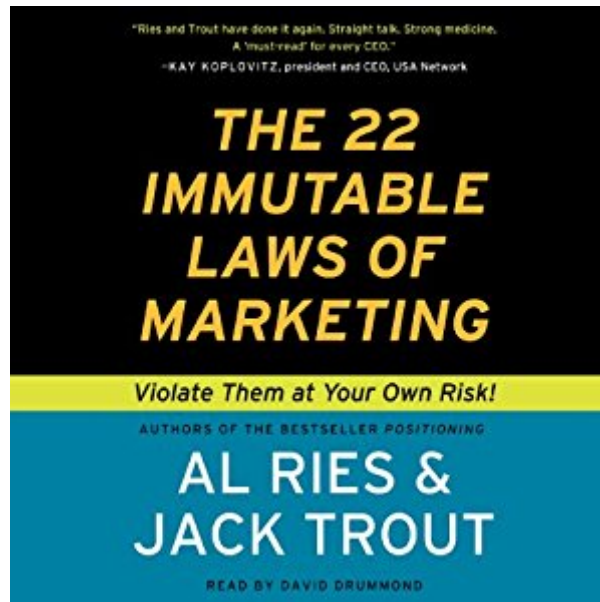


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# The 22 Immutable Laws Of Marketing



## Synopsis

There are laws of nature, so why shouldn't there be laws of marketing? As Al Ries and Jack Trout - the world-renowned marketing consultants and best-selling authors of *Positioning* - note, you can build an impressive airplane, but it will never leave the ground if you ignore the laws of physics, especially gravity. Why then, they ask, shouldn't there also be laws of marketing that must be followed to launch and maintain winning brands? In *The 22 Immutable Laws of Marketing*, Ries and Trout offer a compendium of 22 innovative rules for understanding and succeeding in the international marketplace. From the Law of Leadership, to The Law of the Category, to The Law of the Mind, these valuable insights stand the test of time and present a clear path to successful products. Violate them at your own risk.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 3 hours and 6 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: HarperAudio

Audible.com Release Date: April 22, 2014

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B00J4O6TO4

Best Sellers Rank: #3 in Books > Business & Money > Marketing & Sales > Marketing >

Industrial #5 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Accounting #6 in Books > Business & Money > International > Global Marketing

## Customer Reviews

After 10 years, this still remains a classic work in the marketing field, and perhaps a must-read for anyone in business. And no, unlike many reviewers I do not believe that Ries and Trout have ever managed to redo the glory of this book in their *Laws of Branding*, *Laws of Internet Branding* etc. Don't expect an excruciating marketing treatise with elaborate case studies and What-If scenarios. Expect instead 22 capsules of business wisdom, or "laws" of common sense marketing with some brilliant examples from the real world to prove them. In this, the book excels and is to date the briefest and best argued work I have come across. However, given the passion with which some reviewers comment about this book I am inclined to offer a caveat -- please don't base your

career around it. Although I love thin, in-your-face books such as this (great reading, great examples to bounce off) they also have a fundamental flaw: the fact that they attempt to shove "laws" on to the ever-morphing scaffold of the business of marketing that does not lend itself easily to codification, much less of an "immutable" nature. It would be a cinch to come up with examples that go against each law in the book if you really wanted. For instance, (1) Law of Leadership (better to be first than to be best) can be argued against with the theory of disruptions and how first-mover advantages do not always materialize. Why is WebCrawler not more popular than Google? Because Google is (way) better. (2) The Law of Sacrifice (that talks about focus, as do a couple of other similar if not redundant laws, including, well, the Law of Focus) would not hold much fizz in the case of many very successful conglomerates, especially in Asian countries. Imagine a company selling everything from oil to fruit juice to IT services, and still being a top brand in a country. Examples abound in China, Hong Kong, India, Japan. (3) The Law of the Opposite that advocates the definition of your strategy by considering the leader's (also redundant with the Law of the Ladder, which essentially says the same thing) can be argued by giving umpteen examples of companies that shot from being No.2 to being No.1, some times because No.1 filed for Chapter 11. In such cases, emulating the leader could have in fact been detrimental. Etc. Anyway, despite redundancies across the laws, and the possibility of counter-argument against most of them, this is a ripper of a read for the business intent that it was written for, and 10 years after its publication still as charming as it first was. Highly recommended reading, but keep your discerning senses about you. Noteworthy: Law of Perception (also Law of the Mind), and Law of the Category.

Trout and Ries are two of the most far-thinking individuals extant in the world of marketing. However, to get the most out of their later works (and, as well as this book, I highly recommend "The 22 Immutable Laws of BRANDING" by Ries and his wife), it is best to read them in the sequence in which they were written. If you don't understand "positioning" you may very well not follow the analytical process which continues with these "sequels", as evidenced by some of the negative comments from readers. First, one has to differentiate the process of "marketing" by which is meant the bringing to market, or distribution, of a product or service, and "marketing" by which is meant promotion and advertising. Microsoft and USA Today are not successful because of their advertising or promotions, but because of the manner in which their products are distributed. What these books deal with is how companies promote themselves, not distribution channels which which create an advantage in a given industry. The books deal with the establishment of an identity, a position, which will be good for years to come, not with campaigns which may increase sales in a

given quarter. Why these books are so important is because, if one doesn't understand the basic concept of positioning, and the rules which logically follow it, one could easily create campaigns (or develop products to be promoted under a brand name) which actually harm or destroy the company's position in the mind of the consumer. Books by Trout and Ries should not only be required reading for those in promotion/advertising, but for all executives.

This book was required reading in one of my all-time favorite university classes, entrepreneurship. That was my first contact with the 22 Laws, and I have never been sorry. Not only has the knowledge come in useful as I try to market my own small service business, but I can see how other companies have applied (or ignored) the Laws, and what the outcome has been. THE GOOD: 1) Rather than reading like a textbook, this clever work is more like a small handbook of essential marketing ideas. Its 132 pages are divided up into 22 very readable chapters of about 4-5 pages each. It is very easy to take in a chapter at any time and still learn an invaluable lesson about some aspect of catching your prospect's eye. 2) After each chapter I found myself really thinking about the concept, and trying to figure out how I could apply it to my situation. The chapters have enough great information that they really can be considered little packets of motivation. And who doesn't want more motivation to go and make his or her product (or service) even better? 3) Scattered throughout the book are some really great and inspiring examples of companies that have used the 22 Laws to their advantage. The chapter on the Law of Candor explains how Avis effectively played off of its campaign that it was the number 2 rental car company. The Law of Focus talks about how FedEx succeeded by focusing on small packages and overnight delivery. The Law of the Mind shows how Apple computers beat out the Altair 8800 in the late 70's. THE BAD: I thoroughly enjoyed this book, but I can see some areas that other people may not find too attractive. For example, 1) There are no specifics about how to apply each law to your situation, or even how to go about applying it. It is left entirely up to you to see how the law fits your situation, and how you are going to apply it. 2) This book is written like a How-to-win-at-Chess book. It is about the mental dueling that goes on in the marketing world. If you are not into marketing or how to mentally outwit your competition - then you may not like this book. If you like marketing, clever and witty ideas or the kind of thrill that comes from playing chess then this book is for you! Sure to become a business classic, this book is worth every bit of time and energy spent investing in its powerful concepts.

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