

Small But Mighty Agency Podcast

Episode 76: 5 Ways to Position Your Agency as First Choice

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Ever felt like your agency is one among many and wish you could stand out more? Today, we're tackling the concept of powerful positioning. We'll share insights on how to make sure your agency isn't just another name but one that clients remember and think of first. We've got five key tips to dive into. In a competitive business space, you have to be great at what you do, and you've got to be noticed. So, let's get into it and learn how to shine brighter!

Audrey Joy Kwan

Welcome to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you're a marketer or consultant, or a creative on a journey of growth from solopreneur to agency owner, follow along because I pull back the curtains on the realities of growing and running a scalable, service-based business and building lean team. I'm your host, Audrey Joy Kwan, I know what it takes to build an agency, whether it's from solo to three, five or twenty. I've done it, including supporting an agency owner to sell and exit. I've coached and consulted over 120 marketers, creatives, and consultants. And I've been behind the scenes of seven figure businesses. I also have a master's degree in communications specializing in organizational development. All this to say, I know what it takes to grow lead and operate a multiple six, and seven figure small but mighty agency. And here on this podcast is where we'll dive right in.

Audrey Joy Kwan

Hi, friends. Welcome back to the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. In the last episode, I started discussing positioning your agency by asking a question to get you thinking differently.

I asked the question, what do you wish people would do more or less in your niche?

That question explores your positioning by challenging the norms in your niche.

But what is positioning? It's about deciding where you want your service to "stand" in the minds of your clients relative to other options they might consider. Think of it like a shelf in a store: you want your product to be on the eye-level shelf, easily noticeable and distinguishable from the others around it.

And even more important, why Positioning:

Imagine you're at a party with hundreds of people, and everyone is wearing similar outfits.

Now, your friend is looking for you, but since everyone looks so alike, it takes a lot of work to spot you. But then, you remember you have a bright red hat, you put the hat on your head, and suddenly, among the sea of similar-looking outfits, your friend can find you because you stand out effortlessly.

In your niche, positioning is like that bright red hat. It helps your business stand out among a crowd of similar businesses. Without positioning, your business might get lost in the crowd, making it hard for ideal clients to find and choose you. With good positioning, you become noticeable and memorable, attracting more clients.

If you want to have stand-out positioning. Here are five ways to start exploring.

First, Using your Niche Knowledge. Knowledge is power; when you have focused knowledge in a niche, make sure you're tapping into it fully. You choose a niche to be an expert; so don't underestimate the knowledge you've acquired this year. Do an inventory of the knowledge you gained through seminars, events, forums, online groups and networking events you attended that in your niche

There are dots and ideas you can connect across the different channels you're immersed in. The combination of these channels gives you insights that others don't have access to and supports you to stay updated as your niche evolves year after year. Setting aside CEO time or dedicated time to inventory the knowledge for yourself and looking for insights to connect is highly recommended because its good way to take full advantage of positioning.

A second approach is to challenge the norms of your niche. Standing out means standing for something different and authentically caring about it. Exploring going against the norm is part internal exercise and part external exercise.

Internally, start with these two questions:

Question #1: What is not being said that needs to be said in your industry?

Question #2: What do you wish people would do more or less in your industry?

Externally, get feedback from your clients about these two questions. If you know me, you know that I believe the quality of your question creates the quality of your answer. You're not asking clients what they like or don't like about your industry or niche; these

questions are about understanding your client's pain points, preferences and needs from a new perspective.

A great example is Dollar Shave Club's viral launch video, if you're not familiar with it, look it up. Part of the success of the brand and the video wasn't just humour. Yes it was funny but it also criticized traditional razor brands and therefore positioned themselves as relevant and approachable. That's the power of challenging norms.

The third option is to find a hill you will die on (metaphorically, of course). "Finding a hill you will die on" means choosing a specific belief that your agency feels so strongly about that you're willing to stand by it, no matter what.

I watched a video with my husband about the subminimum wage in the restaurant industry in certain States in the US being 2.13 cents. Yes, that means your server or, host or hostess in these states might be making \$2.13, and the rest of their wages are tips. In the video, they featured a restaurant in Austin, Texas. And this restaurant had a great example of the metaphorical hill to die on. They implemented a mandatory 20% service fee on all bills. They aimed to pay their servers, hosts and hostesses between \$17 to 21 dollars an hour because the restaurant owners believe in providing wages that support the livelihood of their staff. Now, whether you agree or don't agree with the approach is not the point here.

The point is, when you have a belief you feel firmly over, you have an unwavering commitment in your business to that belief or principle, even though not everyone might agree with you.

A metaphorical hill you will die on helps your business stand out because it tells clients what you genuinely care about.

If going forward with the metaphor of "a hill you will die on" or challenging the norms of your industry feels like a gigantic leap for your positioning. You can pull back and start with concept number 4 – all about identifying and understanding your strengths.

Every business has a pot of resources. Knowing your strengths helps you use the pot wisely. When you pour into areas you're great at, you ensure those superpowers shine even brighter.

When you lean harder into your strengths as a position, you're focusing your resources and efforts on those who will most resonate with what you excel at, and this could very well be a micro-niche within your niche.

Leaning into your strengths versus a hill you will die isn't more vanilla or easier – if that's crossed your mind – because positioning for your strength leads to releasing things that are not your strengths - that could be a percentage of clients or letting go of legacy clients, all of it takes courage too.

Fifth, communicate your Return on investment. Once upon a time, when clients were not as marketing-savvy and before the ease of access to online learning of strategy and concepts – big claims were easier to make and buy into.

But flash forward to today, communicating the return on investment is not all about big claims; it's about getting clear on what exactly your client will get and what that will look like.

In other words, this isn't all about guaranteeing your clients will make millions of dollars (if you hear that, run the other way because no one can guarantee that); it's about knowing the milestones that matter to your clients and their journey to the goal, followed by how your service will impact that journey and knowing how to communicate it.

Positioning your ROI leads to value perception, which lends to your business standing out from others.

In summary, we dived into the concept of positioning, which is the art of making your business stand out among a crowd of similar agencies. Positioning is a strategy to place your service in a prime spot in your client's mind. Just like the analogy of wearing a bright red hat at a party makes you stand out among a sea of look-a-like outfits, great positioning makes your business noticeable and memorable in the market.

Before we wrap here, let me give you the bitesize version of the five ways To help you achieve that standout positioning:

- **Harnessing Niche Knowledge:** It's not just about knowing your niche but actively immersing yourself in it. Your unique insights, accumulated over time, can be a strong differentiator.
- **Challenging the Norms:** By questioning the status quo and understanding the unheard needs in your industry, you can offer unique perspectives and solutions that others don't.
- **Finding a "Hill to Die On":** Having a strong, unwavering belief in something, even if it's controversial, can make you stand out. It tells clients what you genuinely care about and what values drive your business.
- **Playing to Your Strengths:** Recognizing what you excel at and focusing your resources there can help you cater to a specific audience that resonates deeply with your strengths.
- **Communicating ROI Clearly:** In a world of savvy clients, transparency about the real benefits and milestones they can achieve with you is essential. It's not about lofty promises but a clear value proposition.

Positioning is your bright red hat in your niche. Done right, it ensures you're seen, remembered, and chosen.

Until next time, keep your business standing out and shining bright!

Audrey Joy Kwan

Hey, there. Thanks for hanging out with me at the Small But Mighty Agency Podcast. If you enjoyed this episode, it would mean the world to me if you hit the follow or subscribe button in your podcast app and share it with a friend and I'll see you in the next one.