



# Competitive Analysis Template

Discover your current position in the market.

# Find Your Position

Standing out from the competition and positioning your brand in the marketplace requires you to actually know the competition.

Who are they, what are they doing, how do they talk about themselves, how are they differentiating themselves, what are their strengths and weakness, what trends are they setting and following...the list goes on and on.

Before you throw your hands up feeling overwhelmed, take a deep breath.

Researching your competition isn't that hard.

## 3 Step Analysis

Analyzing your competition takes analyzing 3 steps:

1. Brand Angle  
What makes your competitor unique?
2. Brand Awareness  
How well your ideal customers recognize and seek out your competitors.
3. Chart Your Position  
Positioning you and your competitors on a chart to see where you fit in the market and what you need to change to improve your position.



## A Caveat Before You Begin...

The purpose of competitive analysis is to see what holes exist in the market and determine where you can show up and be different.

Keep that in mind as you do a deep dive on your competitors.

The temptation every founders face is to copy what their competition is doing — messaging, pricing, offers, sometimes even the look and feel of their brand.

Resist that temptation. You'll never stand out if you look, sound, and act the same as your competitors.



# Step 1: Competitive Angle

Angle refers to what sets you apart from the competition and answers the question *why should I buy from you?*

You might call it an edge, onlyness, USP, advantage, or uniqueness.

Ultimately, it's what makes your brand unique.

Understanding your competitors' angle will give you insights into how you should position your brand in the market — and what you can uniquely bring to the table.



## A Caveat on Angle...

Brand angle is a qualitative metric, not a quantitative metric. This means determining and analyzing your competitors' angle will require more than simply analyzing numbers.

You'll have to read between the lines of what you find to determine what their angle is and if it is stronger or weaker than yours.

Don't let this intimidate you. This is the art side of brand positioning. The goal is to get an overall sense of where you sit, not an exact, down to the smallest detail.

## How to Measure

You'll find a list and explanation of the elements you'll want to capture and analyze on the next page.

### **Most of the information you'll be able to find on your competitors':**

- Websites
- Social Media Accounts
- Email Newsletters
- Ads (digital and print)

Some information you may not be able to find and some may require you to make educated guesses based on the information you do have.

That's okay.

The goal here is to get a rough projection of where you sit in the market. A thorough analysis is best left to the professionals.



## What to Measure

Determining a competitor's brand angle requires gathering the following information:

### **Category.**

What category do they claim to be in? You can often find this in their website messaging — marketing agency, B2B analytics platform, energy and sustainability ERP.

### **Strengths.**

What do they do extremely well?

### **Weaknesses.**

Where do they struggle? What do customers complain about?

### **Message.**

Copy the message they use at the top of their homepage for reference. It's easier to see trends when competitor's messages are side by side.

### **Differentiated Claim.**

What do they say they do differently than their competition (aka YOU)?

### **Price.**

What do they charge for similar services? This may be hard to come by. If they don't have it easily accessible, don't fret too much.

### **Trends They Set.**

What have they done that other competitors are copying?

### **Trends They Follow.**

What have other competitors done that they copy?

### **Their Disruptive Idea.**

What are they doing that is different and disruptive to your industry? (Hint: it's likely something that no one else is doing or something everyone is trying to copy).

### **Other Insights**

Any other insights you gathered that don't fit in the above categories.

### **Overall Rank**

Assign each competitor a rank based on how unique they are. This will help you chart their position in step 3.



## Competitive Angle

	<b>Your Brand</b>	<b>Competitor 1</b>	<b>Competitor 2</b>	<b>Competitor 3</b>
	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>Category</b>				
<b>Strengths</b>				
<b>Weaknesses</b>				
<b>Message</b>				
<b>Differentiated Claim</b>				
<b>Price</b>				
<b>Trends - Setting</b>				
<b>Trends - Following</b>				
<b>Disruption</b>				
<b>Other Insights</b>				
<b>Overall Rank</b>				



## Step 2: Awareness

Awareness refers to how well your ideal customers recognize and seek out your competitors.

Think of it as a top-of-mind metric — when people think about your category, which brand comes to their mind first?

Understanding the level of awareness your competitors hold will help you what work needs to be done in order to become the dominant brand in the industry.



### A Caveat on Awareness...

There are a plethora of ways to track and rank brand awareness. Some are easy (like ours) and others are so complex that you need to hire someone full-time to keep up with the tracking.

We use a simple method that provide enough substance to understand people's behaviors and preferences.

Using SEMrush competitive research, we pull analytical data about the traffic coming to competitors' websites.

## How to Measure

You'll find a list and explanation of the metrics we recommend you capture and analyze on the next page.

**Remember, there are multiple ways to measure brand awareness.**

We choose to use SEMrush's competitive research feature to quickly pull data on our clients' competitors.

Please note: SEMrush is not a free tool, but it does provide a free trial.

We recommend signing up for the free trial when you are ready to pull the information from your competitors' websites.

Just make sure to cancel before the first payment is due!



## What to Measure

Determining awareness requires gathering the following information:

### **Authority.**

This is SEMRush's proprietary metric used to measure overall quality of domain and influence on SEO. It tells you if your competitor is considered an authority in search results and helps you determine if you need to do more SEO.

### **Organic Traffic.**

Traffic driven to analyzed domains via Google's top 100 organic search results. Meaning, your domain shows up in the top 100 results for X number of searches. This shows how often their website shows up in searches.

### **Organic Keywords.**

The number of keywords bringing users to analyzed domains via Google's top 100 organic search results. This will give you insights into how well your competitors are showing up when your customers search for your solution.

### **Backlinks.**

The total number of backlinks leading to analyzed domains. This shows if other businesses or individuals see your competitors as a reliable source.

### **Referring Domains.**

The total number of referring domains that have at least one link pointing to analyzed domains. This shows how many other sites are driving people to your competitor's website.

### **Traffic Share.**

Percentage of traffic that is won by the analyzed domains. This number shows how well your competitors are communicating their brand value and pulling people to their site.

### **Overall Rank**

Assign each competitor a rank based on their overall awareness. This will help you chart their position in step 3.



## Awareness

	<b>Your Brand</b>	<b>Competitor 1</b>	<b>Competitor 2</b>	<b>Competitor 3</b>
<b>Authority</b>				
<b>Organic Traffic</b>				
<b>Organic Keywords</b>				
<b>Backlinks</b>				
<b>Referring Domains</b>				
<b>Traffic Share</b>				
<b>Overall Rank</b>				



# Step 3: Chart Your Position

The final step in this process is to chart your and your competitors' positions to see where you fit in the market.

Take the overall metric from your Angle template and your Awareness template and place each one on an XY graph.

This will give you a quick reference to see your current position and what needs to change to improve and strengthen your position.



## A Caveat on Charting Your Position...

Understand that this is not a professional analysis (especially if you've never done this before) and, therefore, not a completely accurate representation of your position.

However, your chart will likely be fairly accurate and provide you enough insights to make decisions that will help you improve your brand.

Don't be scared if you aren't sure where exactly to place a dot on the chart. The goal is to get a rough enough sense to know what changes to make.

## How to Chart

On the next page, you'll find a simple chart with Angle on the Y-axis (vertical) and Awareness on the X-axis (horizontal).

**Use the metrics from steps 1 and 2 to position your brand and your competitors on the chart.**

We recommend using the Overall Rank from your Angle template and an Overall Rank from your Awareness template.

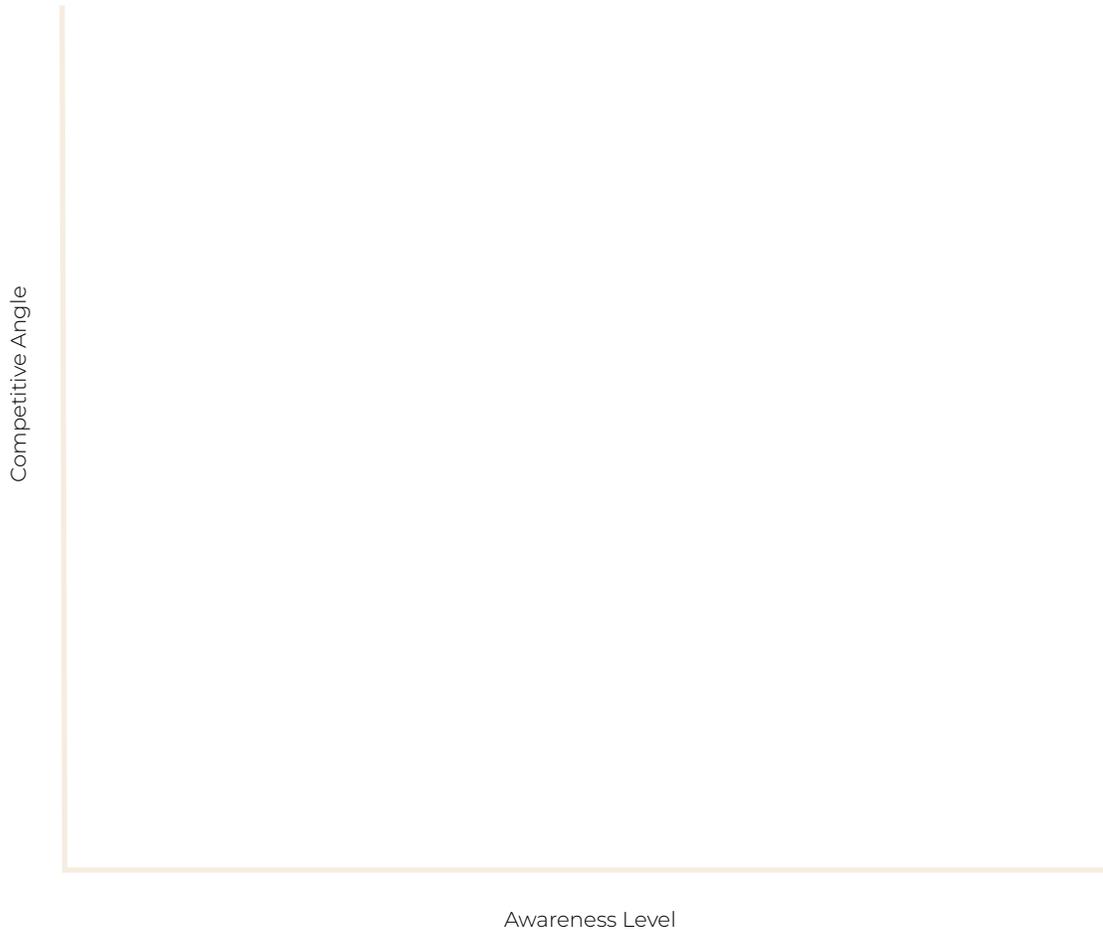
The Overall Rank numbers will help you place dots on the chart representing your own brand and the brand of your competitors.

Remember: it's okay if you don't feel like the chart is 100% accurate. If you aren't a brand strategist or researcher, you likely won't have everything you need to gain an accurate perspective.

Make educated guesses where needed.



## Chart Your Position



Use the data from the previous two pages to chart your current position. Understand, you will need to use qualitative insights to guesstimate where you and your competitors land. While not an exact representation, it will give you insights into what needs to improve to level up your position.

*Your chart could look something like the image to the left.*



# Now What?!

Now that you have a rough idea of your position in the market, it's time to decide how you will improve that position.

Understand, this is the step where working with a certified brand strategist can help the most.

Determining the RIGHT move based on your current position is not something you can pull easily from a guide.

However, you know #sassyjason isn't going to leave you without SOMETHING practical.

Based on this analysis, there are two areas to improve..

## Improve Your Angle

There are two main ways to improve your angle:

- Refresh your brand identity: find ways to be unique and memorable in the visual and verbal expression of your brand.
- Strengthen your angle: develop a clearer and differentiated viewpoint and express it in your brand messaging.

There are multiple ways to do that depending on what you currently have in place, but angle is a combination of what makes you unique and differentiated, and how you express it.

## Improve Awareness

There are two main ways to improve awareness:

- Brand marketing campaigns: create and distribute stories and narratives that express your angle and identity. These will target the 97% who aren't ready to buy yet.
- Performance marketing: run paid ads and content to place your brand in front of the right people. This will target the 3% ready to buy.



## Need More Help?

Struggling to chart your position or not sure how to turn the insights you gathered into usable information?

We help B2B companies analyze their competition and current position and turn those insights into actionable steps to grow their brand.

Schedule a call with us to talk through options so you can build a profitable brand.

**Book at a call at [shft.agency/discovery](https://shft.agency/discovery)**



# Your Next Steps

Creating an effective brand starts by taking the right steps. Grab more of our resources, sign up for our email newsletter, or book a time to chat with us to see how we can help you build a profitable brand and generate more revenue.

**1**

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We have a variety of free and paid guides you can download from our website to grow your brand and content strategies.

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**2**

**3**

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Become the ONLY choice for your ideal customers with our brand strategy, brand design, and content services. Our clients achieve clarity, find a-ha moments, and see an increase of 20% or more in revenue.

**Book a call at [shft.agency/discovery](https://shft.agency/discovery)**

**Learn about our services at [shft.agency/services](https://shft.agency/services)**



## Your Strategist

### Jason Vana

I am a brand and content strategist, entrepreneur, and founder of SHFT. Before social media even existed, I was creating content that drove revenue and positioned brands as the premium choice in their industry. Fast forward 20 years and my strategies have turned previously unknown businesses into worldwide, category-dominating brands. When I'm not leading the team at SHFT, I can be found hiking, traveling, brushing up on my Czech language skills, or ripping apart bad sales and marketing tactics as #sassyjason.

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