

## Business Positioning White Paper

### WHY IS POSITIONING IMPORTANT?

Forming a successful positioning strategy is one of the most fundamental elements of marketing because it allows a business the opportunity to differentiate itself from its competitors. The objective is to get your customers to view your brand as the leader in your respective market.

Getting it right can attract a repeat audience who confidently chooses your brand over the competition. Getting it wrong may result in minimal consumer recognition.

### BUT, WHAT IS BUSINESS POSITIONING?

Positioning is the simplest distillation of how your brand compares to your main competitors. It is a strategic exercise used to establish your brand in the minds of the consumer and involves identifying white space in the market that will ultimately define your property's unique selling proposition (USP).

This USP becomes foundational in sharpening your property's strategic focus and is meant to be used by all internal teams (sales, front desk, housekeeping, etc.) to deliver on-brand customer experiences in their respective areas.

*"Positioning is not what you do to a product. Positioning is what you do to the mind of the prospect. That is, you position the product in the mind of the prospect."* – Yuri van der Sluis

### WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BRANDING AND POSITIONING?

*Positioning* enables a hotel to audit their market position and adjust competitively toward a value-proposition and away from being seen as a commodity within their market. Once armed with a fresh position in the market, all staff and vendors are then re-aligned to the USP via training, immersion, and on-site activations.

Meanwhile, *branding* is the strategic process of creating a distinct and memorable identity for a property or outlet. It involves identifying market positioning as well as crafting a unique combination of visuals, messaging, and experiences that resonate with the target audience.

### WHO IS THIS FOR?

- Branded Hotels
- Recently transitioned into Aimbridge
- Hotels going into or coming out of renovation
- Hotels that have lost ground to comp set (decline in market share, becoming a commodity)

### WHEN SHOULD A HOTEL CONSIDER BUSINESS POSITIONING?

- Hotels in a crowded marketplace that are selling on amenities, versus a unique feature to them.
- Hotels with a declining market share.

- Hotels recently undergo a renovation that doesn't necessarily impact their branding but will become a key selling point (i.e. an addition of significant meeting space or a new spa).

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

- [What Does Positioning Mean in Marketing](#), ProductMarketingAlliance.com
- [16 Examples of Positioning Statements](#), HubSpot.com

**BUSINESS POSITIONING PROCESS AND DELIVERABLES**

**1. FOUNDATIONAL RESEARCH**

- a. Review brand strategy
- b. Current state analysis
- c. Location/market immersion
- d. Comp set analysis
- e. SWOT

**2. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT**

- a. Positioning Statement
- b. Brand Voice
- c. Brand Pillars
- d. Activations

**3. ON-PROPERTY ACTIVATION**

- a. Deploy branding
- b. Training and Immersion
- c. On-site activations and partnerships