

A brand bull's-eye provides content and context to improve everyone's understanding of the positioning of a brand in the organization. Here we look at a hypothetical Starbucks example. In the inner two circles is the heart of the bull's-eye—key points-of-parity and points-of-difference as well as the brand mantra. Points-of-parity and points-of-difference should be made as specific as possible without being too narrow. A POD of “gives confidence” for P&G's Bounty paper towels—known as the “Quicker Picker-Upper”—is very broad compared to the much more brand-relevant POD of “helps to relieve tense situations.” Points-of-parity and points-of-difference should be constructed in terms of the benefits a customer would actually derive from the product or service. “Leading Brand in the Category” as a point-of-difference fails to answer the question: What's in it for the customer? Does being the leading brand give the customer greater peace of mind, greater convenience, access to more innovative products, and/or social approval or self-respect from being associated with a “winner”? Points-of-difference should also be stated in positive, aspirational terms, like “Irresistible Taste,” “Superior Value,” “Tireless Customer Service,” and “Unimpeachable Trust.” Points-of-parity are often stated in more muted terms to recognize the potential deficiencies they represent, such as “Sufficiently Accessible,” “Appropriately Relevant,” and “Fairly Priced.” In the next circle out are the substantiators or reasons-to-believe (RTB)—attributes or benefits that provide factual or demonstrable support for the points-of-parity and points-of-difference. Finally, the outer circle contains two other useful branding concepts: (1) the brand values, personality, or character— intangible associations that help to establish the tone for the words and actions for the brand; and (2) executional properties and visual identity—more tangible components of the brand that affect the way customers see it. Three boxes outside the bull's-eye provide useful context and interpretation. To the left, two boxes highlight some of the input to the positioning analysis. One includes the consumer target and a key insight about consumer attitudes or behavior that significantly influenced the actual positioning; the other provides competitive information about the key consumer need the brand is attempting to satisfy and some competitive products or brands that need suggests. To the right of the bull's-eye, one box offers a “big picture” view of the output—the ideal consumer takeaway if the brand positioning efforts are successful.