Abstract: "Positioning and Messaging Workshop"

Are you putting language to work? In order to create and promote differentiated value in a product, management must articulate a clear positioning to company team members, prospective buyers, and those who influence buyers.

In other words: to succeed, product management needs to express unique selling propositions consistently and compellingly -- telescoping from strategic statements down to sound bites, for all relevant audiences.

This session will be a "hands-on" workshop that will quick-step participants through the creation of their own product positioning statements, together with product messages, proof points, and sound bites targeted to each product constituency.

We will end the session with a discussion focused on best-practice sharing.

Note to reader: The slides that follow incorporate "sanitized" examples in gray text from a positioning and messaging document I created for a client offering a haptic (tactile-feel) technology for use in steer-by-wire systems. The text is provided for illustrative purposes only, to help workshop participants in creating their own products' positioning and messaging.

Jeff Smith
Trajectory Business Services, LLC
jeff@trajectoryservices.com
(919) 949-9710

Positioning and Messaging Workshop

Create a compelling, consistent,
scalable foundation
for product understanding

Share In The Conversation
May 22, 2010

Thank You To Our Sponsors

280Group — The Product Management Experts.™
Consulting • Contractors • Training • Certification • Templates

Back Home PRODUCTIONS

CAMBRIA SUITES BY CHOICE HOTELS ™

HOBSON Strategic Vision — Connecting People, Ideas and Technology

enthiosys

Carolina Auto Spa

RALLY SOFTWARE

Up Public Relations — where we work for you!

Jumpin' Jonny's STEAKS & SUBS

sciQuest

ZIGZAG MARKETING — Product Management Training & Consulting

TERADATA — Raising Intelligence

Pragmatic Marketing — The World's Most Popular Product Management Training

STRATEGYN

productcamp RTP

Introductions

This Session

Topics

- Product positioning

- Messaging

- Validation

Questions and Discussion

A Powerful Tool in Market-Driven Management: The Product Positioning Statement

- Clarifies *differentiating value of product to the market,* for internal management purposes
  - Focuses product development efforts on buyer and user needs
  - Serves as *guide for* marketing communications and sales

- Template:

  For *<target buyers>*,

  who want *<compelling reason to buy>*,

  <product brand name> is a *<description of classification>*

  that provides *<key benefit>.*

  Unlike *<main competitor(s)>*,

  <product brand name> offers *<distinct advantage>.*

Creating the Positioning Statement

Offering (name of product or service): RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System for steer-by-wire applications

Target market: Forklift manufacturers

Purchase decision-makers/primary constituency among buyers ("buyer persona"): Design engineering managers

Primary benefits of the offering:
- Resistive force in steering "feel," leading to greater operator effectiveness and safety.
- Advantages over electric-motor steering-feedback systems:
  – Inherent system stability, leading to greater operator control and safety.
  – Higher-fidelity steering "feel," enhancing operator effectiveness and safety.
  – Lower power consumption, leading to longer battery life and lower battery-related costs.
  – Smaller component size, facilitating more efficient and functional design.
  – Integrated, turnkey solution that combines bearing support, sensing, and force feedback.
  – Optimizability of a single, integrated solution, enabling the simultaneous customization of sensor resolution, sensor type, and redundancy level.

productcamp RTP

Creating the Positioning Statement

Primary features of the offering (which produce the primary benefits):

- RealFeel™ Technology.
- Continuously variable, speed-independent torque.
- No requirement for return-to-center or other active forces.
- Torque density 10 times greater than that of electric motors.
- Low power consumption: 2-3 amps versus 8-10 amps for a 12-volt system.

Threats from substitutes and competing solutions:

- The greatest near-term threat is from electric-motor steering-feedback systems, but Acme Corporation has significant advantages in price and unit cost, usability (passive resistive force), energy density, size, ease of implementation, and customizability.
- A less-urgent threat is from Ogura and other potential "copycat" manufacturers.

productcamp RTP

Creating the Positioning Statement

Primary barrier(s) to purchase decision:

- Lack of awareness/appreciation for the value of providing operator feedback-feel.
- Acme Corporation's short "track record" among steer-by-wire component vendors.

Barrier-breakers:

- The RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System has been adopted for use on forklifts manufactured by Weiss AG. In spite of a worldwide downturn in forklift sales, shipments of Weiss forklifts equipped with the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System have risen 5% during the past 18 months.
- *[Testimonials or customer satisfaction statistics from Weiss customers related to the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System.]*
- The RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System is engineered and manufactured by Acme Corporation, a leader in industrial control systems with a 77-year history and $500 million in annual revenues.
- Acme Corporation's patented RealFeel™ Technology has been validated by several applications, such as in BMW automobile suspensions, and in human prosthetic knee replacements.

Creating the Positioning Statement

Positioning statement to target market:

For forklift manufacturers
seeking a tactile-feedback solution **for** forklift steering assemblies,
the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **is** a tactile-feedback system
that provides the safest, most cost-effective, and most design-efficient solution for realistic "feel" in steer-by-wire systems.

Unlike electric-motor feedback devices, which can create unwanted and potentially hazardous forces if the steering system becomes unstable, the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **offers** a continuously variable resistive steering torque, delivering high-fidelity steering "feel" and maximum control to the operator. Further, the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **offers** 10 times the torque density of electric motors, resulting in a much more compact device. The RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **offers** an easily implemented, turnkey solution that provides the steering wheel attachment shaft and integrated bearing support, and sensing and force-feedback components, thereby eliminating the expense of design activity for operator interface development and speeding product time-to-market.

productcamp RTP

Positioning Statement Template

For *<target buyers>*,

who want *<compelling reason to buy>*,

<product brand name> is a *<description of classification>*

that provides *<key benefit>*.

Unlike *<main competitor(s)>*,

<product brand name> offers *<distinct advantage>*.

Next: Market Messages

- List target constituencies for positioning statement, buyers being the first/foremost
- Assign desired perception of/message about the offering for each constituency

Market Messages (Example)

Target constituency	Desired perception of/message about the offering (What, ideally, should each constituency perceive about the value of "the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System"?)
1. **Buyers** (design engineering managers at forklift manufacturers)	Designing and manufacturing forklifts equipped with the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **enables us to offer a performance-enhancing safety feature that surpasses comparable solutions** in price-performance, ease and speed of integration, and customizability.
2. **Users/end-customers** (forklift purchasers and operators)	Purchasing forklifts equipped with the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **enhances the performance and safety of our workers and reduces liabilities** related to worker injury.
3. **Trade associations** - Industrial Truck Assn. (USA) - European equiv. to ITA - Logistics, warehousing, and materials handling assns.	Recommending the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System can **provide safety and performance benefits to our members' forklift operators, and reduce their financial and legal liabilities.**
4. **Materials-handling trade publications**	Recognizing and endorsing the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering **System enables us to provide value-added guidance to our readers,** and **positions us as an information source on "leading edge" technological solutions** to materials-handling and logistics managers.

Next: Proof Points and Sound Bites

- After assigning market messages, tag proof points and sound bites to each message.
  - **Proof points**: Support for the message; incorporate into marketing collateral
  - **Sound bites**: Powerful, quotable metrics and superlative facts; incorporate into conversations

Proof Points and Sound Bites (Example)

MESSAGE #1 - TO BUYERS (design engineering managers at forklift manufacturers)

"Designing and manufacturing forklifts equipped with the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System **enables you to offer a performance-enhancing safety feature that surpasses comparable solutions** in price-performance, ease and speed of integration, and customizability."

Primary Proof Points (Support for the message; incorporate into marketing collateral)

- Offered on forklifts manufactured by Weiss AG. Acme chosen as vendor because of price-performance.
- Superior steering "feel" and operator control offered versus electric-motor feedback solutions.
- Superior design efficiency (smaller size) and flexibility versus electric-motor feedback solutions.
- Easily implemented, turnkey solution that provides integrated bearing support, sensing, and force feedback, eliminating the expense of design activity for operator interface development and speeding product time-to-market.
- Optimizability of a single, integrated solution, enabling the simultaneous customization of sensor resolution, sensor type, and redundancy level.

Sound Bites (Powerful, quotable metrics and superlative facts; incorporate into conversations)

- "In spite of a worldwide downturn in forklift sales, shipments of Weiss forklifts equipped with the RealFeel™ Tactile-Feedback Steering System rose 5% in the past 18 months."
- "Produces 10 times the torque density of electric motors, resulting in a much more compact device."
- "Typically consumes 70% less current than comparable electric-motor devices."
- "Engineered and manufactured by Acme Corporation—we have a 77-year history and $500 million in annual revenue."

productcamp RTP

Next: Market Validation

- Validate your assumptions on market situation (needs, competition/substitutes, barriers to purchase, etc.)
- Validate your messaging

Questions and Discussion

Thank you for participating!

Jeff Smith

jeff@trajectoryservices.com

Thank You To Our Sponsors