

# Using perceptual maps in marketing simulation summary

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



## Perceptual Maps Simulation

I found this simulation to be very interesting. First of all, it was about motorcycles, and what guy doesn't find that to be an interesting topic? Regarding the lessons it contained for marketing though, it was also interesting while still being entertaining as well. The situations it presented were realistic, while not being so overcomplicated that the material it was trying to present got lost. In the following paper I will discuss the situations from the simulation, the relationship between differentiation and positioning especially with regards to the product in the simulation, and the effect of the product life cycle on marketing again focusing on its relationship to the simulation product. Situations

The first situation the simulation provided me with was a successful brand that is facing declining sales. My recommendation was to focus on Lifestyle, Quality Engineering, Coolness and Price. My results from this were good, but could have been better if instead of focusing on coolness, I'd chosen to focus on service instead. This would have allowed me to optimally position the product. The second situation was to decide on a marketing plan moving forward for Thorr motorcycles. I chose to launch a new motorcycle, the RRoth, rather than reposition CruiserThorr. I chose this because CruiserThorr is already well positioned, and to change its price or other attributes would more likely confuse customers than help to grow the brand. Furthermore, the simulation had stated that the younger market segment of motorcycle customers had been ignored by Thorr, so I hoped to capture a share of that younger demographic with the launch of a new, more affordable motorcycle. I priced it at \$13-15, 000 and placed it at dealers and exclusive showrooms

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only. I chose to promote it through offering free test rides, hiring celebrities for endorsements, publicizing through Hollywood films, and giving away merchandise. Finally, the services I chose to offer were club membership, customization options, financial services and services to owner groups. The sum total of the cost of this marketing strategy was \$12, 749, 000 of my allotted \$13, 000, 000 budget.

All of my decisions were based around focusing on a younger market, hence the Hollywood film placement and celebrity endorsement while still offering a low price and financial services to a market segment with less disposable income. I generally did well with this strategy, but missed a few key points such as placing the product on the Internet, and training dealers, both of which would have enhanced the customer experience overall. The final situation was to evaluate the success or failure of the marketing strategy I had chosen. Interpreting research data was a focal point of the exercise. Based on the answers to the research questions, I rated Lifestyle Image as high as possible, with Quality Engineering and Service Offerings only slightly below that, with Price still lagging behind due to the high price of the CruiserThorr. For the RRoth motorcycle launch, I chose to create the Perceptual Map using the axes of Cool, Price, Quality Engineering and Service Offerings, and assigned the highest marks to Price and Quality Engineering while marking Service Offerings and Cool slightly lower. I correctly interpreted the data for CruiserThorr, according to the simulation. I also did a good job with the Perceptual Map for RRoth, though the simulation suggested that I could have replaced Service Offerings with Lifestyle Image.

Differentiation vs. Positioning

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To the best of my understanding, the main difference between differentiation and positioning lies in who is evaluating the marketing mix. Differentiation is how we, as marketing managers, adjust our marketing strategy to make our brand or product stand out to the customer (Perreault, Cannon, & McCarthy, 2011). Conversely, positioning refers to how the customer perceives a given brand within a market (Perreault, Cannon, & McCarthy, 2011). The repositioning that occurred within the simulation behaved pretty much as I expected it to. Introducing a brand new, and cheaper, motorcycle to the Thorr line up not only created a new product that was successful, but revitalized sales of CruiserThorr as well. While I was making my choices within the simulation, I had hoped to achieve that goal. The Financing Options and new product might bring customers into the showroom or onto the website that otherwise wouldn't have visited. This not only generated sales for the new product, but created additional opportunities to sell the existing product as well. Product Life Cycle

The product life cycle is perhaps one of the most important things for a marketing manager to focus on and understand considering it allows them to effectively plan for the future (Perreault, Cannon, ; McCarthy, 2011). Everything that occurred in the simulation was directly tied to product life cycles. Initially, CruiserThorr was well within the Maturity phase of the cycle and even beginning to enter Sales Decline. This is what caused the marketing team to evaluate the current situation and decide on a new marketing strategy. After that, the simulation continued to focus on CruiserThorr while also evaluating the effect of the new product of the RRoth motorcycle. This product is in the Introduction stage as it is a new product to

the market. That is only the evaluation for each individual product though. As a whole the product of " motorcycle" is in the maturity stage as well. It has existed for over 100 years as a product and the market is well known and defined. This simulation was a useful tool to help me in understanding Differentiation, Positioning and the Product Life Cycle in real world applications rather than just conceptually through the reading of a text book. I found the hands on learning and immediate feedback based on my actual choices to be a refreshing learning exercise. Furthermore, the instant creation of a Perceptual Map as I selected the axes and changed the ratings along those axes really helped me to understand the data that a Perceptual Map is presenting and how the data all relate to one another. Should my future career endeavors carry me into the world of Marketing, I will definitely make use of Perceptual Maps as well as carry with me the understanding of the importance of Differentiation, Positioning, and the Product Life Cycle.

#### Reference

Perreault, W. D. Jr., Cannon, J. P., ; McCarthy, E. J. (2011). Basic marketing: A marketing strategy planning approach (18th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Irwin.