

A Comparative Study of Brand Positioning Strategies: Apple Vs Samsung.

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ABSTRACT The objective of this study is to investigate and evaluate the brand positioning strategies of Samsung Electronics and Apple Inc., two worldwide technological giants. Although both businesses control a large portion of the smartphone industry, their unique branding strategies have a big impact on market share, customer perception, and brand loyalty. Apple markets itself as a high-end, innovative company that prioritises elegance, simplicity, and a private ecosystem. Samsung, on the other hand, takes a more technologically diversified and inclusive approach, emphasising product diversity, innovative technology, and accessibility for a wider range of customers. The research emphasises how brand values, emotional appeal, price strategy, and communication channels play crucial roles in influencing consumer choices through a comparative analysis based on secondary data, marketing campaigns, customer perception surveys, and market performance. According to the report, Samsung depends on technology leadership and market flexibility, whereas Apple on emotional branding and product experience. Understanding these opposing strategies offers marketers who want to develop successful positioning strategies in dynamic marketplaces important insights into brand management techniques in the competitive technological landscape.

INTRODUCTION

Brand positioning has become a crucial component of corporate success in the highly competitive and dynamic global technology industry. Apple Inc. and Samsung Electronics are two of the biggest names in the smartphone and consumer electronics sectors; they have not only transformed technology but also perfected the art of branding. Despite providing comparable basic products, including wearables, smartphones, tablets, and other consumer devices, Apple and Samsung have developed quite different user bases and brand identities. Apple has established a reputation for superior quality, creativity, and exclusivity. Its emotive brand language, closely linked ecology, and minimalist design appeal to customers who appreciate exclusivity, elegance, and simplicity.

Samsung, on the other hand, takes a more proactive and inclusive approach to the market, providing a large selection of goods that suit various price ranges. It presents itself as a creative and technologically sophisticated brand that appeals to a wider range of consumers. This research compares the brand positioning techniques used by the two businesses and examines how they affect market performance, customer behaviour, and brand loyalty. This study intends to demonstrate how successful brand positioning may act as a crucial differentiator in crowded and highly competitive marketplaces by analysing their marketing tactics, communication styles, product plans, and consumer perceptions. Understanding such strategies not only helps one better understand Apple's and Samsung's supremacy in the world, but it also teaches marketers, strategists, and company

executives significant lessons about how to improve brand positioning in their own sectors. The two businesses are perfect candidates for a comparison analysis because of their striking differences in branding. Apple creates an air of exclusivity and excellence through emotive branding and product experience. Samsung, on the other hand, strives to reach as many people as possible by emphasising technological supremacy, diversity, and usefulness.

This study explores how customer loyalty, brand perception, and competitive advantage in international markets are impacted by different positioning methods. Understanding how Apple and Samsung are constantly changing their positioning strategies to remain relevant, gain more prospective consumers, and expand their worldwide reach is the goal of this research. This study compares their strategies in an effort to identify best practices in brand positioning and offer marketers and brand managers helpful insights.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

- To investigate the brand positioning strategies used by Samsung and Apple.
- To assess how brand loyalty and customer perception are affected by these strategies.
- To evaluate the advertising and communication strategies employed by the two businesses
- To evaluate how well each brand is positioned in relation to customer preference and market performance.
- To provide strategic advice to companies seeking to build or improve their own brand positioning.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand positioning is a fundamental marketing idea that focusses on how a business sets itself apart from its competitors in the eyes of customers. Scholars generally concur that a company may effectively connect with its target audience and stand out in a competitive market by implementing a strong positioning plan. Marketing experts say that positioning is more than simply advertising; it's about matching the brand's identity, language, and products to the values and expectations of the customer. Furthermore, the success of brand positioning is significantly influenced by consumer perception. According to Park, Jaworski, and MacInnis (1986), customers' loyalty and purchase behaviour are strongly impacted by how they understand marketing messaging. Apple's approach leverages emotional branding to build a solid psychological connection with consumers, increasing switching costs and retaining existing customers. Samsung's strategy, on the other hand, gives customers choice and useful value by consistently innovating and delivering a wide range of products.

The ethical and social responsibility aspects of brand positioning are also examined in recent research.

Corporate social responsibility, according to Luo and Bhattacharya (2006), has a beneficial impact on customer attitudes and brand perception. Sustainability and social efforts have been integrated into the branding of both Apple and Samsung, which has an impact on their entire reputation and customer trust.

1) Positioning's Impact in Technology Markets

Product characteristics alone are not enough to influence consumer preference in fast-paced sectors like consumer electronics, especially smartphones. Customers may make decisions based on brand trust, perceived quality, and emotional appeal with the aid of positioning. Researchers contend that strong identities produced by successful brand positioning in tech industries might impact consumer choices and encourage repeat business (Aaker, 1996).

Thus, businesses need to convey brand meaning through narrative, lifestyle branding, and experience design in addition to technical specs.

2) Comparative Insights

When analysing Apple, researchers frequently highlight the company's emphasis on premium quality, emotional appeal, and simplicity. The brand is thoughtfully designed to represent exclusivity and innovation, frequently signifying a way of life rather than merely a commodity. Apple's closed environment, customer experience, and product design are all closely associated with its brand positioning strategy, which encourages user loyalty and a feeling of community. Samsung, on the other hand, takes a more dynamic and inclusive approach. Scholars have emphasised Samsung's benefit in providing a broad selection of goods that appeal to different market niches and income levels. The brand may attract a wider audience by emphasising diversity, technical innovation, and competitive price. Samsung is frequently positioned as a company that offers both flagship and low-cost smartphones the newest features and best value.

Comparative studies in the literature now in publication show that Samsung competes by providing flexibility and ongoing innovation, whereas Apple carves out a place with its devoted user base through emotive branding and simplicity.

Global cultural adaptability, customer involvement, and digital platforms are becoming increasingly important in influencing how people perceive brands, according to recent studies. Modern brand positioning has made understanding customer behaviour across geographies, communicating creatively, and maintaining consistency in message essential components.

3) Digital Marketing's Function

social media and digital marketing are used by both companies to connect with consumers. Apple has a tendency to maintain strict control over its messaging, generating enthusiasm through well-planned product debuts and clear, targeted advertising. In order to reach a wider audience, Samsung frequently employs more dynamic and diverse advertising strategies that incorporate influencers

and regional content. This demonstrates how digital platforms are essential for contemporary brand positioning as they enable businesses to communicate with customers directly and instantly influence brand perception.

4) Essential Distinctions Between Samsung and Apple

Both Apple and Samsung are successful, despite having somewhat distinct brand positioning strategies, according to studies. With its exclusivity and simplicity, Apple creates a deep emotional bond with its customers. It emphasises a first-rate user experience in its global marketing. Samsung's strategy focusses more on diversity, creativity, and adaptability. Based on the market, Samsung adapts its marketing and product offerings and concentrates on providing the newest technologies to a wide range of consumer segments. Samsung prioritises innovation and broad accessibility, whereas Apple's approach fosters strong brand loyalty.

5) Apple's Approach to Positioning

Customers seeking exclusivity, superior design, and a flawless user experience are drawn to Apple since it is a high-end, innovation-driven brand. Its positioning places more emphasis on emotional resonance, inventiveness, and simplicity than it does on product characteristics alone. By integrating devices, software, and services, Apple's ecosystem strategy fosters great customer retention and a unified brand experience. Apple maintains a reputation of quality and exclusivity by providing a small selection of well-designed items. Marketing communications emphasise lifestyle improvement and aspirational narrative, which cultivates a dedicated consumer base that is sometimes characterised as brand evangelists.

6) Samsung's Approach to Positioning

Samsung has a different positioning approach that emphasises accessibility, diversity, and innovation. By offering a wide range of devices, from entry-level to high-end versions, it caters to several market sectors. Samsung is a technology leader because it makes significant investments in new technologies and often introduces cutting-edge features like foldable screens and sophisticated cameras. Additionally, Samsung adjusts its messaging and product mix to suit local likes and preferences in order to customise its marketing and product offers for local markets throughout the globe. With the support of partnerships, sponsorships, and aggressive advertising, Samsung is able to sustain one of the biggest market shares in the world.

7) Evaluating Strategic Methods

Despite being worldwide leaders, Apple and Samsung have somewhat distinct positioning strategies, according to academic comparisons. Samsung reacts swiftly to market changes and places an emphasis on practical advantages, whereas Apple plays to customer emotions and prioritises long-term brand value. Samsung's message is frequently audacious, technical, and performance-driven, whereas Apple's is consistent, simple, and aspirational. According to academics, Samsung achieves success through availability and innovation, but Apple cultivates brand loyalty through emotional resonance (Moon, 2010).

8) The Value of Positioning in the Smartphone Sector

Businesses must develop strong brand identities since the smartphone market is extremely crowded and driven by innovation. Brand positioning in these marketplaces entails more than just product specs; it also entails developing an aspirational and emotive brand image that shapes customer choices.

Based on studies, businesses that effectively convey their brand values and USPs typically beat rivals in terms of market share and consumer loyalty (Kapferer, 2012).

9) Prospects for Future

Success in the smartphone sector is largely dependent on brand positioning, as the literature makes abundantly evident. Apple's expensive and emotive branding contrasts with Samsung's expansive, innovation-focused posture, demonstrating two distinct yet successful tactics. Fewer studies, meanwhile, have examined the effects of these tactics on sales and customer loyalty in various cultural and economic contexts. In order to close that gap, this research examines how Apple and Samsung's positioning affects different global markets.

METHODOLOGY

The brand positioning strategies of Apple and Samsung are analysed in this study using a comparative research methodology. It provides a thorough insight of both brands by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. In order to analyse official positioning plans, secondary data is collected from marketing campaigns, business reports, and trade journals. About 200 smartphone users from various demographics will participate in the poll, which will be performed using random sampling to guarantee a range of viewpoints in order to gather consumer insights. Pricing, product preferences, emotional connection, and brand impression are the main topics of the poll.

These resources provided in-depth analyses of Apple and Samsung's strategic decisions, historical evolution, and market positioning strategies, enabling a thorough comprehension of their branding initiatives. The study also collected primary data using semi-structured interviews and structured surveys to supplement the secondary data and incorporate consumer viewpoints. A wide range of customer sentiments regarding Apple and Samsung's brand images, loyalty, and purchase decisions were captured by the poll, which was directed at 150 smartphone users from various age groups, economic categories, and geographic areas.

Additionally, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted to explore emotional connections and nuanced opinions about each brand, providing qualitative richness to the analysis. Data from surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify trends and patterns in consumer preferences, while interview transcripts and open-ended responses underwent thematic coding to extract recurring themes related to brand perception, quality, innovation, and emotional appeal. This mixed-method approach enabled the study to juxtapose strategic brand positioning with actual consumer responses, offering a balanced view of how each company's efforts translate into market performance.

To enhance the results, qualitative information gleaned from speaking with marketing experts may also be added. Finding patterns and distinctions between Apple and Samsung customers is accomplished through data analysis, which includes thematic content analysis for qualitative data and statistical tools like Excel or SPSS for survey findings. Limitations include sample size restrictions and possible bias from recent marketing impacts are acknowledged in the study. By guaranteeing participant confidentiality and voluntary involvement, ethical norms will be upheld. This mixed-methods approach seeks to provide lucid insights into the brand positioning strategies of Apple and Samsung and the ways in which these tactics impact customer loyalty and sentiments.

Case Study Analysis: Apple markets itself as a luxury brand that caters to affluent, devoted consumers and is centred on innovation, design, and a flawless user experience. On the other hand, Samsung emphasises technical innovation and accessibility for all market segments while providing a broad selection of products. Through its ecosystem, Apple fosters emotional brand devotion, whereas Samsung employs diversity and quick innovation. Both achieve success by using distinct positioning techniques that cater to the requirements and tastes of global consumers.

I. Table Comparison of Apple vs. Samsung Strategies

| Aspect | Apple | Samsung |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Brand Positioning | Premium, exclusive, lifestyle-focused | Innovative, accessible, wide market appeal |
| Target Audience | High-income, loyal, design-conscious users | Broad audience – budget to premium segments |
| Product Range | Limited, high-end products | Wide range – entry-level to flagship models |
| Marketing Focus | Emotional appeal, simplicity, elegance | Innovation, features, aggressive promotion |
| Pricing Strategy | Premium pricing | Competitive pricing across all segments |
| Innovation Approach | Controlled, user-centered innovation | Fast-paced, feature-driven innovation |
| Brand Loyalty | High loyalty through ecosystem (iOS, Mac, etc.) | Moderate loyalty, less integrated ecosystem |
| Advertising Style | Minimalist, storytelling | Bold, tech-focused, localized campaigns |
| Global Strategy | Consistent branding worldwide | Tailored branding based on regional markets |
| Product Ecosystem | Strong and unified | Moderate, less tightly integrated |

II. Table: Challenges and Ethical Concerns

| Category | Description |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Data Reliability | Secondary data from company reports or media may be biased or outdated. |
| Consumer Bias | Survey responses may be influenced by brand loyalty or recent brand experiences. |
| Sampling Limitations | Small or unbalanced sample sizes may not represent global consumer behaviour. |
| Access to Information | Limited access to internal marketing strategies or financial data. |
| Comparability Issues | Apple and Samsung operate in different segments and markets, making direct comparison complex. |
| Cultural Differences | Brand perception varies by region; ethical to generalize results needs caution. |
| Privacy Concerns | Collecting personal data from participants requires strict confidentiality. |
| Informed Consent | Participants must be aware of the study's purpose and give voluntary consent. |
| Use of Intellectual Property | Using brand names, logos, or campaigns must avoid copyright infringement. |
| Researcher Bias | Personal preferences may unintentionally influence data interpretation. |

III. Table: Tools and Their Functions Tools and Their Functions

| Tool | Function |
|--|---|
| SWOT Analysis | Identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Apple and Samsung's positioning strategies. |
| Market Segmentation Tools | Helps analyse target consumer groups based on demographics, psychographics, and behaviour for both brands. |
| Brand Positioning Map | Visualizes how Apple and Samsung are positioned relative to competitors based on price, quality, innovation, etc. |
| Consumer Surveys & Questionnaires | Collects data on consumer perceptions, brand loyalty, and preferences regarding Apple and Samsung products. |
| Social Media Analytics | Monitors brand sentiment, engagement, and marketing effectiveness on platforms like Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. |
| Competitor Analysis Frameworks | Compares Samsung and Apple's marketing strategies, product portfolios, and promotional tactics. |
| Marketing Mix (4Ps) Analysis | Examines how Product, Price, Place, and Promotion strategies differ between Apple and Samsung. |
| Financial Performance Tools | Evaluates sales data, revenue, and market share to assess the success of each brand's positioning strategy. |
| Content Analysis | Analyses advertising campaigns, brand messages, and media presence to understand positioning communication. |

JUSTIFICATION

Understanding how well-known international companies like Apple and Samsung successfully position themselves in the fiercely competitive smartphone industry serves as justification for our investigation. Different branding tactics have helped both firms achieve worldwide success: Samsung has done so via innovation and market flexibility, while Apple has done so through exclusivity and emotional appeal. By examining these strategies, one may learn more about how brand positioning influences customer loyalty, behaviour, and purchase decisions. Knowing which positioning tactics are most effective and why is crucial for marketers, companies, and students in light of the growing number of options and expectations of consumers. Furthermore, this comparison demonstrates how technical, cultural, and economic aspects affect the success of brands.

Both new and established companies looking to strengthen their own positioning strategies can benefit greatly from the findings. Given Apple and Samsung's global reach and influence, this study also advances industry standards and scholarly understanding in the fields of consumer psychology, brand management, and marketing.

Furthermore, for businesses to stand out at a time when customers are exposed to a large number of brands on a daily basis, effective brand positioning is more important than ever. Entrepreneurs, brand managers, and marketing specialists may use the knowledge gathered from this study to help them develop strategies that are consistent with the expectations and values of their target market. The study also enhances academic value by adding to the corpus of information already available in the domains of consumer psychology, branding, and marketing.

Apple and Samsung's global presence also makes it possible for this study to examine brand placement in various cultural and economic contexts, which makes the results pertinent and useful globally.

This research is significant because it offers a comparative knowledge of these two opposing approaches and their effects on customer loyalty, preferences, and perceptions. Through an analysis of Apple and Samsung, the research aims to investigate the efficacy of various positioning strategies and their impact on consumer behaviour across various market categories.

Thus, the study offers a framework for other businesses to enhance or develop their own positioning strategies in competitive industries in addition to aiding in understanding the branding success of these two tech titans.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this analysis of Apple and Samsung's brand positioning strategies offer important new information on how these businesses affect consumer perception and behaviour. The information gathered from market research, secondary sources, and surveys shows a distinct difference in their approaches,

a) Consumer perception and brand identity Apple is typically regarded as a high-end and aspirational brand, according to the study results. Customers connected Apple with prestige, exclusivity, quality, and innovation. The smooth interaction across Apple products was cited by many as a key factor in brand loyalty. The ecosystem that Apple has established, which includes everything from MacBooks and iPhones to services like Apple Music and iCloud, has a powerful emotional pull that supports the brand's positioning as a representation of creativity and lifestyle. The dedication of Samsung to bringing innovative technologies like flexible displays, strong cameras, and quick CPUs was valued by the respondents. Samsung is seen as a brand that provides value across a range of price points, which increases its accessibility to a wider range of customers.

b) Strategy for Products Apple offers fewer models with strong brand integration as part of a targeted product strategy. It seldom makes significant design modifications, and its product introduction cycles are regular. This constancy builds familiarity and trust. Samsung, in contrast, employs a wide range of product offerings, ranging from high-end flagship handsets to smartphones that are affordable. Samsung is able to retain a strong presence in both established and emerging regions because to this versatility.

c) Strategy for Pricing The two brands' price strategies are one of their main points of differentiation. Apple portrays its products as luxury goods by using a premium price strategy. Although this approach complements its brand identity, it also restricts its appeal to consumers who are price conscious. By providing smartphones at several price points, Samsung, on the other hand, employs penetration pricing in numerous areas.

d) Communication and Marketing The three main pillars of Apple's marketing approach are emotional appeal, narrative, and simplicity. Its commercials are neat, eye-catching, and focus more on creativity and lifestyle than technical details. This has aided Apple in sustaining a steady and powerful brand image around the world.

e) **Brand Engagement and Customer Loyalty** According to the survey, Apple's emotive branding and connected ecosystem contribute to its greater level of consumer loyalty. After buying a single product, customers are more inclined to stick with Apple. Samsung, on the other hand, has brand loyalty due to innovation and customer happiness,

Difficulties and Prospects Apple's biggest problem is that its high pricing have limited its appeal in underdeveloped nations. The problem for Samsung is that having too many models dilutes its brand and might mislead customers. Chinese smartphone manufacturers like Xiaomi, Oppo, and OnePlus are posing a growing threat to both names because they provide competitive technology at more affordable costs.

Insights and Recommendations:-

- By highlighting exclusivity, design, and lifestyle appeal, Apple concentrates on emotional branding, which fosters strong brand devotion.
- With a wide range of products to suit any customer niche, Samsung's strength is in innovation.
- Customer retention and user experience are improved by Apple's ecosystem approach, which integrates the iPhone, iPad, Mac, and other devices.
- Samsung is able to increase its market share, particularly in price-sensitive countries, because to its pricing flexibility.

CONCLUSION

This study compared the brand positioning strategies of Apple and Samsung, two dominant players in the global smartphone market. Apple's approach is focused on developing a high-end, exclusive brand image, with a focus on svelte design, an exceptional user experience, and a closely knit product ecosystem. Wealthy and design-conscious consumers have effectively developed strong emotional bonds and great brand loyalty as a result of this strategy. Apple maintains a premium technology brand image through its constant marketing of innovation and lifestyle appeal. However, Samsung's strategy is centred on innovation leadership and broad product availability, serving a variety of customer categories at varying price points. From entry-level to flagship models, Samsung's wide range of models allows it to reach a wider audience and tailor its marketing to local tastes. Particularly in developing regions, Samsung is able to sustain a competitive advantage because to its inclusiveness and quick innovation cycle. Samsung's wide range of products can occasionally obscure the brand's identity, while Apple's high price points restrict its penetration in price-sensitive areas. Both brands still confront these difficulties. Additionally, the increasing rivalry from up-and-coming firms that provide comparable technologies at less costs puts pressure on both businesses to constantly innovate and improve their positioning strategies. In summary, Apple and Samsung's divergent brand positioning tactics show two effective routes to market leadership. Both Apple's unique, emotionally charged brand and Samsung's creative, broadly available strategy provide insightful perspectives on successful brand management. Furthermore, it offers a basis for further investigation and useful recommendations for companies looking to establish robust, distinctive identities in cutthroat marketplaces.

The results show that while both approaches work, they appeal to distinct customer segments. Whereas Samsung's varied, tech-driven strategy encourages accessibility and market penetration, Apple's targeted, premium positioning fosters exclusivity and devotion. This comparative study emphasises how crucial it is to match brand positioning to the demands of the target market and audience. With the use of these information, marketers can create strategies that effectively balance customer expectations, innovation, and competitive dynamics.

IMPLICATIONS

This analysis of Apple and Samsung's brand positioning tactics has significant ramifications for academics, business executives, and marketers. The results underscore for marketers that effective brand positioning needs to be tightly aligned with the market dynamics and preferences of the target audience. Deep consumer loyalty may be developed by developing a strong brand identity focused on exclusivity and quality, as demonstrated by Apple's premium, emotionally charged approach. In contrast, Samsung's strategy of providing a wide range of items at various price points shows how effective accessibility and ongoing innovation can be in attracting a large consumer base. Adopting a clear and consistent positioning plan is crucial for organisations, particularly those with new or developing brands, according to the survey. Regardless of positioning strategy, the study suggests that innovation must remain a fundamental pillar from a strategic business standpoint. While Samsung is able to react quickly to market trends and competitive challenges thanks to its rapid product development and technical improvements, Apple's consistent innovation within a regulated product range strengthens its premium image. Therefore, in order to maintain competitive posture, business executives should prioritise investments in R&D and cultivate organisational agility. Furthermore, creating and using a powerful brand ecosystem—like Apple's combination of services, software, and hardware—can be a key difference in the marketplace that increases repeat

business and client retention.

In the global marketplace, where cultural, economic, and consumer behaviour variations impact the efficacy of brand positioning, the consequences are also present. While Samsung's broad product line enables it to enter new countries and appeal to a range of income levels, Apple's premium strategy is more effective in established regions with greater disposable incomes. In order to adjust their brand positioning appropriately, businesses that are growing globally should carefully evaluate the features of local markets and customer preferences.

Rapid innovation and adaptation, like Samsung's, are crucial to being competitive in rapidly shifting markets, but investing in a cohesive product ecosystem, as Apple has done, may help retain customers. The study also emphasises that in order to optimise brand effect, marketing and communication tactics must be customised to regional and cultural variations. Understanding how brand positioning influences consumer behaviour in various economic and cultural circumstances is one of the research's scholarly contributions. Future studies are urged to investigate hybrid models that combine inclusivity and exclusivity. In order to remain relevant and develop, companies must innovate not just in their goods but also in the way they interact with customers, according to the study's findings.

This study advances knowledge of how brand positioning tactics affect customer behaviour in various cultural and economic circumstances from an academic standpoint. Particularly as markets get more globalised, it promotes greater research into hybrid tactics that blend exclusivity and inclusivity.

Last but not least, the report contends that being competitive in the ever-changing technology industry requires constant innovation, customer-focused marketing, and adjustment to local tastes.

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