In this chapter an attempt is made to survey various positioning strategies followed by the Indian corporates.

Indian corporates have been following different positioning strategies in placing the brands in the minds of the consumers. The range of strategies have included placing emphasis on the advertisement, unique selling propositions, segmentation, convenience, health, price-quality, acquisition and re-launch positions. Some positioning strategies have paid very rich dividends and some others have not.

The success of a strategy or a combination of strategies, to a great extent has depended upon correct brand positioning. Correct brand positioning has been accepted as a necessary step to achieve success in today's marketing. Monopolistic competition prevails in the present day market situation. Product differentiation and price differentiation are the main features of the monopolistic competition. The marketer forces the consumer to differentiate between the brands through positioning. The marketer must reinterpret the product differentiation as a meaningful consumer benefit. The following strategies have proved the success of such positioning.
Positioning by advertising:

Advertising removes the hindrance to knowledge. It is one of the tools that firms use to persuade consumers to buy their products. Effective advertisement positioning drives the consumer to the doorstep of the retailers. Some examples are discussed here.

One of the most successful advertising campaigns has been the Onida devil defining jealousy in the television age. The first time a negative emotion was very boldly used for positioning a product. "Neighbours envy owners pride" was well engraved in the minds of the consumers. (The Economic Times, 1994).

The single largest cigarette brand in our country in value terms (12% share of the 5000 crores market) Wills Navy cut was launched by Indian Tobacco Corporation Ltd in July 1963. Filter and plain cigarettes are positioned by the advertisement line, "Made for each other -filter and plain perfectly matched". A couple reading the official Polish joke book advertisement was run from 1983. In 1986, research indicated that this advertisement had the highest recall value from other ITC advertisements. In 1993, ITC changed its Polish joke book campaign which had run successfully for seven years. The advertisement which had become almost synonymous with the brand has been replaced by an advertisement campaign which features a younger couple. The objective is to make the communication more vibrant and contemporary, while retaining the spontaneity, shared warmth and joy of the earlier advertisements. Thus the brand is finding every opportunity to convey that message. Though this advertisement is 30 years old, it is in true with today (Advertisement & Marketing, 1994).
Sports shoe “Force 10” was well positioned by an advertisement visually. The advertisement showed various ‘forces’ which influence a typical teenager’s life. Each advertisement was divided into 10 compartments depicting nine products with strong teenage life style symbols like Archie comics, Ray-ban, Pepsi, Coke, Walkman, Bungers, Levi jeans and Wrangler, Polo, M TV wrestlemania and the like. Positioning the product on the same platform on which these symbols were positioned could lend the product powerful associations (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).

Just like Force 10, DHL Courier service also positioned their service through a visual presentation. The advertisement showed a swimming pool, a restaurant, a garage and a booking centre with a sign reading ‘closed’. The advertisement, ‘If it were DHL, it would still be open’ aimed to communicate that DHL works round the clock so that clients’ urgent documents and packages are delivered on time. This visual advertisement of DHL was well positioned in the minds of the customers. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994). Another example for an advertisement positioned through TV and print hoardings was that of Coorg filter coffee.

Consolidated Coffee Limited (CCL) a subsidiary of Tata Tea Limited had launched a 100 percent pure filter coffee named Coorg. The brand was being positioned as a ‘garden fresh filter coffee’. A multimedia campaign was used. As a result, the company claimed that it had captured 20 percent of the pure filter coffee market in Tamilnadu. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).
Roll-on is a herbal oil, which has to be literally rolled on, across the nose, the head, the throat and any other affected area during a cold. The headline of its advertisement is as follows, “Blow your nose 100 times a day or use Roll-on”, effectively attracted the customers. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).

Complan was positioned as a meal in a tea cup. Launched in 1967 in India, the brand has consistently increased its share in the milk beverages market. The television campaign, ‘I am a complan boy. I am a complan girl’ was designed well and its sales increased to Rs.60 crores. (The Economic Times, 1993).

Britannia’s Marie Biscuit was presented as a tea-time snack. The message was conveyed in a humorous manner. As a result, Britannia held 36 percent share of the Rs.890 crore organised biscuit market during the year 1993. (The Economic Times, 1994).

Proline Sports Wear Private Limited introduced its knit wear in April 1993. This was positioned by an advertising campaign, featuring famous sports personalities like Sandeep Patil and Ravi Shastri endorsing its T-shirts. By the end of the launch year, Proline sold 25,000 T-shirts and became the market leader. Proline was growing at the rate of around 250 percent annually as the consumers were now flocking for branded T-shirts. (The Economic Times, 1994).

Another brand which has silently positioned itself in the minds of the consumers is ‘Eveready’. A mere slogan ‘Give Me Red’, a associated with a brand relevant to the times, positioned the battery very strongly for over 90 years. It has
created its own special place in the homes and hearts of millions of Indians. (Brand Blazers, 1994).

One of the biggest advertising successes of recent times has been the campaign for Michelo beer. The brand was launched with a campaign, ‘First class is Michelo’. Michelo was the first brand to build a position in the beer-drinker’s mind. It was positioned as a premium-priced brand. Actually Michelo was not the first premium-priced domestic beer, but the first to build the premium position in the beer drinker’s mind.

**Positioning by unique selling propositions (USP)**

Dettol soap relaunched in 1984, has made much headway in the crowded premium toilet soap market by adopting a strategy of creating and dominating a specific usage occasion. The occasion may be sticky, or dirty, or grimy and it would respond to the idea of 100 percent bath.

The feature of being an antiseptic bath soap is the unique selling proposition of Dettol soap. This position turned out to be quite profitable, which attracted many customers and dominated the position. (Sengupta, 1990).

Mahindra and Mahindra spent five years in research and product development before launching Armada in February 1993. The five-door Armada, which can accommodate 10 people, was positioned between a car and a jeep. The
company’s USP, ‘The heart of a jeep, the soul of a car’, was attractive in the market. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).

In October 1992, a new model designed specially for the Indian market by TVS Suzuki was launched. The Suzuki Samurai came with a clear positioning that had worked, “the no problem bike”. Samurai was designed to give the customer the combination of elegance, performance, fuel efficiency and power to counter all other competing brands. Some months later Suzuki Shogun was introduced with a very clear positioning, namely, ‘the boss’. Yet, both Samurai and Shogun have not been so successful USPs as that of Hero Honda, “Fill it, Shut it and Forget it”, which remains evergreen in the memory of all customers. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).

In 1985, Johnson and Johnson’s branded prickly heat powder, Shower to Shower was launched in two varieties, namely, plain and Sandal wood. Shower to Shower’s position was further fine-tuned as a ‘Sweat - fighter’. The reason was that there can be no prickly heat powder without sweat. Lintas, the agency handling the brand brought out this USP strongly in the advertising. With its refreshing nomenclature and the attractive TV commercial, finding a foothold in the market was not difficult. The year of its launch saw Shower to Shower capturing 21.4 percent share of the market. (The Economic Times, 1994),

When the shape of the product is integral to its appeal, innovative packing can work wonders in generating trials. Hindustan Lever’s Le Sancy soap, with its unique bean shape, was packed for the first time in transparent polythene which
was moulded to its shape. This unique selling proposition strongly influenced high trial purchase, winning peak shares of 15 to 20 percent in most premium soap markets within the first four months of its launch (The Economic Times, 1994).

Tata Tea Limited was the first company to introduce tea in polypacks in the domestic market in 1986. Its another unique positioning was on its twin platforms of ‘Plantation packed’ and therefore ‘Garden fresh’. This unique selling proposition was reinforced by effective and forceful communication in the TV commercials, which showed the reality of Tata Tea being picked and packed on the gardens (Brand Blazers, 1994).

The thermoware industry is shared by Eagle, Milton and Cello. Cello positioned its brand sales through a telephone campaign, ‘Say cello, not hello’. This promotional campaign yielded an enthusiastic response from the consumers and a high recall for the brand name (The Economic Times, 1994).

In 1996 World Cup cricket season two types of unique selling propositions were used by the corporates:— (i) official brands and (ii) unofficial brands.

(i) official brands: Indian Overseas Bank was the official bank. Coca-cola was the official drink, Fuji was the official photo film, Center Fresh was the official chewing gum.

(ii) unofficial brand: Pepsi claimed and advertised the caption, “Nothing official about it” in the TV commercials. It adduced a number of examples for such unofficial things like cricket players’ dress and their behaviour in the game. By
using celebrity cricket players, the advertisement said ‘nothing official about it’ which caught the memory of many viewers.

**Positioning by segmentation**

There is a high female readership of Bengali magazines but there was only one magazine devoted to women - Sukanya as of 1986. There was scope for a new Bengali magazine for educated, young, middle and upper middle class women. As a result, a very successful new Bengali magazine, named Sananda was launched (Sengupta, 1990).

Zen was launched by Maruti Udyog Ltd:- The Company has come to occupy the slot between non-luxury and luxury car categories ruled by the Maruti 800 and the Maruti 1000 respectively. Zen is targeted at that consumer segment which would want to graduate from non-luxury to luxury cars. (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

The Hero cycle was more than 40 years old, when it decided to reinvent its product lines. In June 1989, the Hero Ranger, was positioned as the All Terrain Bike (ATB). It was launched to satisfy the school boys and girls who no longer wanted to go to school on a cycle which looked exactly like the ones their servants rode. The black cycle ‘The Ranger’ was fulfilling the need of the teenagers and was targeting the need to be economical as the petrol price was going up. (Advertising & Marketing, 1994).
Astra from Hindustan Machine Tools (HMT) launched a range of digital watches during 1991, targeting specific group - business men and executives for effective time management and sports men for whom timing is all important. The watch was positioned as 'Business planner for your wrist' for businessman, while the 'get set go' headline advertisement aimed to attract the attention of sportsman (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

Wonder wipe, the indigenously developed ‘super cellulose mop which cleans like a cloth and absorbs like a sponge’ was launched by DCM Shriram’s Rayon division wonder wipe was positioned as a hygienic, reusable, multipurpose, modern kitchen user for the urban upper middle class. (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

‘A gift for some one you love’ has remained unchanged over two decades. The idea of Amul chocolates as gifts of love from and for people of all ages is well positioned. . (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

Ballarpur Industries launched Gopal vanaspathi. Vanaspathi is supposed to be the poor man’s ghee. So Gopal vanaspathi has been positioned as ‘the taste of Ghee, in Gopal vanaspathi’, for this particular segment. (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

Realising that the health of the child is the prime concern of the parent, Vicks Vaporub was positioned as a rub for the child afflicted with cold to be used at night on the nose, throat, chest and back. By distinguishing it from a balm
(because a balm is much stronger and therefore not preferred for children), a particular segment was targeted. This positioning was maintained and reinforced in every communication to the consumer, to the trade and within the company (Sengupta, 1990).

Meditel, India's first video medical journal was produced by the Delhi-based Update Video Publication in association with Life-time Television of the US. Meditel is a series comprising four journals namely, a monthly physicians' journal update, two bi-monthly ones, (one on cardiology and another on gynaecology) and a quarterly release on Paediatrics.

Meditel has found bulk subscribers in all the major pharmaceutical companies which see in the product an useful gift for doctors. The 1400 branches of the Indian Medical Association have also been effective routes to reach the buyers. It is also subscribed by 40 to 50 medical colleges and several large public and private organisations, with well-equipped medical departments, like BHEL and SAIL. Thus a medical journal has been positioned to a particular segment.

Ray-Ban has quickly made a noticeable presence on the Indian Brand Map. It has launched many models specially aimed at women and teenagers, introducing plastic frames for a casual, trendy image which will encourage multiple ownership.

Yardley powder has ventured into a market and has strongly positioned itself among the middle class people.
Zee talcum powder has been positioned exclusively for men, which is the first and the only one of its kind in the Indian market.

The tyre industry in India has been highly visible in recent times. Apollo and Ceat made an attempt to position their brands through acquisition.

Apollo, already the market leader in truck tyres, has a market share of 15.21 percent of the truck tyres sold every month. Apollo was the first to segment the truck tyre market by creating a niche for itself. Then it entered the passenger car radial market, with the launch for the first time, of Amazer radials made of fibre glass, specially designed for the Maruti. It further segmented Amazor with the introduction of different radials for the 118NE, Gypsy and Contessa Classic. Further, it went in for a premium image by tracing its black cat scooter tyres launched in October 1993, black cat was introduced as an anti-skid tyre. Research has indicated that ‘safety’ is the primary requisite for scooters. (The Economic Times, 1994).

**Positioning by Reforming :**

Every commercial bank offers loans against fixed deposits made by its customers followed by minor formalities. Citibank proposed the idea of reducing the formalities to something as simple as signing a cheque. All the other conditions remained the same as with the other banks. The cheque book facility created an immediate perception of easy liquidity, thus reflecting an extremely effective positioning idea, namely, the flexible deposit. This idea was
Positioning by convenience:

Brooke Bond Lipton India Limited (BBLIL), a subsidiary of Unilever, launched frozen vegetables in New Delhi April, 1994, under the brand name Bird’s Eye Green Valley. Vegetables such as green peas, cauliflower and mixed vegetables are cleaned, cut and are made ready for cooking. Targeting the busy house wife, the frozen vegetables are positioned as a convenience product which offers value for money (The Economic Times, 1994).

In 1982, Food Specialities Limited, associated with Nestle, considered launching Maggi instant noodles. The company has many options from several alternative positions. Maggi noodles was launched in Delhi in January 1983 and it became an overnight success because of its positioning. In the advertisement the caption, “Two minutes” has created a strong position in the mind of the consumers; captions such as ‘sat on it, ‘the product to eat’, ‘fast to cook’, ‘any time snack’, ‘TV dinner’ and ‘a mini-meal’, are aimed at children (Sengupta, 1990).

Research reveals that in India, tea is more often preferred to other beverages for two or more people at a time. Moreover, a technology has been developed to manufacture a pouch to hold enough tea for two cups. Tata Tea and UK-based Lions Tetley have entered into an equal partnership joint venture and have launched Tata Telley ‘two cup tea’, a new product form, which is not only...
convenient for use but also less costly while a cup of comparable quality tea from a packet costs 22 paise.

Revive, the instant starch from Marico Industries signalled the entry of a major marketer into the branded starch market. The product offers convenience, value addition and starching to uniforms.

**Positioning by appeal to health:**

Since there is little product differentiation, it is the marketing strategies which will eventually determine brand success. All sunflower oil brands provide the same benefits, therefore lacking in unit selling propositions.

'Sundrop' the first branded sunflower oil was launched by ITC in 1988. Sunflower positioned itself as the 'Healthy oil for healthy people'. The print advertising showed an extremely energetic child doing a somersault. The TV commercial shows a mother cooking a 'healthy meal' with Sundrop. Sundrop which has a 60% market share has a strong presence in the Indian market.

Another refined sunflower oil brand from Godrej was positioned as one which 'favours health, flavours food' which was targeted at the housewife. The Godrej refined sunflower oil was launched in July 1993 and it accounted for a market share of 6.4% in the branded category.
Some brands have made additional distinction in advertising. Brooke Bond Lipton’s Flora, one of the earlier brands in the market, has been positioned as “An important part of an overall healthy regime which includes efforts to reduce cholesterol. Sweekar’s advertising focussed its brand as ‘88 percent fat-free’.

Thus Sunflower oil which has no unique selling prepositions was positioned under the health platform. (The Economic Times, 1994). After sunflower oil, corn oil is also used with health as its selling strategy.

Ballarpur Industries Limited produces Cornola, the first only branded corn-based oil till date. Cornola was targeted at the urban, health-conscious, high income consumer. Cornola, the oil of the future is positioned on the health platform.

**Price - quality positioning :-**

Balsara Hygienic Products Ltd., launched Odopic in 1965. There was a gap for a medium-priced brand combining cleanliness and affordability. Striving to fill up this gap, Odopic positioned itself as a low range product. Just as Odopic was gaining ground, two new brands, Godrej’s Biz and Modern Laboratories’ Shine entered the fray in 1970 and 1976 respectively, Biz was positioned against Vim, while Shine was positioned against Odopic. Shine, became the market leader with a 21% market share. The success of this brand was due to low priced quality positioning. (The Economic Times, 1994).
Arrow shirt, owned by US-based Arrow company, a division of Cluett Peabody & Co, was brought to India in October 1993, by Arvind Clothing Limited of the Lalbai group in the premium market. (Advertising & Marketing, 1993).

Lakme has brought out products such as the grease paint, make-up, the lipstick, the blush-on, the eye-shadow, the nail enamel and the perfume. The Great Dame of the Indian Cosmetics Industry is getting dressed to kill, even as the multinationals are preparing to invade the market. After thirty years of dominating women's dressing tables in Indian urban homes, the Rs. 110 crore Lakme was bringing back the glow to its cheeks with a product range and a price-quality positioned to sweep consumers and competitors off their feet. (The Economic Times, 1993).

**Relaunch and Successful positioning**

Horlicks, the one hundred year old milk food drink and one of the largest selling food drinks (46% market share in the 45,000 tonne market) in India, has been relaunched in its new **avatar** (incarnation). The product has been launched in an attractive new jar and the label design is also new. Horlicks has also come out with a product specially for kids below three years of age. (The Economic Times, 1994).

Another highly successful positioning and repositioning strategy was that of Milkmaid condensed milk. The product and the pack had remained unchanged but today one can see four distinct positioning strategies as expressed in its advertising.
Years ago, Milkmaid was advertised as a whitener for tea and coffee. Much later, yet another position for Milkmaid with the product and pack unchanged was established with the label, ‘the tastiest Milkmaid’. Later, another position, namely, a jug of milk which is derived from condensed Milkmaid was mixed with water, was visualised, through advertising as it had relevance at a time when fresh milk was in short supply in some parts of India.

And then, through consumer research and sound marketing judgement Milkmaid’s position was ‘Milkmaid for dessert receipe’. It had boosted the sales year after year. Thus Milkmaid was effectively repositioned periodically. (Sengupta, 1990).

Another interesting instance for relaunching positioning happened in the case of the Maruti Van. The Maruti van was initially positioned and advertised only as a van. It was to compete against Mahindra and Standard vans. Later, it was renamed ‘OMNI’ and repositioned as the most spacious car on the Indian road. Its competition was with other cars like Ambassador, Fiat and the Maruti car itself.

In 1949, the British Drug House Limited (BDH) brought Mycil to India. Two years later, its name was changed to Nycil. Glaxo took the brand in 1968. The brand was repositioned as a curative for prickly heat, a common summer problem. As a result of repositioning, Nycil became a household name. (The Economic Times, 1994).
Lohia Machines Limited (LML) perceived a market potential in the low volume, high margin premium scooters segment, LML decided to change the image of its products by repositioning its existing T5 Model as a high performance scooter with contemporary international styling positioned through an advertisement campaign that talked about its ‘style, power, performance’. The company claimed that 35% of its sales during the year 1991 - 1992 came from T5 Model. That experience reinforced LML’s belief that a premium positioning could work well and during November 1992, it launched a new model Vespa Select. The sleek, new scooter came in a range of metallic shades, distinctive styling and graphics, a total change from what the market offered. A year after its launch, 60% of the company’s total turnover came from Vespa Select. From being a consistent loss-making company for five years, the company came close to wiping off its accumulated losses due to its repositioning strategies. (The Economic Times, 1994).

**Positioning strategies followed by detergent manufacturers:**

In this section, successful positioning strategies followed by detergent manufactures are discussed.

The marketers of Detergent cakes and powders are competing for a large share in an oligopolistic market which is showing signs of stagnation.
Positioning by colour:

The colour of the detergent plays a vital role in positioning strategies. The following cases prove it. The favourite colour is India is blue which is associated with brightness. This strategy is reflected in many cases.

In 1968, TOMCO launched the first detergent bar namely Bonus coloured yellow. The yellow colour was selected deliberately to highlight and focus its similarity with the Sunlight bar soap against which it was positioned. Hindustan Lever conducted a consumer research after which Rin was launched in the market. Bonus was perceived as economical but people perceived that its whitener quality was poorer than that of Sunlight or Rin. As a result, Bonus has been coloured blue to encourage people to see its whitening quality as against Sunlight or Rin.

The same history is repeated in low-cost discounted-price detergent powder product class. Nirma, the first low-cost detergent powder was introduced in yellow colour. Nirma was positioned against the powerful blue Rin which belongs to the premium product class. There emerged a mega detergent war between Nirma and Rin. Nirma took the market by storm. In 1987, Hindustan Lever Limited, the market leader played a defensive role and it launched Wheel detergent powder in the discounted-price product class (Sengupta, 1990). Nirma in Yellow colour and Wheel in blue color competed against each other in the discounted-price product class. Recently Nirma also introduced a detergent powder in blue colour this to satisfy the Indian customers who prefer detergents in blue colour.
Procter and Gamble, a new entrant in the detergent market, launched Ariel in green colour in the premium product class. Later it also accepted the sentimental attachment of the Indians for blue colour and now Ariel detergents are available in blue colour also.

**Positioning by advertisements:**

The Rin detergent was well positioned in the minds of the consumers through advertisements also. In 1970, the Rin detergent bar came into the market. The early advertisement focused on the ‘Power’ aspect with the ‘lightening striking whiter’. It also emphasised that Rin alone washed twice the number of clothes as any other ordinary bar. In 1977 the white - off white comparison was first brought in. In 1980, this idea evolved into an advertisement with the one liner symbol of all the strengths of Rin. Value for money was inculcated to the customers through Lalitaji advertisement. In 1988, Rin made yet another attempt to reinforce its positioning as an economical alternative to Nirma with its ‘one drop of Rin’ advertisement campaign. Thus Rin was well positioned by advertisement in different periods of time.

Similarly Nirma was positioned by high- decibel advertising along with its attributes of low-price and high quality. The Nirma commercial is pleasing and has a jingle that is easy on the ear. It portrays young, attractive modern lively people in a simulated ballet and this is followed by a visual demonstration of the whiteness and brightness which its brings to clothes. All the brands use a effectively at the end of the advertisement which helps the consumer remember the
brand. e.g. Ariel uses ‘Kutti puyal’ (small hurricane), and - Lemon smell, Henko uses “German formula”.

**Price- quality positioning**

People perceive price - quality position as value for money. Nirma the national brand positioned its detergents under this category. Low - priced and good quality brands challenged even the multinationals like Hindustan Lever. The price - quality equation of Hindustan Lever was also successfully positioned. e.g. Rin, Wheel.

Hindustan Lever also launched new brand called Surf Ultra Matic a detergent powder formulated especially for all types of washing machines. The powder protects the washing machines from clogging corrosion and it gives a clear whiteness to clothes. The brand has become successful because of its price - quality position.

**Positioning by competitors**

Positioning by competitors through comparison with the main competitors is another way to demonstrate a brand’s superiority.

Hindustan Lever Limited and Procter and Gamble use this strategy. The gunfire in these no-holds-barred battles is being exchanged at the retailing level.
The following incentives were given to retailers to boost sales: (i) Rs. 25/- cash is given for each Ariel poster put up in the shop. (ii) Extra 2% is given for every Rs. 2000/- worth of Lever’s detergents sold. Similarly, a quartz watch is given for selling over 15 cases of Procter and Gamble soap in 2 months.

Procter and Gamble has registered perceptible success in luring away the retailers from the ambit of the Hindustan Lever Limited - by offering gold and silver coins to those who exceeded the fixed targets. HLL continued this move with the strategy of concluding demonstration to prove that wheel cakes were very effective in washing.

They have been at it for years, and are still at it without much let up. Arch rivals Hindustan Lever Limited and Procter & Gamble India Ltd., have been fighting a regular duel in the market place; parity product launches even similar advertisement messages and positioning. Hindustan Lever Ltd., was the first to launch concentrates in India through Surf Ultra, now withdrawn because of the breakthrough on Surf Excel. The advertising clearly mentions its USP as, “an antibobbling ingredient”. Within the nine months of the launching, Surf Excel has gained clear leadership in the concentrates segment and is now 40 per cent ahead of the competition. But competition - Ariel with Microshine - has just been launched in the month of January, 1997, the argument of being ahead may not hold good for the present. Thus, the war between Hindustan Lever Ltd., and Procter & Gamble India Ltd., in the detergent field is a never ending tale. (The Economic Times, 1997)


190) Ibid.,

191) Ibid.,


193) Ibid.,


197) Brand blazers, the study behind successful brands, 1994, P. 18.


200) Ibid.,


203) Brand blazers, the study behind successful brands, 1994, PP. 76-77.


209) Ibid.,

210) Ibid.,

211) Ibid.,


218) Ibid.,


