



# The Hidden Strategy



Yellow seed, spicy brown, dijon... alright, I am not the mustard expert, but stay with me here. Think of the top three national brands of mustard. Who did you come up with? Plochman's, French's & Grey Poupon. These brands are likely the most common among people.

People's perceptions of particular brands may not be motivated by what is actually best, or which sells the best, but by their own motivations for that product. For example - their individual tastes, needs, wants, desires and fears, even affordability.

Now ask yourself, "Who is the best in my business?" How is your market answering that question? Do you think that consumers answer with your business name or one of your competitors?

Most people will rank the top two or three products in any category based on their own perception. Where do you appear on that list? If you are in the, oh-yea's, the so-and-so or the who-is-that? - you are not where you need to be. The perception of your products/services can be changed with careful planning.

Plochman's is most remembered as the "mustard lovers mustard," French's has positioned themselves at the "American Families Mustard", and Grey Poupon as the "gourmet of mustards". Each creating its own unique niche in the mustard market. Each taking into consideration individual tastes, needs, wants and affordability to gain a specific percentage of the target market.

The most overlooked strategy in marketing is positioning. Positioning takes your product/service further than "look what we've got." Positioning goes past the "me too's", the laundry list of "have's and do's", it makes your products/services easier to sell.

This can be done a number of ways; defining a unique niche, clarifying differentiation, establishing a value proposition (what you stand for), finding competitors vulnerabilities, creating need, desire or even fear in your potential consumer base. In essence taking a small percent of the market and changing their minds about those companies at the top of the list or creating a unique niche for your product.

Positioning however is more complex than "spinning" your product or service. It takes more than placing an ad, brochure, commercial and radio advertisement. You may also need to evaluate and then align, your staff, procedures and policies to be consistent with the new positioning. You need to back it up with quality products and services.

## Who has made the change? —

Years ago Listerine mouthwash held the top spot in their market. They were easily perceived as the way to get rid of "bad breath". When Scope entered the market they avoided the "bad breath" approach that Listerine already used. Instead, Scope took on Listerine with two words "medicine breath", exposing the weakness, though small, and positioning themselves uniquely with consumers.



## Secrets in your weakness? —

NyQuil positioned themselves, by turning a potential weakness into its own strength. An effect of the medication is drowsiness, but rather than avoiding this, they quickly made themselves into the "night time, so you can sleep medicine". Creating its own market niche in night time cold remedies.

*Think about... the coffee you drink, toothpaste you use, other everyday products. How do they position themselves uniquely in the market?*



## Building a Strong Agency Relationship

I recently found a resource that opened my eyes to recognizing my “best” clients. It explains that being the agencies biggest, least demanding or nicest client is not necessarily their “best”, but by being committed, open, respectful and detail oriented is what really makes a business relationship sing.

Does it sound like a lot of hard work? Of course it does... it is like any other strong relationship.

### 1. Strategic Partner

Shoaf Design Studio is more than a vendor for graphic design. I have 10 years experience as a graphic designer and marketing professional with the ability to give you sound advice regarding your marketing strategies. Consider Shoaf Design Studio as you would an accountant, lawyer or other business professional.

### 2. Team Work

Make Shoaf Design Studio as a part of your marketing team. Have you considered including Shoaf Design Studio in appropriate meetings and planning sessions? What better way to have your strategic partner stay on top of your business trends. Internal news, accomplishments or intentions to expand will help Shoaf Design Studio keep you positioned ahead of your competitors.

### 3. Trust

Make sure that Shoaf Design Studio understands your goals and objectives. The more Shoaf Design Studio knows about your business the better I can reach those objectives.

### 4. Long Term

A long term commitment is crucial for Shoaf Design Studio to build an accurate image campaign. Building a successful campaign takes time and consistency. Be respectful of concepts and don't be afraid to ask for what you want.

### 5. Insist on Check-ups

Meet periodically with Shoaf Design Studio to express new goals and current wins and potential concerns. I want to now how our relationship can be better. Let's work together to “improve the future”.

# TAKE A LOOK!!!!

Shoaf Design Studio has launched our new web site. Introducing new services and valuable resources for your business marketing.

[www.shoafdesignstudio.com](http://www.shoafdesignstudio.com)

## REFERRALS

Your referrals are welcome and appreciated. *Your* business associates can benefit from great design! Tell folks about Shoaf Design Studio.



## What Industries is SDS experienced in?

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. business-to-business             | 7. automotive, airlines, and transportation |
| 2. healthcare and medical           | 8. museums, schools and institutions        |
| 3. technology and computers         | 9. travel, tourism, and hotels              |
| 4. publishing and media             | 10. clothing, fashion, and accessories      |
| 5. financial services and banks     | 11. retail stores                           |
| 6. food, beverages, and restaurants | 12. sports, entertainment, and music        |



# NEXT ISSUE

Marketing from the inside out.