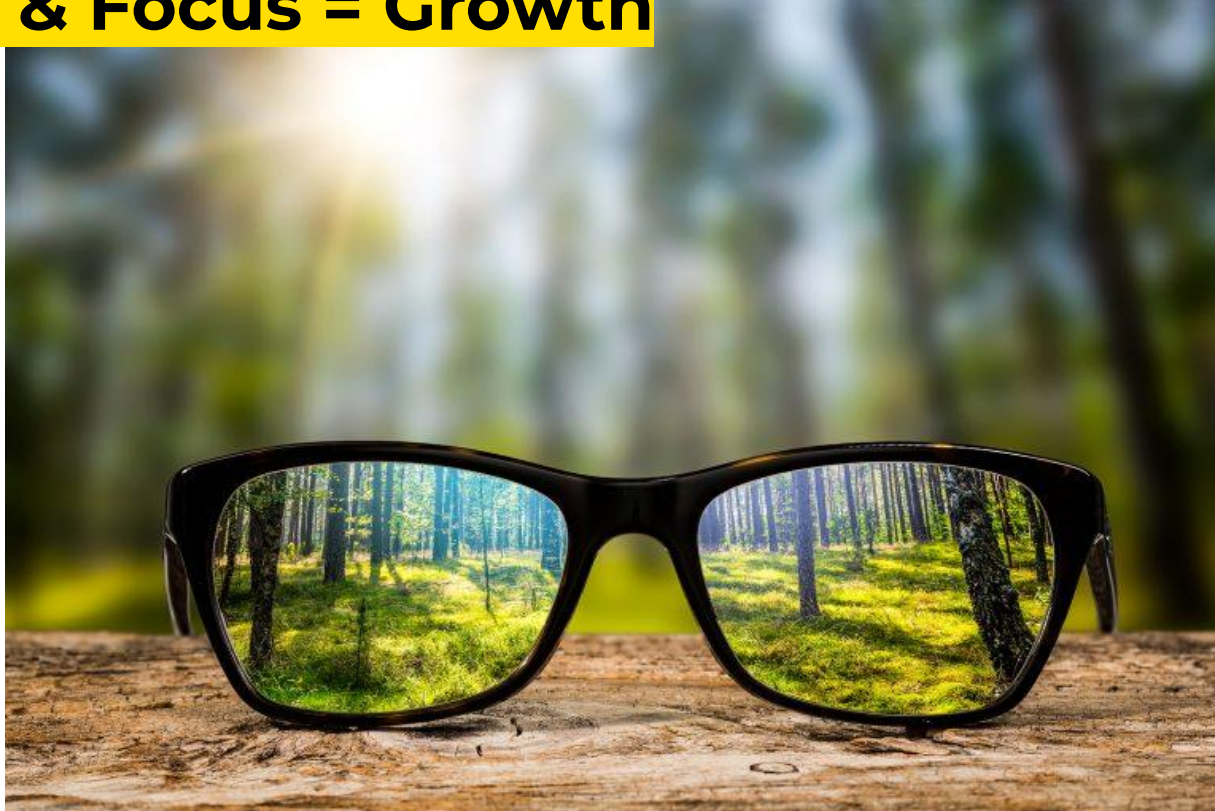
Effectiveness of product positioning

- Revenue
- Market share
- Sales velocity
- Product stickiness

Effectiveness of brand positioning

- Earned media
- Organic pipeline
- Advocacy and fanbase
- Reputation

Clarity & Focus = Growth



Business-specific

Product positioning

Brand positioning

Creative-specific

Value equity

Product positioning

Brand positioning

Perception equity

In-situation

Great, but what does this look like in practice?

Messy!

Iterative

Cyclical

Ongoing

Where to find me

- **LinkedIn :)**
 - B2B SaaS marketing
- **CXL Product Marketing Mini-Degree**
 - *Messaging that Matters*
- **Product Marketing Alliance**
 - Las Vegas Summit | May 24-25
 - San Francisco Summit | Sept 21-22



Thanks!