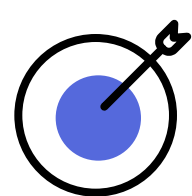


Busca Backpacks

Searching for a Brand Identity



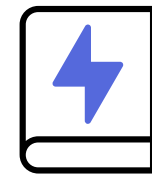
PRIMARY CONCEPT

Brand Positioning Strategy

ELEMENTS IN PLAY

- A dominant competitor
- Positioning statement
- Strengths and weaknesses of four different strategies
- Customer's voice

AT A GLANCE



How to Use This Micro:Challenge

This Micro:challenge is designed to give students an immersive firsthand encounter with the marketing strategy concepts you'll be developing more fully in the rest of your discussion on branding strategy or brand positioning. Here is one way to connect this micro:challenge to a class on these subjects.

- 1 Students do the Micro:Challenge **10 MIN**
- 2 You facilitate the class debrief and bridge to the business concepts **10 MIN**
- 3 You teach the concepts as you would normally **REST OF THE CLASS**

DIVE IN



Learning Objectives

To explore a method for choosing a brand's position, specifically focusing on its positioning statements.

To evaluate the pros and cons of specific positioning strategies through analysis of specific positioning choices as well as comparisons between positioning possibilities.

To appreciate the importance of aligning that various elements of messaging to create clear communication of your positioning / value to the consumer.



Synopsis

In the micro:challenge, students assume the role of the founder of Busca, a company

specializing in backpacks manufactured in Peru by Peruvian artisans, featuring traditional designs and weaving methods. Busca is faced with an emerging opportunity and challenge. It's largest competitor has recently come to dominate the backpack category worldwide. Busca has an opportunity to strengthen its position in this market by advertising on the popular online platform, Twitch. So, the CEO faces a question: How do we better focus / strengthen our company's brand's positioning for this ad campaign?

To answer this question, students must make the best choice among four positioning options. Those choices are informed by some pertinent background of both Busca and the dominant competitor. Students are presented different paths in the micro:challenge. With each path they are able to receive pieces of customer response and decide whether or not they would like to try again before locking in their final decision.



Sample Discussion Questions and Answers

Q1. How would you describe the positioning of Busca's main competitor, Free Passage? What are other versions of that strategy that you have seen?

A1. The "buy one-give one" backpack deal by Free Passage could be seen as a "social mission" (or "cause related") strategy. Variations of this strategy include: companies supporting an existing non-profit; donating some profits to social causes; or, supporting green programs or initiatives. Companies may pursue this strategy with more or less energy: some as peripheral, one-off events, and others as core to their brand identity.

Q3. Which of the four brand positioning options should Busca pursue? Or, which is the best option given Free Passage's positioning?

A3. There is no best answer although there could be some interesting branding philosophies that could emerge from this question. One could point to the founders of the company as providing the compass for a branding position: whatever really motivates them should be the core of the brand. Or, one could point to the perhaps weakest option, the "mix" positioning, and contrast it with the potential advantages of picking one position (whatever that may be) and sticking with it over some time. The major problem with the "mix" positioning is dilution of the branding message because a variety of messages are conveyed to many target groups.

Q2. Are these marketing strategies truly effective in your own experience as a consumer? Have they persuaded you to buy or use a product?

A2. A key point here for students is that "social mission" marketing – like any decent marketing strategy – can be effective if it's pursued in a coherent fashion. If two or more students feel very differently about this question, use their examples and ideas to inform a debate about the potential effectiveness of social mission marketing.

Q4. What are examples other positioning options that weren't covered in the micro:challenge?

A4.

Lifestyle positioning: Consumers buy lifestyle brands to surround themselves with products that transport them emotionally into a culture, subculture, or group and allow them to affiliate themselves with it.

Underdog positioning: Underdog positioning, or narrating a historical account of a brand's humble origins, lack of resources, and passionate and determined struggle against a more advantaged competitor, can increase consumers' preferences, purchase, and loyalty.