

HOW TO DEVELOP AND USE A POSITIONING MAP

BC Ministry of Agriculture Marketing Guide Series



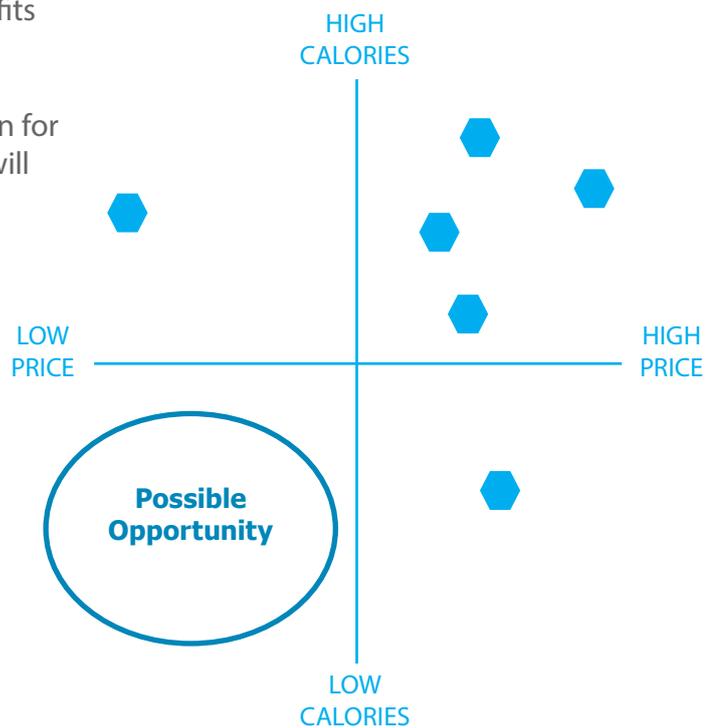
Positioning Maps Identify Opportunities

A common question asked by many business owners is how to position their product so that it stands out from the competition. A positioning map is a good way to begin the process. A positioning map will help you differentiate your product based on benefits important to consumers.

A positioning map also lays the foundation for your value proposition statement which will guide your marketing efforts.



This example identifies a gap in the market and an opportunity for a low price, low calorie product.



WHAT IS A POSITIONING MAP?

A positioning map is a diagram that allows you to compare your product to the competition and identify opportunities for new products in the marketplace.

A positioning map plots two key product benefits on horizontal and vertical axes of a graph. These product benefits are based on what is important to the consumer. Product benefits may be real or perceived and include calorie content, healthy ingredients, locally produced, price, protein content, etc.

Positioning maps are based on product benefits important to the consumer.



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Tip Base on Knowledge
Not Speculation

A positioning map helps you identify how competitive the market is for your product and whether or not you can compete.

Other key outcomes of mapping products are:

- Identifying the core benefits sought by the consumer;
- Providing a better understanding of consumers and the product category;
- Identifying potential opportunities for new products or new target markets;
- Providing the ability to monitor new products as they enter the market; and
- Laying the foundation for your value proposition statement.



DEVELOPING A POSITIONING MAP

The table below outlines the steps in developing a product positioning map for the fictitious Company XYZ’s Go Wild energy bar for endurance athletes.

Use market research to gather unbiased information for each step in developing your product positioning map. Market research will ensure that your positioning map is based on knowledge rather than speculation. For more information, please refer to the Ministry of Agriculture’s guide on “How to Conduct and Use Market Research”.

Good sources of market research include Mintel, Innova Market Insights, Prepared Foods, BC Ministry of Agriculture, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada or surveys conducted by organizations such as Ipsos-Reid.

Step	Description	Example
Step 1	Identify product category and consumer group	Energy bars for endurance athletes
Step 2	List key benefits sought by consumers	High protein content, high calorie content, value for money, good tasting, organic, vegan, locally produced
Step 3	Prioritize the top two benefits	High protein content, high calorie content
Step 4	Label the axes with the two key benefits	Level of calorie content on the X axis and level of protein on the Y axis
Step 5	List main competitors	Bar A, Bar B, Bar C, Bar D, Bar E, Bar F
Step 6	Rate your products and competitor products by key benefits	Bar A – top selling energy bar with 19 grams protein and 220 calories Go Wild - 20 grams of protein and 300 calories

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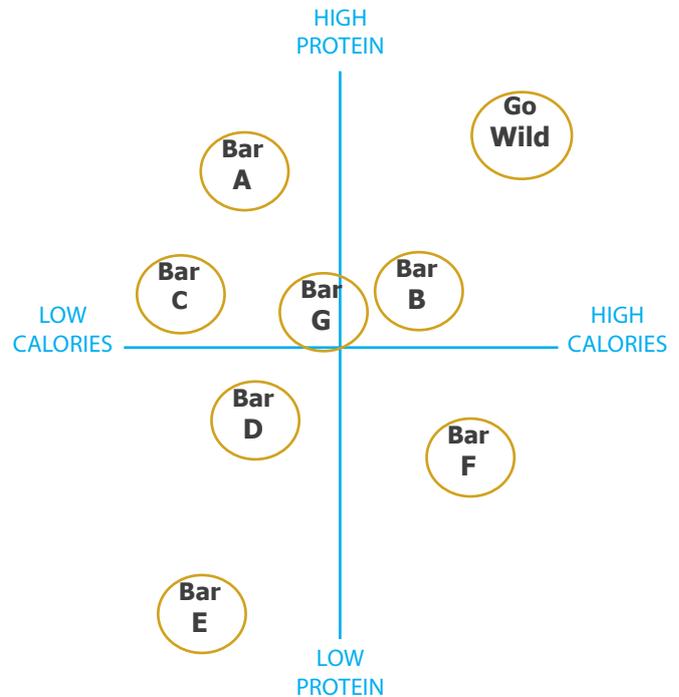


Helps Identify How Competitive the Market Is

This diagram provides an example of a positioning map for the fictitious Company XYZ's Go Wild energy bar based on two key benefits sought by consumers: high protein and calorie content.

The map identifies that Go Wild can be differentiated from the competition as having both the highest protein and calorie contents on the market.

Company XYZ's product positioning statement could incorporate results of this positioning map to describe the target market: *"Endurance athletes requiring concentrated energy foods"*; and how Company XYZ wants that market to perceive the Go Wild brand: *"The bar with the highest protein and calorie contents on the market"*.



Tip

Gather unbiased information with market research.



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The Foundation of Your Value Proposition

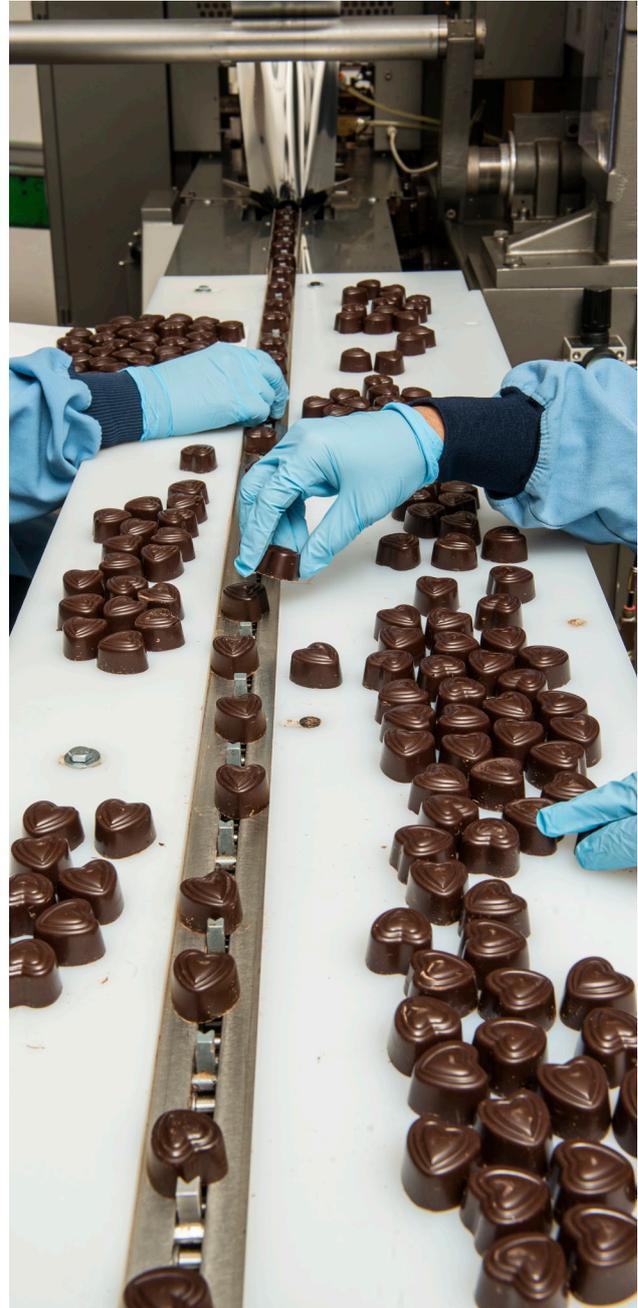
A positioning map is a tool to help you to differentiate your product from the competition and craft your messaging to your target market based on the benefits consumers believe are important.

It also lays the foundation for your value proposition statement which will guide your marketing efforts.

Tip

Stay on top of new product trends. Key benefits sought by the consumer today may change as new scientific discoveries, new product formats or new consumer groups come into the picture.

These discoveries could open up new opportunities for your company!



MORE INFORMATION

See the Ministry of Agriculture's Marketing Guide Series for more information and additional topics by visiting <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/statistics/market-analysis-and-trade-statistics>

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