

## Evaluating Brand Positioning Lines

A strong brand positioning line tells prospects, customers and other stakeholders what a company or organization does and why it is different from or better than the competition. So what goes into crafting a good one? Here are FredComm's criteria:

**Brand Illuminating** – A strong positioning line addresses and provides a platform for conveying a brand's core and extended identity elements. It is not necessary for a line to completely encompass the extended elements, but it should provide a strong basis for supporting the core message with them.

**Interesting / Compelling** – A positioning line can, and should, spark interest among prospects, customers and other stakeholders and nudge them toward wanting to learn more.

**Differentiating** – As we strive to claim a specific position in the marketplace, we need to explain how we are different or superior to those who provide the same or similar products or services. No line can accomplish this alone, but a good one will set the stage.

**Based on Fact / Speak the Truth** – A positioning line should be solidly grounded. One that blatantly contradicts stakeholders' perceptions will not work and could harm the brand. An effective line builds on indisputable strengths and potential to convey what a company is today and what it is striving to be tomorrow.

**Provide a Central Theme** – A good positioning line provides avenues for expanding upon the extended identity elements that give the brand its full meaning. In doing so, it can become the lynchpin for a strong advertising and marketing campaign.

**Explainable** – Traditionally, a positioning statement is one sentence that defines a company and its direction. In this context, a positioning statement is a more thorough explanation of why a particular positioning line makes sense, fits for the company and can be applied in moving the company forward. If a line is difficult for the marketing team to explain, if it feels forced, it should be reworked or discarded.

## Fredricks Earns NDPC Sweepstakes Award

Martin Fredricks and his collaborators have earned 25 category awards and the Sweepstakes Award in the 2009 N.D. Professional Communicators competition. The Sweepstakes is based on points for individual category awards and the number of entries in each category.

The awards recognize 2008 materials FredComm completed for Adventure Shooting Sports; Advertising Marketing and its client, Fargo Jet Center; Dawson Insurance; the Greater Fargo Moorhead EDC; HUSUM WindEnergy; Jubae Design and its clients, Tower Tech Systems and Broadwind Energy; and Otter Tail Power Company. Collaborators included John Holland, Travis Kurtz and John Peterson of Advertising Marketing; Brad Clemenson of Brad Clemenson Design; Kim LePage Briss of Jubae; and Ellen Shafer of Shafer PR.

Fredricks also earned awards for personal columns for *The Red Letter* and op-ed pieces written for *The Forum*.

*You can't wait for inspiration. You have to go after it with a club. – Jack London*

*The Good Word*

### You Can Do This

Imagine if the Little Blue Engine had repeated to himself, "I think I have the ability to, I think I have the ability to, I think I have the ability to..."

No way he would have made it

to the top of that darn mountain; all those words would have left him winded and short of the top.

But you know how the story goes. "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can," became, "I thought I could, I thought I could, I thought I could." The kids received their toys and happiness ensued.

You're probably not selling toys, but you are selling something, be it a product or service. Rather than telling prospects and customers you have the ability to customize orders, deliver on time or whatever, say you can.

Better yet, tell them you will and do it. Happiness will ensue.