

DIFFER ENTIATE OR DIE

The CEO Guide to Disruptive Positioning
— ♦ —
Secrets of Silicon Valley

DIED

ENTIRE

OR

DE

An aerial, high-angle view of a dense city skyline at night. The image is dark, with the city lights providing a textured, glowing background. Numerous skyscrapers and buildings are visible, their windows and structural details highlighted by the ambient light. The text is centered in the middle of the image, appearing as a white overlay on the dark background.

After positioning hundreds of
successful Silicon Valley companies
– from disrupters to unicorns to
established leaders –
we're sharing the secrets of
successful B2B tech positioning.

A pair of wings, possibly from a butterfly or a fantastical creature, with feathers that exhibit iridescence, showing a spectrum of colors including blue, green, yellow, and orange. The wings are spread out, framing the central text.

**IMAGINE
MORE**

“Think customer-in, not company-out.
Until you do, you’ll just talk the talk
not walk the walk – something that 95%
of tech companies today
are still very guilty of.”



Philip Lay
Chasm Group



**PROVEN
RESULTS**



Positioning clients





**UNLOCK
POTENTIAL**

Do you have a positioning problem?

The tell-tale signs



Your presentation
is 38 slides



Long sales cycles,
feature wars,
pricing discounts,
unacceptable
win/loss ratio



Ask 3 people
about your company.
Get 3 different
answers



You place your logo
on your competitor's
web site; you both
look the same



Blah, Blah, Blah.
Your parents don't
know what you do
for a living



Your product
is considered a
"nice to have"



**RISE
ABOVE**

The inconvenient truth of B2B technology: Driving the need for strategic positioning

The best product rarely wins



No executive buyer wants
another technology vendor



All companies are organized
for yesterday's buyers



The competition is setting
the buying criteria and market agenda



Tech companies love to talk features;
executive buyers don't care "how it works"





NEW PERSPECTIVE

What do all B2B tech category leaders have in common?

- All have a **strong, differentiated positioning strategy** as a central foundation for their company success
- All understand that positioning is a strategic **CEO-led initiative** for accelerating revenue and commanding a higher valuation
- All recognize that breakaway differentiation requires a shift from a **product-centric to a buyer-centric** positioning strategy

An abstract sculpture composed of several large, metallic, angular forms that intersect and overlap. The forms have a brushed metal texture and are set against a background of vertical, slightly blurred lines, possibly part of a larger structure or a wall. The lighting creates highlights and shadows on the surfaces of the sculpture.

**STAND
OUT**

The keys to disruptive positioning

This is not a marketing game.
It's a game-changing CEO initiative.




**INSPIRE
THE YES**



Define your “Mary”

Successful positioning strategies are **exquisitely clear** about their “Mary,” or **target buyer**. The more clearly you understand the motivations, needs, challenges and attitudes of your buyer, the stronger your positioning. Most tech companies do a poor job of truly understanding their “Mary.” Or they **miss the mark** by positioning to **yesterday’s buyer**. If you want to break away from the pack, you must have a point of view and value proposition that engages your **next set of buyers**.

A close-up photograph of a cracked concrete surface. A prominent, dark, irregular crack runs horizontally across the middle of the frame. The concrete is light gray with some brownish-orange spots and smaller cracks. Overlaid on the image in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters is the text "WHY IT MATTERS".

**WHY IT
MATTERS**



“Own” a problem

Every B2B tech category leader has built a positioning strategy around a **big hairy problem** their buyers deeply care about. They “**own**” **this problem** in the market, develop a strong viewpoint that resonates with their buyer, and articulate what they do in the context of the problem their customer is trying to solve. Successful positioning calls for a **fundamental shift** in the conversation from “how the product works” to “**why it matters**” to your buyer.

A low-angle, upward-looking perspective of a modern glass skyscraper. The building's facade is composed of numerous rectangular glass panels held together by a dark metal frame. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue. The text 'UNIQUE GENIUS' is superimposed in the center of the image in a large, white, sans-serif font. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day, with some light flare visible at the bottom of the frame.

**UNIQUE
GENIUS**



Take a corner of the room

Each significant tech company has carved out their “**corner of the room**” with a distinct, highly differentiated positioning that separates them from the pack. They know their **true genius** – whether it’s unique IP, an original approach, a specialized focus – and how it positions them to solve their buyer’s problem better than anyone else. In contrast, most tech companies are **stuck in “geek speak” and feature wars** or end up sounding exactly like their competitors. And if buyers can’t tell the difference between competitors, they will always go with the bigger brand name.



FRESH NARRATIVE

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Have a viewpoint, tell a story

Stop explaining. Start inspiring. Today's market leaders **stand for something** with a provocative viewpoint and a positioning story that cuts through the noise, **wakes up** the market and brings their products alive. Positioning that **elevates** the whole conversation, **captures** the imagination of buyers and proactively **influences** the formation of the category. Stories that make the difference between average and transcendent, boring and inspiring. The **difference** between yes and no.



**CREATE A
MOVEMENT**

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Answer 3 questions for your buyer

True game changers are unambiguously clear about **why they matter** and why buyers should care.



The answer to these questions is **everything**. So your buyer can finally understand who you are and how you will rock their world. It's **never** about "how the product works." This comes later.



**BREAK
AWAY**

Success metrics:

What does winning positioning look like?

•
Your company has
a **strong viewpoint**
that wakes up the market

•
Everyone is on
the **same page** in
your company

•
Sales
engages at the
executive level

•
Your **win/loss**
ratio is at
least 5:1

•
Your solution
commands a
premium price

•
There is buyer **urgency**:
your solution is a
“got-to-have”

•
Analysts and customers
are adopting
your language

About
firebrick
CONSULTING

Firebrick is a San Francisco-based consulting firm that helps B2B tech companies accelerate revenue growth and command a higher valuation through breakaway positioning strategies. Through a proven process, refined by our experience positioning over 400 B2B tech companies, we give your company the powerful positioning it deserves.

www.firebrickconsulting.com