

Dick Maggiore: Differentiate, strategize, target and shout from rooftops

By [Dick Maggiore Special](#) to The Canton Repository

Posted at 7:23 AM

Have you found your brand's **positioning** idea? Southwest Airlines is low cost. FedEx is overnight delivery. Volvo is safety.

Have you developed strategies to make it difficult for your competitors to copy? Southwest flying only 737s is among a variety of structural practices to reduce cost. FedEx invented the hub-and-spokes distribution concept, enabling overnight delivery. Volvo has invested millions of dollars pioneering ways to make its cars safer.

Have you heard that if you build that better mousetrap, the world will beat a path to your door? It makes sense, but it doesn't work that easily. You need more.

If you've found your differentiated positioning idea and you've found ways to make it difficult for your competitors to copy, then you must tell the world.

Shout from the rooftops. Shout so your stakeholders, your industry, employees, customers, prospects, suppliers, communities and other influencers know your positioning idea.

But (there's always a but) shouting effectively is more than a matter of volume.

Each of us is bombarded daily with thousands of advertising messages. How can we possibly outshout those numbers? Being heard in all that noise is truly a huge challenge.

One way to break through this clutter is to get your brand mentioned on one of the highest-rated TV shows. Sheldon on the Big Bang Theory can't live without Purell, saying lines such as, "Oh,

dear; oh, dear; Purell. Purell.” Thirteen million viewers are reached each time Sheldon mentions Purell.

This season’s new Big Bang Theory spinoff is called “Young Sheldon.” Adult Sheldon’s voiceover chimes in saying that he “wouldn’t touch my brother’s hand until 17 years later thanks to the invention of Purell.” There go 16.6 million more advertising impressions!

We’re not all so fortunate.

To increase your chances of building your brand, start by identifying and understanding what segment of your category, or subcategory, to target. Determine the demographics and psychographics of your target.

Demographics refer to characteristics: gender, age, race, income, geography, occupation, educational attainment, married, single, divorced, with or without kids, number of individuals living in the household, homeowner or renter, rural or urban, and more.

Psychographics take a deeper look by getting more into the psychology of your target’s behaviors and lifestyle. Demographics tell us who buys your product or service. Psychographics begin to tell us why they buy. Psychographics can include hobbies, special interests, travel and vacation preferences, even opinions, values, and attitudes.

Understanding your target will help you craft the right message as well as select the right media mix more effectively. You’ll know where your targets are, what media they use, how they respond and what motivates them to purchase.

There are more media choices than ever. More choices make it even more difficult to select the optimal media mix. Here is a sampling of ways to distribute your message.

Online advertising: Search engine optimization (SEO), AdWords, social media, Pandora, email, e-newsletter, blogs, podcast, video, marketing automation programs and so forth.

Traditional advertising: Newspaper, magazine, television, cable, radio, satellite radio, outdoor advertising, direct mail, yellow pages, on-hold phone messages and more.

Marketing activities: Referral programs, word of mouth, community involvement, sponsorships, events, networking, affinity marketing programs, celebrity endorsements, customer testimonials, sell online and/or bricks-and-mortar, inbound telephone, public relations, publicity, trade shows, premiums/specialty items, packaging, point-of-purchase materials, brochures, jingles, loyalty programs, contests, signs, newsletters and much more.

These tactics might help to spur ideas that are a good fit with your product or service and its positioning idea. Begin with your brand's differentiation and a strategy your competition cannot copy. Know your target and shout to them from the rooftops.

Happy marketing!

Dick Maggiore is president and CEO of [Innis Maggiore](#), founded in Canton in 1974 and today the nation's leading positioning ad agency, building strong brands for companies in competitive markets here and across the country.