

Positioning / How to Master the Art of Upturning the Competition by Al Lewis.

Positioning / Dislodging the Competition

Positioning Dislodging the Competition.

“Positioning is the function of marketing that focuses on the problem of getting heard in an over communicated society, of standing out from the crowd.

“Only a tiny fraction of what pours in, ends up in the mind of the receiver. The best approach to take in an over communicated society, therefore, is an oversimplified message.

“Sharpen your message to cut into the mind. Clarify ambiguities, simplify the message, and then simplify it more to make a long-lasting impression.”

Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind (1972)

Concentrate on the perceptions of the prospect and not the reality of the products or services you offer whatever their quality or efficacy.

Figure out how you want to position your company, its products and services in the minds of consumers relative to competing companies, products and services: professional vs. amateur, first, last, best, biggest, smallest, most expansive, far reaching, comprehensive, structured, authoritative, intelligent, responsive, efficacious, etc.

A well-positioned company, one

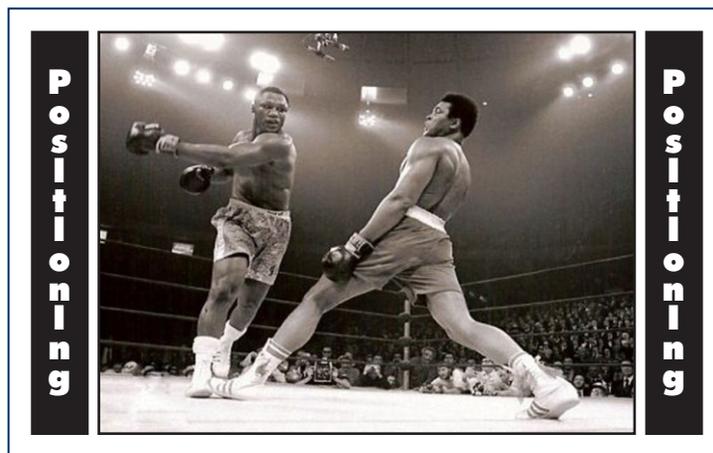
that clearly articulates what it does, why it is relevant and how it is different, will beat the competition that has a comparable offering.

Today in real estate there are too many competitors for us to do business without really trying like days

estate they meet along the way. By doing this, they eliminate the competition for you. In this situation a good program is a plus, but not necessarily the cause of success.

You can't win and not make enemies and you can't win unless you make friends. Well, there you go.

To build a position in the market from nowhere, from ground zero, you could design and pursue a marketing strategy based on the come-to principle of marketing, meaning come-to-me and I'll go to you, the listings wanted principle of business development. This is accomplished through



of old when a broker could post a “Listings Wanted” sign in the office window and actually get listings; because of this, you can't hardly compete (win) without creating losers and making enemies.

Paradoxical to this, in today's competitive environment you carve out a specific niche in the market, as though alone in a market without competitors, by going out and making friends with prospective sellers that because of the relationship will list with you when they decide to sell irrespective of others in real

paid advertising of one type or another kind of like posting a “Listings Wanted” sign in the window. This is okay if you have lots of time and lots of money to invest trying. The problem with this is that there are thousands of agents practicing the go-to principle of marketing that will likely go-to (I should say get-to) your targeted advertising prospects before they see your advertising and come-to you. This is why advertising for listings however creative today on- or off-line doesn't work like it may have in the

past, but advertising vendors keep selling this and agents keep buying.

To succeed at getting more listings than you can maybe handle in a year's time without investing a lot of time and money all you really have to do is to narrow your focus from everybody is a prospect (the goal of advertising) to almost zero, to maybe only fifty prospective sellers out of 3.2 million people in San Diego County or 3 million in Orange County or 18.7 million in Los Angeles County or whatever the number where you live that have volunteered information to you about the time of year they may consider putting their home on the market; this is called a concession-deadline

A seller will do this, volunteer this information, because you ask for it in person at their door and, if you only knock on doors of sellers you already know want to sell, owners of expired listings, how much time can this take and how much money will you have to spend to accomplish it? I'd say, very little.

Concentrate on them by evolving a cold call contact into a friend and, with a purposeful program in hand that'll get them to where they want to go, you'll get to where you want to go.

Carving Out a Niche? Building a Position?

These things are easier said than done, but there is a way to do them without having to come up with a new product or service or having to spend a lot of time and money, and this is by repositioning the competition in a seller's mind. A turnaround, you might say.

For a repositioning strategy to

work, we must say something about our competitor's product and service that causes the prospect to change his or her mind about the competitor's product, not ours. It's they we focus on and not ourselves, the usual tact of selling. It's an intellectual pivot that we seek.

Once an old idea however entrenched is overturned, establishing ourselves as the next thing is ludicrously easy (I made that one up), but not without a bit of confrontation relative to the old idea. You've got to hit it head on to kill it.

For example, a few sections of script pieced together regarding our World Outreach Marketing program recently edited and taken from Luxury Home Sales and Marketing (.com) will make my point.

World Outreach Marketing / World Outreach Marketing, the unique way we practice it, is a full-participation network marketing program designed to skyrocket the potential for a fast-sale of most any custom home, estate or resort-oriented residence by reaching out to what we call Rich Overseas Buyers and Locals with Means.

Distinct to our program are liaison-oriented co/marketing partnerships with brokers and agents both locally and overseas that, because of the relationships created for the multilevel growth and expansion of their business, funnel their buyers both local and incoming to properties on which we practice it. Multilevel incentive-driven opportunities unique to our program stimulate activity and spark sales.

A Bit of History / Trial and error played a part in the development of this program by my having to figure out how to move slow-sale real estate dur-

ing the many market downturns of the last four-decades, my time in real estate, but by means of one success following another and, then, another and another I devised proprietary (1) Strategies, tactics and actions (2) Art, images and literature (3) Structure, Contracts and Agreements (4) Online Protocols and Websites for making it happen that others, everyone else in real estate, have yet to realize.

Plain Talk / The franchise giants like Sotheby's, Coldwell Banker, First Team, Berkshire Hathaway, Engle & Volkers, Keller Williams, Re/Max, ERA (Electronic Realty Associates), Century 21, Windermere and others put forth a one-company facade and a presumption of having an international platform or array of programs for reaching out to overseas buyers when they actually are associations of standalone, independent offices owned by local brokers that spend all their time recruiting agents, training newcomers and juggling the books to keep their doors open month-to-month.

The result of this is that property listing agents, themselves, are left holding the bag or carrying the burden of property marketing; and, the problem with this is that resources for doing this are limited on an individual basis and thus are diminished month-to-month to the point where, usually, after only one or two months on the market little to nothing is done to further the aim of selling a property except recommended price reductions and continued listing on MLS (the Multiple Listing Service).

We have a proprietary program for solving this problem and for reaching out to buyers both locally and internationally that grows exponentially month-to-month that I would like to share with you along with a

new "Top of The Mark" appraisal of the value of your property personally prepared by me in hand. Within just a few weeks of starting, your house will be the main attraction in the local market; it will be a serious contender for "First Preview" by incoming buyers from many overseas markets seeking to buy property in your area; and we will have the pleasure of using this program to reel in big-fish-in-a-small-pond agents, some you already know, for cooperative marketing many times the efficacy of MLS.

There's a great difference between putting a home on the market and marketing a home. Power marketing is a hands-on activity of mining for gold day-in and day-out subject to an orderly schedule of activities (a strategy) for getting to where you want to go. A classic mistake sellers make is to list with a franchise giant solely because they believe power-in-the-market is derived from the namesake or size of the franchise-organization they list with when the reverse is actually true: power in the market is derived from the execution of blueprint strategies for getting to where you want to go carried out by a single hands-on marketing professional that champions the sale effort of some standalone house, estate or resort-oriented residence until success is achieved by one means or another of a multilevel marketing plan executed with vigor.

The Buck Stops Here / I seek to be that champion for you. See how this is planned for and done by looking over my Multilevel Marketing Plan and Fast-Sale Marketing Worksheet customized to the unique potential for World Outreach Marketing specific to your property.

Never be Afraid of Conflict.

The crux of a repositioning pro-

gram is undercutting an existing concept, product, service or person.

"Conflict, even personal conflict can build a reputation overnight when aimed with lethal accuracy at a problem you can solve by upturning the status quo."

People like to watch the bubble burst on the big guy, the big player.

In the past, advertising was a standalone activity. Marketing professionals would study a product, its features and then prepare ads that communicated them to customers and prospects. It didn't make much difference whether the competition offered those features or not. Being an also-ran or alternate of choice because most all products of the same category were alike was enough to get a piece of the pie. This can still be seen today in real estate. Virtually all big name franchises are alike, swap logos and you couldn't tell one from another.

Sellers know this and that the benefit of using one over another varies little so, without much forethought, go with one or another when they decide to sell.

Repositioning programs, because they stir up the pot, reap a host of complaints from colleagues and agents seeking to piggyback the status quo to success, but this is not our concern. Our concern is to dislodge them.

To be successful in an over-competitive society you have to play the dislodging game with vigor. Think of it as a sport like ping pong or tennis, soccer or football, basketball or baseball. All are games of vigor as is real estate. Think of it like sport and creating conflict with an aim in mind can be great fun.

It's a lie to think that you're not

good enough to do this; it's a lie to think that you're not worth it; it's a lie to think, sure for Al Lewis, but not for me because of this or that. Whatever you come up with – race, creed, color, height, weight, gender, age, experience, personality, smile, teeth, car, clothes, shoes, time, availability, etc. – for not taking on the challenge of standing before an awe-struck, jaw-dropped seller listening to you take on the competition with fluid confidence is a lie and nothing more.

When was the last time you went to McDonalds and gave a hoot about who was selling you a #1, Big Mac Combo, and handing it to you on a tray to gobble up a few moments later? I think never. Sellers are the same, they could care less about who has the knock-down program for getting them to where they want to go so just long as they get it and get there.

Might as well be you.

Anonymity.

"In business, in marketing, in life, anonymity is a resource easily squandered by too much publicity."

How often, for example, have you given your email address to some retailer like Office Depot or Macy's or Guitar Center for you guitar players (I did that) and then been salt and peppered with "Sale" literature almost daily to the point where you create a delete-filter to eliminate them from popping up in your inbox? This happens all the time, doesn't it?

I recently had my car serviced at a Toyota dealer away from home and when making up the work order gave over my email. It wasn't a day or two before I started getting sales literature of every sort from their

service center. Ridiculous, I only wanted my oil changed.

You can't beat a somebody with a nobody is an old political saying but, emphatically, you can. Jimmy Carter beat Ford, Clinton beat Bush (a war hero President), and Obama beat everybody.

"Publicity [marketing] is like eating. Nothing kills the appetite quite as much as a hearty meal. And nothing kills the publicity potential of a product or a person quite as much as a cover story in a national magazine"

Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind. Al Ries and Jack Trout

How many times have we seen some star get an Academy Award and then virtually disappear?

Media outlets: newspapers, magazines, radio, TV; and for agents websites like Zillow, Trulia, Realtor.com, as well as bench ad vendors, newspapers, newsletter services, etc. to infinity all are looking for new customers, a fresh face, a paying customer; but our clients, home owners, are not.

Be real, they don't want all that stuff coming in, do they?

In real estate we must conserve our anonymity until ready to set the hook. We must stealthily sneak up on both our prospects and competition, to never let them see us coming by braggadocio until casually invited in by a home owner to share our program; then, and only then do we set the hook (wow them into agreement) and leave with a signed listing agreement to the surprise of all, both they and the competition.

Always keep in mind this principle of marketing: the objective of marketing both ourselves and our service is not publicity or communica-

tion for its own sake, which is what most real estate companies and agents do, but personal marketing aimed at closing a sale (gaining a listing). This is done in person, in house, and not by means of paid advertising that over-salts and over-peppers our prospective clients to death and uses up our resources (money) while doing it.

In real estate, an unknown company (or agent) with an unknown product can unseat any competitor however high-and-mighty provided the product is seen by a home owner as an over-the-top structured program for getting them to where they want to go that the agents they know have yet to even realize.

How to Do This?

Well, you know, don't you?

We do this by executing a break-in strategy I call The Wealth Agenda and the 50/50/50 for Fifty Plan.

These represent our strategic marketing plan for getting in front of sellers to present the Seller Services Portfolio, Strategies and Tactics we execute to get them to where they want to go with the sale of their property.

They follow this pattern (1) We select fifty sellers that own a home that experienced an expired listing within a time-frame of nine-months past that have not yet re-listed (2) We contact these fifty in person by call or visit and (3) Once contacted "in person" follow-up these fifty to develop relationships that will lead to a program look over (a listing presentation) when the time to go back on the market comes 'round again (90% re-list within nine-months) and (4) It is our objective by doing this to list and sell enough properties within a twelve-month

period to add up to an average income of \$50,000 a month each: The 50/50/50 for Fifty Plan.

The principles upon which this strategy and its tactics are based are that (1) Real estate for listing agents is a go-to business and not a come-to business and (2) That it is relationship-oriented activity that leads to the creation of a pipeline of sellers that will list with we each individually like aunts, uncles and cousins without undue effort, cost or time to achieve when they decide to sell again.

Sidebar / Once listings are gained within any particular community, area or neighborhood, it is the listing agent's choice to pursue strategies and tactics that differ from the break-in strategy to establish themselves as a local area representative by means appropriate to that end.

This altogether represents a structured strategy for the conservation of energy, resources, and publicity toward a specific aim and is how you work with intelligence and not time and money to get where "you" want to go in real estate.

Thank you.



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Inspiration and Quotes from the Seminal Book, "Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind." 1972
