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The Green Position

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Back in 1981, advertising pros Al Ries and Jack Trout published a little book called “Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind.”

Positioning is a simple concept that packs a powerful punch. And in an industry as competitive as residential construction supply, it is a crucial ingredient for your company.

In a nutshell, positioning as defined by Ries and Trout is how your customers view you in relation to your competition. It’s your position that determines what—and why—people buy from you.

If your company is best known for its selection of mouldings and millwork, that’s a position. Or perhaps customers think of you first when it comes to personalized service—another position.

There’s an important point to remember about positions, though: They’re not necessarily accurate.

For example, if your customers believe the company across town has a better selection of windows, then that’s where they’re going to shop for windows. Also, once a company occupies a position, it can be difficult or impossible to change.

With an industry as seasoned as ours, it is rare that a truly new position emerges. For those who understand the power of positioning, that rare moment should be pounced upon. In our industry, in most markets, that moment is now. The position: expertise in green building.

Despite the sluggish housing market, studies from McGraw Hill and statistics from NAHB make clear that green building is one area that’s healthy and growing.

Last year, I spent several days talking with hundreds of builders, remodelers, homeowners, and architects at a trade show called West Coast Green. The common thread tying these conversations together was that all of these people wanted to buy green building materials, and none of them knew where to turn. When I mentioned that many of the materials carried by their local lumberyard already meet the definition of “green building material,” the responses ranged from surprise to skepticism.

A rapidly expanding population anxious to buy products that you're either already selling or are uniquely positioned to sell equals a textbook positioning opportunity for you and your company. And that's why LBM Journal is launching the Certified Green Dealer™ program. Here's what you can expect when the program goes live later this fall:

No travel. Thanks to sophisticated distance learning technologies, your entire staff will be able to learn about green building and how to sell those products right at their computer.

Branding. Once the training is done, your company can proclaim its status as a Certified Green Dealer™ through use of the Program's logo on all your signage, ads, and promotional materials.

Marketing/promotional materials. Along with the logo, you'll receive press releases and other marketing materials to help you establish your position as the green experts in your market.

Very low cost. Thanks to financial support from an exclusive group of visionary sponsors, you will be able to train everyone at a single location who deals directly with builders and contractors for one incredibly low price. total!, and click on Certified Green Dealer™.