

Positioning Unlocks Growth

By Reilly Newman

Growth in a company is often thought of as fast-moving, pivoting, and the infamous Silicon Valley cliché of “move fast and break things.” Speed has its place. But building a brand over years asks something else of a business: give the market enough consistency to understand what you stand for.

Growth is not always another pivot. Sometimes it depends on becoming more firmly rooted in a position worth earning.

Think of the company as a tree. The position it wants to pursue is the ground it chooses. Strategy guides how it takes root. The work, language, pricing, and customer experience give the market evidence. **Positioning is what the market comes to believe** after seeing those signals.

The Roots

A clever statement may give you a direction, but it cannot give you roots. Those develop through decisions made repeatedly: the problems you choose to solve, the standards you hold, the work you turn down, and the promises you keep.

If the story changes with every opportunity, the audience has less chance to recognize a pattern. The business keeps introducing itself instead of building on what people already know.

Consider an architecture firm pursuing a reputation for carefully designed coastal homes. Its roots might include relevant project experience, knowledge of local constraints, and a clear way of guiding clients through complex decisions. Its portfolio, proposals, and client experience need to make those strengths visible.

If the same firm suddenly promotes itself as the answer to every kind of building project, more people may see the offer, but the reason to choose it can become less clear. The alternative is to expand from an established strength: show how that expertise applies to the next kind of project, and support the connection with evidence.

A specialist does not have to stay small. The question is whether expansion gives the market more reason to believe in you or asks it to start over.

The Market

Think of the market as nature. The wind and storms. The giant boulder your roots meet in the soil. The droughts and cold winters. But also the sun, rain, and conditions that make growth possible.

The market is not fully within your control, and it does not treat every company equally. A change in technology, buying habits, or competition can favor one business while putting pressure on another.

Some shifts are seasonal. Others change the ground you are standing on. Being rooted does not mean ignoring either. A business needs to distinguish a passing gust from a change that makes its chosen position less useful.

Sometimes a pivot is necessary. The discipline is to know why you are moving, what is worth carrying forward, and what the audience will need to understand next. Consistency should help a business adapt with credibility, not hold it in the wrong place.

The Branches

The branches represent reach: more people encountering the business, more opportunities to be considered, and more places where the brand becomes visible.

It is tempting to chase that visible growth first. More advertising. Another market. A broader offer. But reach needs something to carry. If the business is still unclear about its value, greater exposure can simply spread that confusion further.

Roots and branches also support one another. Getting the work into the world creates conversations, experience, and feedback. Those encounters can strengthen what the company knows about its audience and where it belongs.

You do not need to perfect the roots before growing a single branch. You need to keep the two connected. Learn from the market, reinforce what is working, and build the capacity to deliver as demand changes. Positioning can support growth; it cannot substitute for sound operations, an offer people want, or the resources to sustain it.

Grow From What the Market Believes

This is where Motif's **Positioning Flywheel** becomes useful. A clear signal helps people understand the business. Experience gives them something to judge. What they believe feeds the next turn. So does what they repeat to others.

Before reaching further, ask what buyers already trust you for. Then ask what proof would help that trust travel. The next branch should have a reason to grow from this tree.

The roots are not a guarantee against every storm. They are the accumulated reasons the business can keep growing without having to become unrecognizable each time it does.

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