Rob Kaminski in • Following
Co-Founder @ Fletch | Positioning & Messaging for B2B Startups
2d • 🌐

This is what most B2B markets look like. (see image).

Not one clear competitor.

But a fragmented set of alternatives for solving the same job.

You can only get this view of the market if you look at it through a jobs-to-be done lens.

The trap many founders fall into is looking at the market ONLY through a category lens.

They fixate on magic quadrants, analyst reports, and other YC-backed startups, building their messaging to compare themselves to those vendors.

🔴 This is often a big mistake.

Because most of market isn't even aware of these tools, let alone actively evaluating them.

So the message doesn't land.

In reality, the competition is usually:

- DIY efforts
- Bent or hacked together legacy tools
- Manual processes
- Agencies bundled into broader work

Take our business, Fletch, for example.

We help B2B software develop their positioning strategy.

At first glance, you might assume our competition is 'other positioning consultants'.

That's rarely true.

We almost never compete head-on with another consultant.

Instead, we usually compete with:

- teams this work in-house
- founders delegating it to ChatGPT
- positioning gets lumped into a larger branding exercise or website refresh with an agency

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There is another hidden insight in seeing your market through a JTBD lens.

→ Recognizing that your value argument (ie. Differentiation) will be COMPLETELY DIFFERENT when compared to different alternatives.

Fletch example:

• When compared to in-house marketing teams, we tout our frameworks and proven experience working with 500+ companies as our main differentiators.

• When compared to other positioning consultants, our two week sprint (speed) and pricing become our main differentiation.

This is where a lot of teams in trouble.

They look across this map and try to combine ALL of the value arguments into one unified message.

In practice, this results a generic, bloated, and forgettable message.

Only in sales conversation do you have the luxury of time to unpack multiple alternatives, explain tradeoffs, and tailor your story.

Marketing doesn't work that way.

You don't get 30 minutes.

You get 10 seconds.

Which means you have to choose who you're PRIMARILY positioning against, in order to tell a clear, compelling story of why you are better.

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So when working on your positioning and messaging, remember:

→ Markets are (usually) very fragmented
→ In most markets, your competition is rarely a fellow startup
→ Only with a JTBD view can really uncover your main competition

◻ **Fletch's**
Positioning Map
A JTBD view of our market landscape

The Job-to-be-Done:
B2B Startups trying to improve their positioning

Alternatives (ways of addressing the JTBD)	Problems (of the alternative)	Differentiation (relative to the alternative)
Doing this internally on their own	• Biased • Risk of no decision • lack of a framework	Proven framework & experience aligning 500+ companies around a strategy.
Delegating the work to ChatGPT	• Only as good as your inputs • Risk of generic result	Hands on experience with every possible positioning problem.
Hire a full time PMM	• Expensive • Slow to ramp • Limited positioning experience	Lower cost, faster results with a team with deep positioning experience.
Brand Agencies	• Expensive • Focuses more on visual identity and values.	We focus is on strategic decision of where you will play in the market.
Marketing Agencies	• Expensive • Bloated scopes • Incentivized to upsell you	Fixed scope, unbiased advice, deep specialization.
Other Positioning Consultants	• Slow • expensive • black box	Fast, cost-effective, and transparent framework to follow.

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Deepak Gupta in · 2nd   17h ···
Building the world's first AI-powered GTM Engineer for B2B SaaS (Cybersec...

Rob - curious about your take on sequencing this for early stage products.

if you're pre-PMF and the market is fragmented across DIY/manual/agencies like you described, do you pick ONE alternative to position against first? or does that risk alienating other buyer segments who are coming from c ...more

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Trevor Hatfield in · 2nd   1d ···
CEO at SendX & SendPost | Helping high-volume senders land more emails i...

This JTBD framing matters for infrastructure positioning. SendPost's real competition often isn't Mailgun or SendGrid - it's teams building custom SMTP infrastructure in-house, or evaluating whether to stick with their current ESP. The positioning shifts completely when you see the real job your buyer is actually trying to solve.

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Spencer Parikh in · 2nd   1d ···
Founder @ DevCommX | Full-Stack Digital Builder: AI Apps, Sales Systems, G...

Great insights! It's like trying to find the right pair of shoes in a store full of flip-flops and hiking boots.

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Jeroen Coelen in · Following   1d ···
PhD on product-market fit | Mentored over 350 startups

To be critical, 'lack of framework' is a bit weird as a problem. The absence of your solution can't never be the problem. I think you intend something like: lack of a systematic approach, or a transparent approach, or something like that, for which you have developed a framework.

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See previous replies

Rob Kaminski in Author   23h ···
Co-Founder @ Fletch | Positioning & Messaging for B2B Startups

yeahhh I see what you are saying. But I think it's mostly Tomato, Tomaaato. (ie. if they are looking for structure, I think a framework would resonate)

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Robert Bogere · 2nd   1d ···
I help early-stage SaaS founders fix their positioning | Daily Insights on ICP, ...

The way you have branded others is amazing. Slow 😝 and expensive as if fetchPmm isn't expensive.

Like · ❤️ 1 | Reply

Andrea Sanders ✓ · 2nd   1d ···
Product Marketer @ ShipperHQ 🔵 ✨ Ecommerce | Logistics | Sustainability

Love this framework! Can't wait to try it out

Like | Reply · 1 reply

Rob Kaminski in Author   1d ···
Co-Founder @ Fletch | Positioning & Messaging for B2B Startups

Andrea Sanders lemme know how it goes!

Like | Reply

Brandon Chaplin in · 2nd   1d ···
Head of Growth Marketing - Strategy | Tech | Paid media | Automation | reven...

Aimie Smith

Like | Reply

Puneet Srivastava ✓ • 2nd   1d ⋯
Digital & Growth Strategy | Product Marketing | AI & Data Driven Marketing |...

This is gold. Most teams obsess over competitors that barely exist in their buyers' minds. JTBD thinking flips the lens: your "competition" is whatever job your customer is already doing, whether it's DIY, agencies, or legacy tools.

Like | Reply

Eric Holland 👀 🔗 • 1st   1d ⋯
I build messaging GPTs ✚ interactive demos for SaaS companies | Podcast H...

I'm only like 5 months into the game but I'm baffled by how much energy I need to put into the "yeah, but who are we positioning against" conversation

Like · 👍 1 | Reply · 1 reply

Co-Founder @ Fletch | Positioning & Messaging for B2B Startups

Eric Holland 👀 hahaha, the answers is usually "everyone"

Like · 👍 1 | Reply

Anton Koval ✓ • 2nd   1d ⋯
Packaging custom code into scalable solutions

Yep I love JTBD framework, makes things way more clearer.

I try to use it in every positioning doc I work on, suprisingly very few companies use it.

Like | Reply · 1 reply

Rob Kaminski 🔗 Author   1d ⋯
Co-Founder @ Fletch | Positioning & Messaging for B2B Startups

Anton Koval I think in part because JTBD can be a bit of a black box, with the different schools of thoughts on how to even write a job statement

Like · 👍 2 | Reply

Messaging   ⋯ ✎ ⌃

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📁 PMM Files   →