STORY BRAND

Anybody. Communicating. Anything.

LIFE FORCE
YOUR MARKETING AGENCY

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Introduction

What should you say on your website? What about your next email blast? What about your next television commercial, print ad or sales report? What should you say about your brand in your next keynote presentation?

It's a noisy world, and only those who speak clearly will be heard. Even so, speaking clearly isn't easy. **Many business leaders struggle with the "curse of knowledge."** That is, they've become so familiar with their products and services that they think customers know as much as they do. However, they don't, and this is a fatal mistake.

STORYBRAND IS A DIFFERENT BRAND-DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK IN WHICH WE USE THE POWER OF STORY TO MAKE IDEAS CLEAR.

Customers don't tend to buy the best products and services—they buy the products and services that are easiest to understand. Steve Jobs didn't sell the best computer, phone or music-listening device; but he did build the clearest, simplest and most easy to understand technology brand.

At StoryBrand, we use the power of story to make ideas clear. We do this because we believe story compels a human brain faster and stronger than any other force. When you filter your marketing material through the seven-step StoryBrand framework, your customers will immediately understand what you offer and why your products matter within the story they are trying to live. When customers understand how you can help them live a better story, they will respond.

Sincerely,

Donald Miller, President of StoryBrand

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PART ONE

Core Concepts

Introduction

A story compels a human brain the same way a puzzle or riddle intrigues us.

Essentially, a story is a series of questions. If those questions are relevant, asked well, and asked in the right order, they will keep a person interested. There are a thousand different formulas for stories and some work better than others. **The StoryBrand 7-Part Framework is a conglomerate of some of the most popular stories and has been used in movies ranging from *Star Wars* to *Tommy Boy***. We chose this framework because it has been baked in the Hollywood system for years, so it's proven to compel the human brain.

How StoryBrand Got Started

Watch Core Modules, Video 1: How StoryBrand Got Started

In this video Don talks about how StoryBrand got started and how story helps us understand how people think. The main example he uses is that story works like music in the sense it has rules. If we break the rules of music, sounds descend into noise. The warning for us as communicators is to understand the rules of story so our customers won't look at our material and see it as noise.

Assignment: Take a step back from your marketing collateral? Is it noise or music?

Assignment: Open your website for an acquaintance and give them 5 seconds to look at it. After 5 seconds, can they answer these 3 questions?

1. What do we offer?
2. How could what we offer make your life better?
3. How can you purchase what we offer?

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Watch Core Modules, Video 2: How Story Works

The StoryBrand 7-Part Framework

The Framework Explained

EVERY STORY MUST BE CLEAR

The absolute enemy of a story is clutter. If a scene makes it into a movie that doesn't serve the plot, that scene has to go, no matter how good it is. A disciplined storyteller knows what to take out and what to leave in. This will mean a great deal more once we create your BrandScript, but for now, know that these are the essential elements of a story and if we add to or subtract from them, we risk losing our audience. Let's look at each element in greater depth:

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A CHARACTER

A person who will take the journey. The main character in a story is often called the hero or the protagonist. Some stories have many characters but the StoryBrand framework focuses on the simplest story structure and is a single-protagonist model. To really compel an audience, the hero is usually called to a task that is outside their comfort zone but is necessary for their survival and the benefit of others. Interestingly, the hero is not the strongest or most reliable character in the story. Usually, the strong character is the guide. Yet, the hero is the center of the story because they are the one who must take action. They are also the one who experiences a character arc—a change in their character or perspective brought about by the adventure of the story.

Examples of Heroes in Stories: Frodo Baggins (Lord of the Rings), Luke Skywalker (Star Wars), Bridget Jones (Bridget Jones' Diary)

WHO HAS A PROBLEM

No story works unless the hero encounters a problem. The reason a character has to encounter a problem early in the story is because the problem posits a story question. Will the character get out of the problem? How bad will the damage be if they don't? Will they get their happy ending? Will they defeat their enemy? This is why stories are so compelling to the human brain—they posit a series of questions that make the audience stick around to get an answer. Will the guy get the girl? Will the hero disarm the bomb? Will the team win the big game?

In a good story, there are three levels of problems, and they are intertwined. Those levels are internal, external and philosophical.

Examples of External Problems: Frodo (must save Middle-Earth), Luke Skywalker (must defeat the Evil Empire), Bridget Jones (must find love)

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Examples of Internal Problems: Frodo (Is he courageous, brave and disciplined enough? Is he good?), Luke Skywalker (Does he really have what it takes to be a Jedi, or is his father right about him?) Bridget Jones (Is she worthy of love?)

Examples of Philosophical Problems: Frodo (Will good win out over evil? Will group interests win out over self interest?), Luke Skywalker (Will good win out over evil? Will group interest win out over self interest? Will benevolence win out over greed? Will freedom win out over tyranny?) Bridget Jones (Is life fair? Can love win out over lust? Can self-love and self-acceptance be enough?)

MEETS A GUIDE WHO UNDERSTANDS THEM

In stories, characters do not solve their own problems. If they could solve their own problems, they'd likely have never gotten into trouble in the first place. What normally happens, is the character meets somebody, reads something, remembers something or experiences something that helps them grow. In the StoryBrand framework, that somebody or something is the guide. A good guide has "been there and done that" in the sense they understand the journey the character is on and can see clearly where they need to go. In fact, the first job of the guide is to listen, understand and empathize with the hero's problem. The second is to give the hero a plan they can use to fight for a happy ending. The guide, not the hero, is the strongest, most steady character in the story. This is why the StoryBrand strategy calls on you to position your brand as the guide rather than the hero.

Examples of Guides: Frodo (Gandalf and many others), Luke Skywalker (Yoda and Obi Wan Kenobi) Bridget Jones (Bridget's mum, friends and many more.)

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AND GIVES THEM A PLAN

When the hero meets the guide, they are confused. The job of the guide, then, is to break through the hero's confusion and give them confidence their life can be better. The plan can be as simple as a paradigm shift - *you used to think this way, but I want you to think another way* - or as complex as a multi level strategy that will help the hero win a complicated battle. Regardless, after the hero hears the plan, they must decide whether to take action on the plan they've been given.

Examples of Plans: Frodo (You have what it takes.), Luke Skywalker (Trust the Force, Luke.), Bridget Jones (To find love we must take risks.)

THAT CALLS THEM TO ACTION

A call to action in a story is the point at which the hero must decide whether to act on the plan. Will they attack the Death Star or will they run? In a story, the call to action is a point of crisis. It's often a dark night of the soul for the hero. They must choose whether to stay in their comfort zone or embrace the plan given to them by the guide. A good guide empathizes with the hero's problem, gives them a plan, and calls them to action.

Examples of Calls to Action: Frodo (Gandalf: "All I did was give your uncle a little nudge out the door."), Luke Skywalker (Joins the Empire in the fight to destroy the Death Star.), Bridget Jones (Makes the Call.)

THAT RESULTS IN A SUCCESS

In story structure, a happy ending is called a success while a sad ending is called a failure. Whether or not a story ends in a success or a failure, though, an audience must know what might happen in order to remain compelled. We have to know the hero can either get or lose the

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girl, disarm the bomb or die trying, or win the game or lose to their arch rival. Usually, at some point during the story, another character, often the guide, will state the happy ending well before it happens. "If you do this, Middle-Earth will be saved" and so forth…

Examples of Success: Frodo (saves Middle-Earth and many more), Luke Skywalker (destroys the Death Star), Bridget Jones (Finds love for herself and finds love in a partner.)

OR A FAILURE

Good screenwriters and novelists help us imagine dire consequences whether or not they actually happen in order to build suspense. Later we'll talk about how successful brands do the same thing, but for now, just know every audience must have a clear idea of what possible failure the hero faces if they don't act on the plan. If we don't know what failure might befall the hero, audiences zone out and lose interest.

Examples of Failure: Frodo (Middle-Earth is taken over), Luke Skywalker (the Evil Empire rules the galaxy), Bridget Jones (remains lonely)

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A Story Must Be Clear

The StoryBrand framework is just one way to tell a story, but there is one universal truth about telling stories that cannot be broken:

A STORY MUST BE CLEAR.

If every scene in a story cannot be placed onto a simple chart, the story runs the risk of boring the audience. There are exceptions, of course, but there aren't many. Being a good storyteller is a lot like being a good tennis player. First you learn form, then you improvise. If you don't learn form, though, you'll never compete with the professionals.

At StoryBrand, this is our philosophy about branding too. Once somebody understands the StoryBrand framework, their branding methodology will be given form, and once that form is perfected, they can begin to play outside of that form. But the form comes first.

Again, clarity is key.

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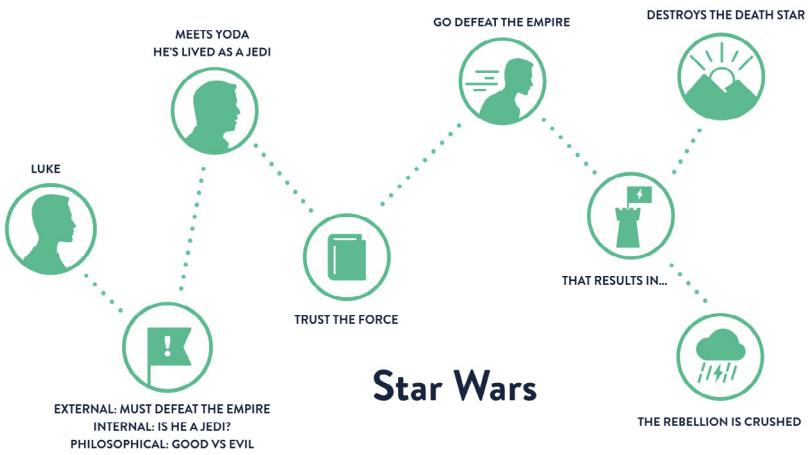
Watch Core Modules, Video 3: Story in Major Motion Films

POPULAR MOVIES THROUGH THE STORYBRAND LENS

Here are two popular stories laid out on the StoryBrand chart so you can see how simple and clear they are at their bones.

In the *Hunger Games* movies, Katniss is trying to survive the Games and needs the help of Haymitch. Haymitch gives her confidence and a plan so she can win the Games and survive.



Every story is about a character that wants something and has to overcome conflict to get it. Luke wants to rebel against the Evil Empire, but he also wants to know if he has what it takes to be a Jedi. It's Yoda that gives him confidence, a plan and training to go out and defeat the enemy. The comedic or happy ending happens when Luke destroys the Death Star.

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PROJECT Moneyball

THE ONE PAGE BRANDSCRIPT

A CHARACTER

What do they want?

WITH A PROBLEM

External

Internal

Philosophical

MEETS A GUIDE WHO UNDERSTANDS THEIR FEAR

Empathy

Authority

AND GIVES THEM A PLAN

Summarize your plan

THAT CALLS THEM TO ACTION

Direct

Transitional

THAT RESULTS IN...

SUCCESS

Successful Results

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

FAILURE

Tragic Results

-
-
-

STORY BRAND

StoryBrand.com

PROJECT Stephen Kenn Leather Bag

THE ONE PAGE BRANDSCRIPT

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FAILURE

Tragic Results

-
-
-

STORY BRAND

StoryBrand.com

Why the StoryBrand Framework Matters to Your Brand

Of course, we aren't just studying story for fun. The goal is to help you create a BrandScript you can use to communicate clearly. In the next section, you'll begin to see how brands use the power of story to engage their customers. And soon, you'll be doing the same with your brand.

In Part Two, you'll see how successful brands:

1. Identify their customer's heroic journey and encourage them in their pursuits.
2. Empathize with their customer's internal and external problems.
3. Establish themselves as a trusted guide (within their field of expertise.)
4. Offer their customers a plan that breaks through their confusion and gives them self confidence.
5. Call their customers to action by asking them to engage their products or services.
6. Do everything they can to help their customers define their successful ending.
7. Make sure their customers know of the potential negative consequences of not engaging with their brand.

This well-worn narrative path is subconsciously familiar to people because they've seen it a million times in movies, television and literature. Once you begin using StoryBrand framework in your brand strategy, your customers will find your brand more compelling.

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Watch Core Modules, Video 4: How Major Brands Use Story

How Major Brands Use Story

The idea behind the StoryBrand strategy is to use the most proven of story formulas to guide our brand communication. Brands who've taken this approach have had remarkable success, and you can too.

THE STORYBRAND FRAMEWORK IS A COMMUNICATION FILTER

When screenwriters write a screenplay, they map out scene by scene what is going to happen, then plug in the dialogue later. The grid they create, then, serves as a filter. Not a single scene, character or word can be added to the story unless it fits within the grid. As we've said, if a writer adds anything that isn't in their disciplined grid, they risk confusing the audience.

The problem with most companies is they keep trying different marketing tactics that work for a while but soon end up with a brand narrative that is inconsistent and confusing. When we don't have a tight, disciplined BrandScript, customers have trouble figuring out what we offer and why it matters to them.

Our goal in section three is to help you understand the many ways successful brands use this framework to clearly communicate what they offer. **Every brand piece we create doesn't have to tell a complete story, but every brand piece does have to fit within at least one of the seven elements of the framework. If it doesn't, it has to go.**

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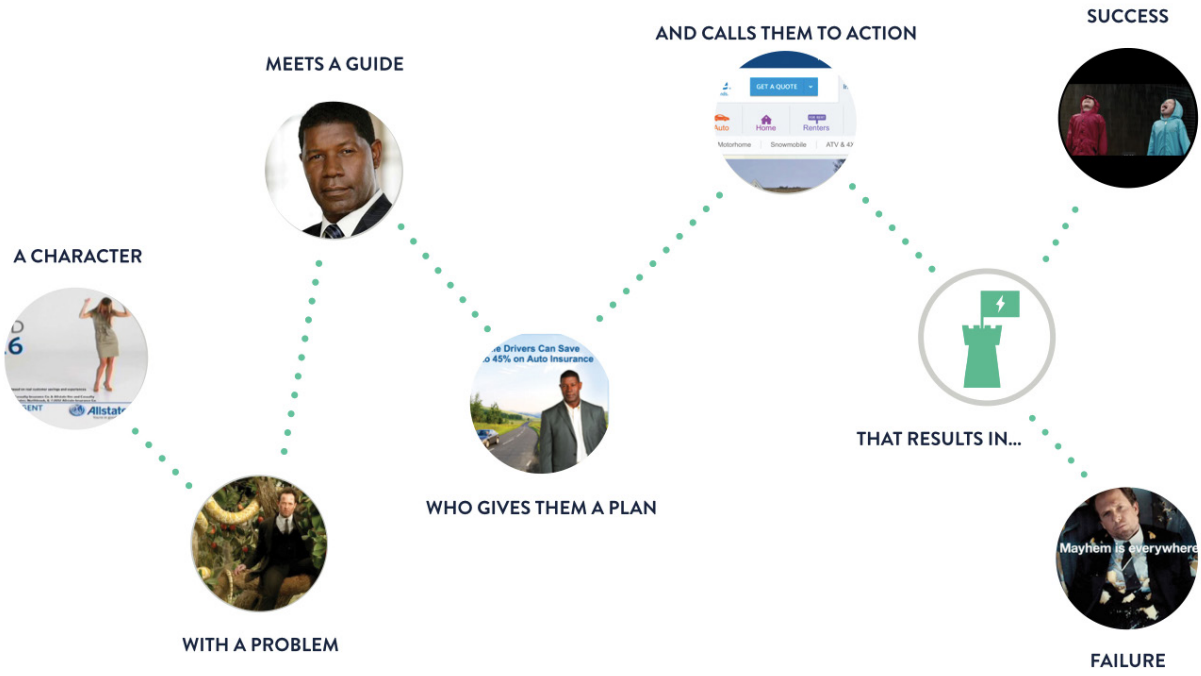
How Do They Do It?

Now that we understand how a story works, let's look closely at how major brands use story structure to filter their brand communication. In visual form, here is how Allstate Insurance covers the seven StoryBrand elements.



You'll notice each of the StoryBrand elements are included in their overall strategy. While few of their brand materials contain all the elements at once, their overall campaign is disciplined and on script. Here's a breakdown of how they covered each of the elements:

1. A HEROIC CHARACTER

Allstate acknowledges their customers are winsome, fun and successful.

2. WITH A PROBLEM

Allstate humorously shows "mayhem" to be the problem their customers face. Anything bad can happen at any time. It's as though they're asking their customers if they're ready.

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3. MEETS A GUIDE WHO UNDERSTANDS THEIR FEAR

Allstate's trustworthy pitchman establishes confidence, calmness and authority when it comes to dealing with mayhem. That said, he's not the hero, he's the guide.

4. AND GIVES THEM A PLAN

Allstate's "Value Plan" gives their customers something that breaks through their confusion. Now buying insurance and protecting themselves from mayhem seems easy. The name of the plan also insinuates it's not expensive and it's well worth the price.

5. AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

On Allstate's website, there is a single call to action, and that is to **get a quote**. There's one box to fill out with your email address. The call to action is **simple**, **clear** and **obvious**.

RESULTING IN

6. SUCCESS

Allstate released a commercial showing how good life can be when you're not worried. It's a beautifully shot commercial about people enjoying life. This is the "successful ending" customers can experience if they buy Allstate insurance.

7. FAILURE

Allstate's mayhem character serves as both the problem and the failure. They cover the tragic ending aspect of the campaign by showing their customers what can happen if they don't have insurance. This element of their campaign is fun and winsome so as not to come off as fear mongering, a tactic that would certainly backfire on a brand.

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Dominos

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CarMax

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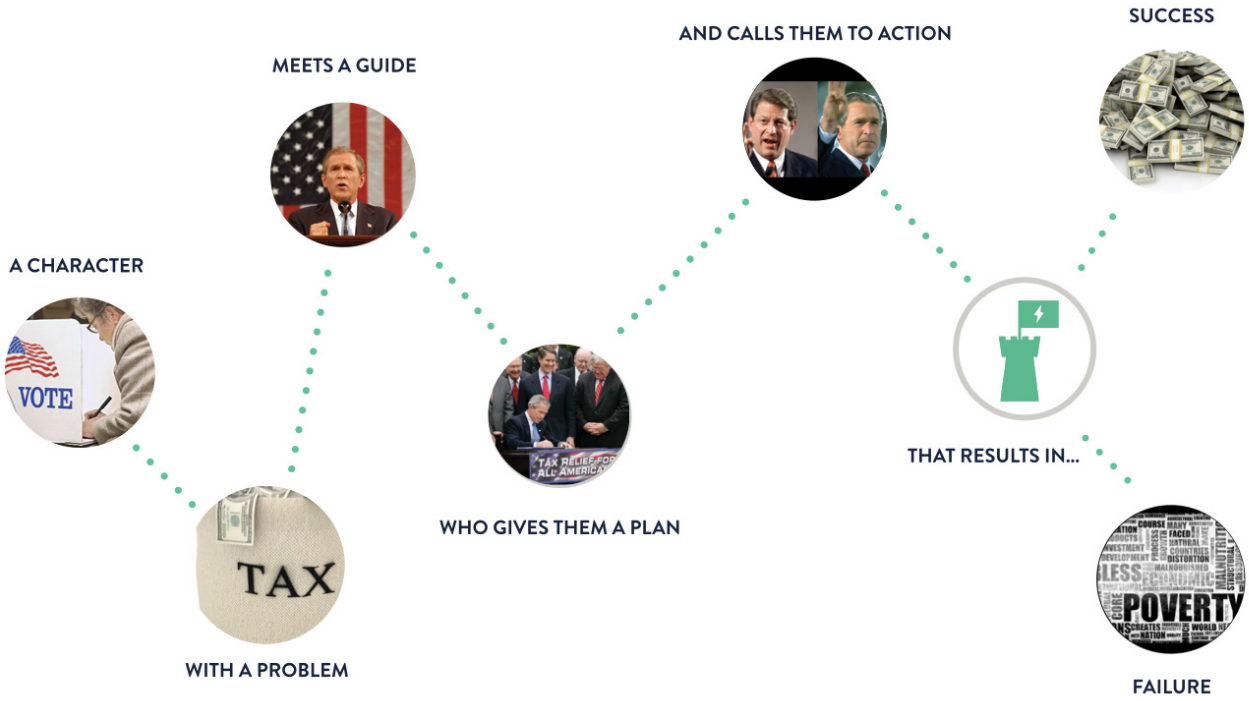
Bush Campaign



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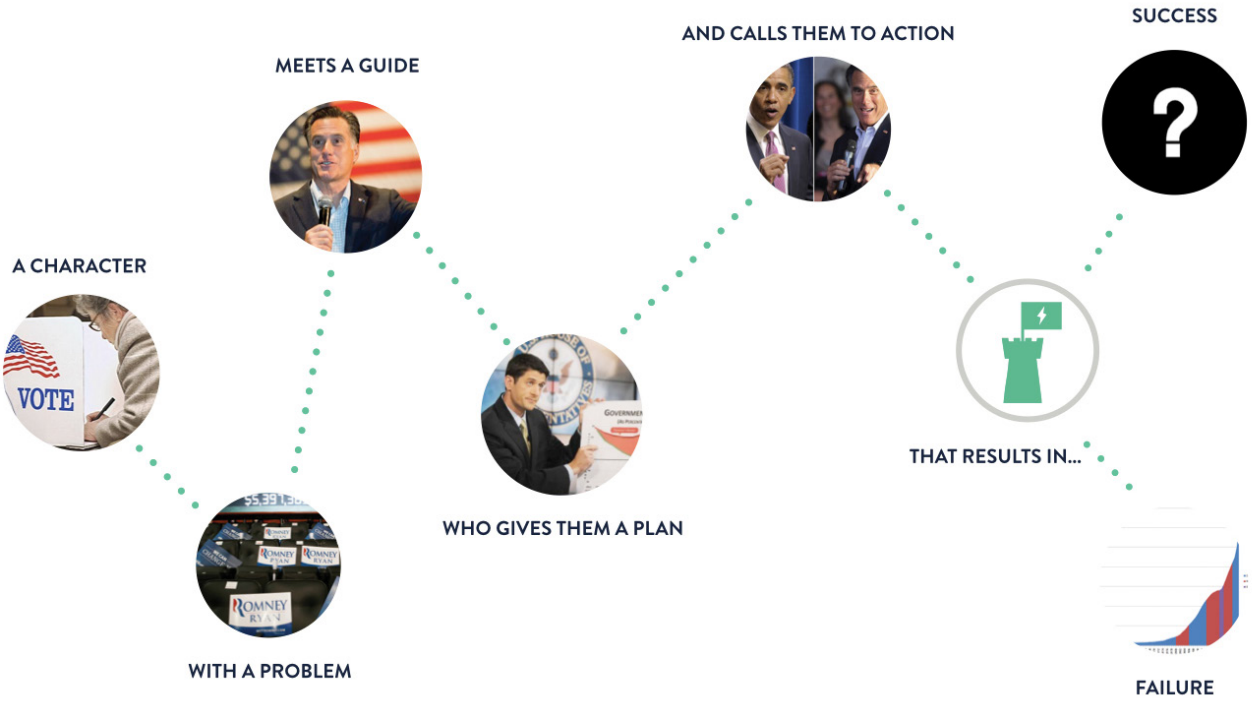
Romney Campaign



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Reviewing the StoryBrand Framework

Before we create your BrandScript, review the following graphic to remind yourself why each of the seven story elements are so important.

IN CLOSING

As you can see, successful brands use a story framework to create clear and compelling brand messages. Now that you understand how story works and how brands can use the elements of story to compel customers, let's work on applying these powerful elements to your own brand. Whether you're a writer, a politician, a plumber or the marketing director for a billion-dollar brand, there's plenty you can do to clarify your messaging and reach a wider audience.

In Part Three of the StoryBrand framework, we'll look at each of the seven elements and come up with concrete messages you can apply in all levels of your marketing. Let's create your BrandScript.

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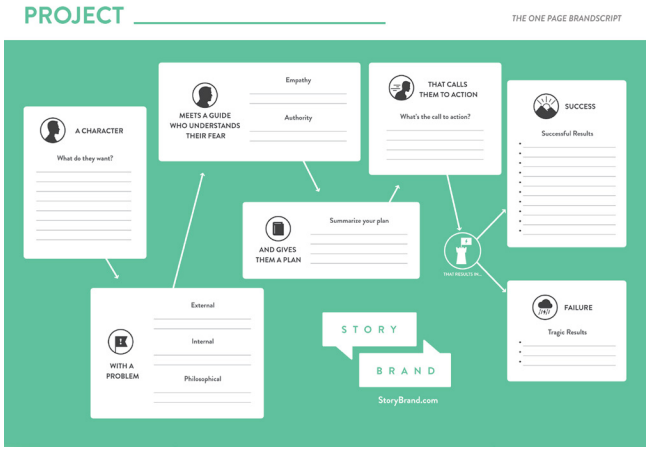
3 Levels of BrandScripts

COMPANY



DIVISIONS

PRODUCTS

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Knowing What Not to Say

Watch Core Modules, Video 5: Knowing What Not to Say

Customers are drawn to clarity, which means we have to de-clutter our messaging. Watch Core Concepts Video 5 and get a feel for how and why to de-clutter your brand. Remember, your website should pass the grunt test. This means that even a cave man should be able to grunt what it is you offer. Here's some motivation and inspiration to simplify your messaging to it's absolute clearest.

Assignment: What can you take off your website to make it more clear? Are there buttons, paragraphs or images you could remove that would make your offer more easy to understand? If so, consider making those changes as you go through the 7 modules to create your BrandScript.

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PART TWO

Modules

Introduction

Now that you understand the StoryBrand framework, it's time to create your BrandScript. Your BrandScript will be a summary of each of the seven elements as it relates to your brand. You will then use your BrandScript to filter all brand communication. Once your BrandScript is done, everything on your website, in your advertising materials, and even the way your team talks about your brand will be unified and on script. Your marketing will make sense to potential customers and your business will grow.

Once your BrandScript is complete, you will use it in three ways:

1. To change your current brand materials
2. To filter future brand communication
3. To unify your team around a common, narrative mission

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Watch Module 1: A Character

MODULE 1

A CHARACTER: Your Brand is not the hero, your customer is

Many StoryBrand clients make a philosophical mistake in their brand strategy: they assume their brand materials should be about themselves. They shouldn't. Your brand materials should be about your customers. What do they want? What problems are they facing? How can we educate them about our field of expertise? What products do we sell that they can use as weapons in their fight for a happy ending?

Engaging with potential customers is a lot like dating. On a first date, the more you talk about yourself, the less likely you are to get a second date. Instead of talking about ourselves, we should be doing a lot of listening and actively demonstrate an interest in the person who's decided to risk an evening on us. Most people are subconsciously scanning the world for people who understand them. Those are the people we find most impressive. And it's no different with brands.

The first step in creating a StoryBrand BrandScript is to define what it is that our customers want. A story is about a character that wants something and has to overcome conflict to get it. The reason people resonate with stories is because they serve as a metaphor for our own lives. We all want things and we all experience challenges getting what we want. When people experience trouble, they look around for help, for a plan, for something they can do or use to fight for a happy ending. And that somebody or something needs to be your brand.

A common misconception about heroes, is they are perfect. They aren't. In almost every story, the hero has flaws. They are sometimes selfish, often scared, unskilled and undisciplined. It takes the guide to help them become the kind of character that can destroy the Death Star.

Your brand, of course, will serve as the guide for the hero. You are going to help them get what

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they want. Whether it's to help a customer buy a home for their family, fix a car so they can take their kids to soccer practice, bake a cake for their daughter's birthday party, or allow them to find rest in entertainment, your brand exists to serve the desires of your customers.

Use this section to identify what your customer wants. First, brainstorm. Then, transfer a summary of your answers to your one-page BrandScript.

BRANDSCRIPT: A CHARACTER

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

1. What does your customer want as it relates to your brand?

2. Who does your customer want to become?

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Watch Module 2: With a Problem

MODULE 2
WITH A PROBLEM

A story doesn't get interesting until the main character encounters a problem. Without trouble, stories are boring, and it's the same with creating a brand strategy. **Until you clearly define what problems your brand can solve for your customers, they won't understand why you're relevant to their lives and will move on to your competitors.** Every hero is looking for somebody who believes in them and understands them.

A story happens when a gap is created between the hero and the successful ending. This story gap is all about conflict. When a hero's life is turned upside down, they're thrown into a story crisis which motivates the journey. The second your customer experiences something negative regarding your field of expertise, they'll start floundering around toward a happy ending. Nobody thinks about a mechanic until their car breaks down. Nobody thinks about tennis shoes until their old pair becomes uncomfortable. **The beginning of the hero's journey starts at the point they experience conflict.** If you can clearly communicate what that crisis feels like, your customers will identify with you and trust you to help them find a resolution to their internal and external problem.

And let's remember, there really are three kinds of problems in stories, INTERNAL, EXTERNAL and PHILOSOPHICAL. You are likely in the business of solving customer's external problems. Either you're fixing their plumbing, selling them televisions, or consulting to expand their business. That's fine. If you didn't solve a customer's external problems, you'd not have a business to begin with. **However, the reason customers go looking for solutions to their external problems is because those problems are creating internal stress, confusion or fear.** Internal problems are what external problems are causing your customers to feel. In other words,

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companies often sell solutions to external problems, but the motivation to purchase those solutions come from a customers' internal problems. In your BrandScript, you'll identify an internal, external and philosophical problem your brand helps your customer solve.

In addition, we can identify a single "Death Star" our customers face that we want to help them destroy. For example, the "Death Star" we've identified for our StoryBrand clients is stalled growth in their business. We want to equip them to leave our workshops and destroy the confusing brand communication that is stalling their growth.

In this section, we will define some of the INTERNAL, EXTERNAL and PHILOSOPHICAL problems our customers face, as well as a single "Death Star" your brand can help your customers destroy.

For review:

EXTERNAL PROBLEMS: physical problems, financial problems, relational problems
INTERNAL PROBLEMS: doubts, fears and insecurities the external problem manifest
PHILOSOPHICAL PROBLEMS: good vs. evil. Lives in the world of should and ought

Use this section to identify the kinds of problems your customers experience regarding your field of expertise. Summarize your answers on your one-page BrandScript.

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BRANDSCRIPT: WITH A PROBLEM

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

1. What is the EXTERNAL problem you solve?

2. What is the INTERNAL problem you solve?

3. What is the PHILOSOPHICAL problem you solve?

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Watch Module 3: Meets a Guide

MODULE 3
MEETS A GUIDE

As we've mentioned, the hero is not the strongest character in a story. The strongest character is the guide. The guide is the character who has "been there and done that." They are usually older, more experienced and wiser. Think of Yoda in *Star Wars*, Gandalf in *Lord of the Rings*, Albus Dumbledor in *Harry Potter*, Robin Williams in *Good Will Hunting,* and so on.

We want you to position your brand as a guide because if you've got enough experience to start a business in a given field, you're likely an expert at something. You may not feel like you're the best, but the truth is you've thought about the service you provide for thousands of hours. You've got more experience, more wisdom, better ideas, and more solutions regarding your field than most anybody outside your field, which makes you a fitting guide.

There are three questions a brand must answer in order for the hero to recognize they've found the right guide:

1. **Empathy:** What empathetic statement can your brand make that would help your customers feel understood and listened to?
2. **Authority:** What testimonials, statistics or brand associations can you make that would help customers trust you because you're an authority in your field of expertise?

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BRANDSCRIPT: MEETS A GUIDE

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

1. Empathy: What empathetic statement can you make?

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2. Authority: What endorsements, statistics, recognizable associations or anything else would help you establish authority and trust with your customer?

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Watch Module 4: Who Gives Them a Plan

MODULE 4
WHO GIVES THEM A PLAN

In stories, the guide often gives the hero a philosophy or technique to boost their confidence and help them understand they have what it takes. The "plan" can be as simple as "bring her flowers, all girls like flowers" or as complicated as "trust the force, Luke" but regardless, the hero suddenly realizes there's a path they can take toward resolution.

The purpose of a plan is to create a clear mental path your customers can take from where they were when you found them to the point of purchase which should provide a resolution to their conflict. Imagine a hiker standing on the edge of a shallow creek, looking for stones to step on for an easy crossing. Your plan will serve as those stones. By now, you've established trust with the hero and you are guiding them on a journey. Still, they're scared. It may be a well-worn path for you, but to them it's new territory. By offering them a plan, you're pointing out the stones in the creek bed that will help them cross safely.

Here are a couple examples of the effective plan:

- The "Process Plan": a simple process you take customers through that clarifies a path
- An "Agreement Plan": an agreement you make with your customers to deliver value

It's true you can create a BrandScript for your company and then create separate BrandScripts for each of your products. One of your products may use the "process plan" while your overall company may use the "Same but Different" plan. It hardly matters, but each BrandScript should focus on only one or two plans.

Let's break down the two kinds of plans we recommend.

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THE PROCESS PLAN

Imagine wanting to have the carpet in your home steam cleaned. You're looking online for a local vendor, reading reviews, checking prices, and so on. Then you stumble across the website for a well-reviewed carpet cleaner in your area and right there on their homepage, in large text, you read about their "Four-Step Ultra Clean Checklist." It sounds interesting so you read the description. They 1. pre-rake the carpet, 2. stain-treat troubled areas, 3. vacuum with their dirt-lifting power scrubber, then 4. post-rake the entire house so the carpet dries faster and stays clean longer. It sounds great. You wonder why other companies don't go through the same trouble to care for their customers. And these guys aren't even that much more expensive. So you call and schedule a cleaning.

The reality is, though, the other companies are doing the same thing. It's called cleaning a carpet. What the company did that got your attention, though, is they turned their normal service into a step-by-step process, clarified it for their customers and gave it a name. What this does in the customer's mind is take the vague, foggy world of steam cleaning carpet and frame it with some definition. Because people are drawn to clarity, they end up getting more business.

At StoryBrand, we have a seven-step framework to help you filter your brand communication. We call it *The StoryBrand Process*, and it works. The reason we call it a seven-step process is for external communication. The reality is we guide you through a broad series of paradigm shifts about how to do branding and even how to think about your business. We use the phrase "seven-step process" to lay stones in the creek bed so our clients can identify a clear path to the other shore. This path establishes confidence. When they get to a workshop, then, we can unpack each step with more nuanced thinking. The point is this: on one side of the creek, a business leader is fuzzy in their thinking, but on the other side there's clarity. How do they cross? They use the seven steps.

What steps are you already taking your customers through in order for them to engage your product? Could you define each of those steps and give the process a name? If so, this is your Process Plan.

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THE AGREEMENT PLAN

An agreement plan is all about creating a contract with your customers. This isn't a literal contract; it's just a promise that if they do business with you, you will deliver a specific, stated value. Agreement plans can range widely and encompass everything from Little Caesars *Pizza Pizza* plan (they sell two pizzas at a time) to Newt Gingrich's *Contract with America*. The idea behind an agreement plan is "if you give us this, we promise you will get this in return."

Human beings fear change and offering an agreement lessens that fear. Often called a risk-removal clause, an agreement plan ensures a customer isn't taking a financial risk by doing business with you.

There are other types of agreements, though. Let's say you're selling houses and recognize an internal fear some buyers have about feeling alone after such a large purchase. Agreeing to visit the home owner a month or six months after their purchase to walk through the house and agree to fix problems lessens their fear.

Another agreement plan is that a brand would be accessible to customers if they needed them. Is there a number they can call to ask questions? If so, this is another example of an agreement plan.

An agreement plan is as simple as a promise. If you sell a service, consider listing the ten or fifteen things you deliver and package that list as a value promise. If you like, you can use your brand name in naming the promise, (ie.. *The StoryBrand Value Agreement*).

CarMax's 25-point inspection is an agreement plan. A local radio promising a weather update every fifteen minutes is an agreement plan. A pain relief promise from a medicine company is an agreement plan. And on and on it goes.

The Agreement Plan is one tool we recommend for every StoryBrand client. Your Agreement Plan

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doesn't have to be a money-back guarantee, but it should remove at least some of the customer's risk, especially if it removes an internal problem the customer experiences within your field of expertise. A dentist offering a pain-free checkup is an example of an agreement plan.

Is there an agreement you can make with your customers that will lessen their fears? Are you already offering something that alleviates their fears but you haven't named it yet? What kind of agreement can you make with your customers to help them have confidence in your products and services?

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BRANDSCRIPT: WHO GIVES THEM A PLAN

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

Having a plan is an important part of guiding your customer through their heroic journey. There are, of course, many kinds of plans. That said, it will be important for you to choose one for purposes of simplicity and clarity (excepting The Agreement Plan, which we recommend as an addition). If you focus on more than one plan, your customers will delay longer at the side of the creek because there are multiple rock paths that cross. It would be better if you gave them a single, obvious and safe path.

Use the worksheet below to brainstorm these two questions. First, what process can your customers use to engage your product? Second, what agreements can you make with your customer? Once you're finished, choose the plan that seems the clearest and most easy to understand and feature it in your StoryBrand strategy.

THE PROCESS PLAN

1. What steps do your customers already use to engage your product / service? Could this process have a name that helps your customers understand its value? Be careful not to give too many options. The magic number is three, but try to name no more than five.

Step 1. _____

Step 2. _____

Step 3. _____

Step 4. _____

Step 5. _____

Process Name: _____

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THE AGREEMENT PLAN

The Agreement Plan is an informal contract with potential customers. It works like this: if they will engage your ideas, products or services, you will provide a specific value. An agreement plan can be as simple as a buy one get one free offer, or as complicated as an agreement to follow up with customers to make sure they have received quality services.

Check the following kinds of agreement plans you could incorporate into your overall brand strategy or apply to a specific product or service.

The idea is to have an agreement plan that will ensure value and establish trust with your customers. In addition, your Agreement Plan should have a name or a slogan, something that helps customers understand what it means upon first hearing it. You can call it a money-back guarantee, a value promise, or the "(*Insert Brand Name*) *Follow-Up Consultation.*"

Regardless, once you give your plan a name, customers will be more comfortable engaging you because you've lessened their perceived risk.

Which of the examples above do you feel would be the strongest choice for an Agreement Plan for your brand? Create a title for this plan and describe it:

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Title: _____

Our agreement with our customers is:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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Watch Module 5: And Calls Them to Action

MODULE 5
AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

In stories, characters rarely take action on their own. If a screenwriter writes a story about an out-of-shape character who suddenly wants to get into shape, the audience won't buy in. Moviegoers won't know why the story doesn't work but the reason is simple: **human beings don't change unless they're challenged to do so**. If a character starts to positively evolve without outside forces acting on them, the story no longer resonates with our human experience and an audience will lose interest.

The tool screenwriters use to propel characters into the story is called the "inciting incident." An inciting incident is an event that acts upon the character and motivates them to take action. If our hero is out of shape, she must fall in love with a man who is a fitness instructor or have a health scare or lose a bet and be obligated to run a marathon.

In the movie *Good Will Hunting*, Will is forced into therapy when he's issued a mandate by the court. In *Saving Private Ryan*, Tom Hanks is thrown into action when he's charged to find the lone living son of a family that has already lost four sons. In *Sleepless in Seattle*, Meg Ryan is challenged to take action by friends who prompt her to seek out a caller she heard on a radio show.

Without an inciting incident, characters will not take action, and without a call to action potential customers will not engage our ideas, products or services.

Now that we've identified the heroic journey our customers are on, established empathy with

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their internal and external problems, positioned ourselves as their guide and eased their concerns with our plan, it's time to call them to action.

The StoryBrand strategy utilizes two kinds of calls to action:

1. Direct Calls to Action
2. Transitional Calls to Action

Both calls to action should be featured in your branding material.

A transitional Call to Action does not necessarily lead to a purchase, but serves to engage potential customers with your brand by offering to educate them about an issue related to your products, deliver more information about your specific product, or give them a free sample. We call these calls to action transitional because they help transition a disinterested customer into a buyer. Transitional calls are best used to qualify customers. If a customer downloads a brochure, they've shown interest and an e-mail marketing strategy can be employed that later calls them to a direct action. If customers sign up to search real-estate listings in a certain price point, they would then be qualified as a potential home buyer for specific homes or properties in your listings.

Transitional calls to action can vary from "call us for a free quote" to "download our informative brochure." Offering free samples or an in-home demonstration are examples of transitional calls to action. Domino's Pizza's "create a pizza profile" feature on their website is a transitional call to action. About once each month, they can email you a special offer and actually feature your favorite pizza in the digital coupon.

A Direct Call to Action is a straight-forward request for your customer to make a purchase. Remember the rule of story: characters do not act unless they are challenged to act. Not unlike the hero in a story, your customers will not purchase your products or services unless you ask them to.

Remember, those who ask, receive.

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Years ago, I was preparing a keynote presentation for a global shampoo brand and my graphic designer was too busy with other projects to help. Not wanting to wait, I decided to outsource the presentation to a design house. I went looking online for a shop that dealt specifically with presentations and Google showed me two local houses that could help. The first website I visited was beautifully designed. Images moved across the page as text floated around revealing the design shops core values. After about twenty seconds admiring the visual elements of their site, though, I started looking for information about their services. But I couldn't find much of anything. They featured samples of previous projects, a few testimonials and a phone number I could call. But, the truth is, I almost called them and scheduled an appointment but they lost me when I looked at their competitor's site.

The other company's site wasn't nearly as beautiful, but it dared to be clear. "If you've got an important presentation coming up, we can help you hit a grand slam." That sounded good. Then they had a PDF I could download explaining three design elements every keynote slide should include. Not only this, but they asked me to email them to schedule an appointment and promised to get back to me within the hour. Within a few seconds, I knew exactly what they offered and not only this, they told me the result I would experience if I bought their product: I'd hit a home run. They even went so far as to ask for the sale. So I purchased their services. I emailed them, they got back to me, and within a week my keynote looked great.

Many StoryBrand clients are afraid to ask too strongly for the sale, and we understand this. Positioning your brand as the late-night pitchman cutting mattresses in half with a chainsaw doesn't do much to establish credibility. But in an age where people are constantly pressured to make a purchase, an "order now" button is hardly a bullhorn. Most of the time we feel like we are screaming, yet our customers can only hear a whisper.

Your customers have not stumbled upon your brand materials by accident. They're looking for something. Whether it's a swimming pool or a replacement battery for their camera, they want what you have. However, if they don't, they aren't a qualified customer in the first place. The best way to qualify a customer is to ask them to make a purchase.

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When you visit Domino's Pizza's website, there are four "order now" buttons and none of them seem obtrusive. Allstate insurance has one clear button that reads "get a quote." The brightest button on any Amazon page is the "Add to Cart" button. And the same should be true in your branding materials.

Direct Calls to Action should:

1. Be clear.
2. Ask for a purchase, schedule an appointment or do something that leads to a sale.

Whether you're selling cars, pizza or landscaping services, your customers should never wonder how to place an order. If your call to action isn't clear and identifiable you are missing out on sales.

Transitional calls to action work best when they have one or more of the following four criteria:

- They qualify a customer as a potential buyer.
- They educate or inform a potential buyer.
- They capture information allowing you to follow up with further calls to action.
- They offer something of value for free.

If there's a way for a call to action to cover all four of these criteria, you'll have terrific success.

When our StoryBrand team analyzes a website, one of the more common suggestions we make is that our clients do a better job capturing email addresses. On their websites, many of our clients simply ask their customers to "sign up for the newsletter" or "stay in the loop." And yet most people aren't interested in a newsletter because it doesn't answer a specific question or offer to satisfy a specific need. As you might expect, the results of these efforts are dismal, but there is hope. When our clients focus on specific needs in their transitional calls to action, results increase dramatically.

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As an expert in your field, you have valuable information your customers need or want. A local nursery might offer a free PDF explaining what types of plants grow best in the local climate. They could then follow up with a series of automated emails including reminders about different planting seasons. Those reminders might include direct calls to action to swing by and purchase new plants and supplies. An investment firm might offer a free online course teaching potential customers five common financial mistakes people make in their fifties. Whoever signs up for that course would be flagged as a qualified buyer who would be sent further information about products specifically created with them in mind. A local fashion boutique might offer a free in-store fashion show featuring ten bold new looks for spring. A national grocery store chain could offer a free subscription to a weekly recipe and online cooking demonstration. There is no shortage of ideas but the point is to offer your customers something specific that meets a specific desire or need.

As much thought should be put into what you offer your customers through a transitional call to action as is put into the creation of a product. This, after all, is your future customers free taste of how your brand will make their lives better.

BRANDSCRIPT: AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

Relationships aren't static, they're always evolving. The same is true in our brands relationship with our customers. Hopefully, those relationships are progressing toward sales and recurring sales. But relationships don't progress without a clear direction and a call to action. If you truly have a good product or service, one that benefits the lives of your customers, you should never feel bad about asking for a transitional call to action or a direct sale to take the relationship to the next level. Do we have something good for our customers? Are we offering value? If so, we should call people to action.

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Use the following worksheet to explore both direct and transitional calls to action.

DIRECT CALLS TO ACTION:

Direct calls to action are, as stated, invitations to engage your brand in a way that leads to a sale. Direct calls to action should be made clear and should be on every page of your website. Direct calls to action should be on your brochures, in your automated emails, on every page of your catalog, and so on. Customers will not place an order unless you ask them to. Use the following checklists to make sure you are calling your customers to direct action by asking them to make a purchase.

WHAT DIRECT CALLS TO ACTION WILL YOU USE?

_____ Order Now Button

_____ Call Now to Place Your Order

_____ Apply Now

_____ Register Now

_____ Other _____

_____ Other _____

_____ Other _____

TRANSITIONAL CALLS TO ACTION:

Transitional calls to action help us enter into relationships with potential customers. They are often free offers for information or bonus material you can use to qualify a customer and follow up with them in the future.

Do you have information your customers need that you can offer to qualify them as potential buyers? How could you package this information? Could it be a PDF? A subscription to a weekly recipe? A video course educating customers about your field of expertise? A webinar?

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TRANSITIONAL CALLS TO ACTION I CAN IMPLEMENT ARE:

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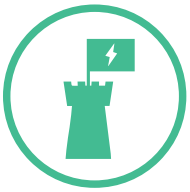

THAT RESULTS IN

All stories hinge on whether or not something positive or negative is going to happen to the character. If we don't know the building will explode if the hero doesn't destroy the bomb, the story isn't interesting. If we don't know the couple will live happily ever after if the hero can rescue her, there's no suspense or reason to keep watching.

In stories, something must be gained or lost depending on whether the hero takes action. The clearer that something is, the more interested people will be in the story.

Likewise, if you're telling your customers about a product without spelling out how it might give them a happy ending or save them from a tragic ending, they will lose interest. In the StoryBrand strategy, this means we tell our customers what results they will either experience or avoid by using our products and services.

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Watch Module 6: That Results in Failure

MODULE 6
THAT RESULTS IN FAILURE

Bad things happen to people in life and if you're a good brand with good products and services, you're stopping some of those bad things from happening. Whether it's raising somebody's self-esteem, helping to relieve somebody's physical pain, keeping somebody's dream from crashing, or providing light in an otherwise dark circumstance, your brand must position itself as a force working to defeat your customers' fears. If we haven't identified a mutual enemy our brand and our customers have in common, we shouldn't expect customers to think of us as relevant. They are, after all, in a battle.

Add to this, the human brain is only compelled by the power of a story if all the elements are spelled out, including the element of potential failure. How interesting would the Star Wars series be without Darth Vader? Or if Luke Skywalker didn't have a Death Star to destroy? Or a biological father to confront? Conflict is what makes the hero the hero, after all. Without it, the story suffers and audiences loses interest.

The reason most brands neglect the tragic element of the StoryBrand strategy is for fear of coming off as manipulative. We understand. At StoryBrand, we are not fans of brands, personal or corporate, who exaggerate the tragic story element in an effort to manipulate. If you're demonizing your opposition in an effort to paint yourself as the hero, then you're falling into the villain trap yourself. Villains are exaggerators and deceivers. No deception should be overlooked for the good of the cause. A liar is a liar. We don't support liars, even if their cause is seemingly noble.

Story is a powerful tool, and it's best used to convey the truth rather than to manipulate. When we use the elements of story to paint a fictional narrative, time finds us out. If we've learned

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one thing from Hitler, Stalin, Chairman Mao and the rest, it's that history doesn't look fondly on a manipulator. Each were incredible storytellers, but ultimately if a story is used to deceive, the truth will be found out and the storyteller will be judged accordingly. Over dramatizing the potential tragic element of a story is nothing short of deception, but leaving the tragic element out all together isn't any more noble. Neglecting the tragic element of reality is also a form of deception. Bad things really do happen to people. The key is to tell the truth about what your products and services can help people avoid. Err on the side of understatement, not on the side of silence.

Think of the tragic element in the StoryBrand strategy like salt in a recipe for bread. If the comic element is flour and the guide element is eggs, the tragic element is salt. It will only take a pinch. If it's there, customers won't notice anything other than the bread tastes good, but if it's missing, they'll only know something doesn't taste right. Without letting potential customers know the negative consequences they're avoiding, the story loses a certain interest factor, but pour on too much salt and you'll lose a discerning audience that can smell out a manipulator.

So, what does this look like? Well, it can look anything like titling a blog "Five Ways Your Roses will Survive the Winter Freeze" to "Our New Energy Drink is Guaranteed to Keep You from Bonking on Your Run." See what we did there? We mentioned a negative consequence but it didn't sound the least bit manipulative. Why? Because it was all true. Roses really can get damaged in a freeze and sometimes runners bonk in the middle of a run.

In your BrandScript, we've created a worksheet to help you identify negative consequences your products and services are helping your customers avoid. Use the worksheet to clarify how you will incorporate this element into your communication strategy.

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BRANDSCRIPT: FAILURE

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

To identify negative results your customers might experience if they don't engage your products or services, list five products or revenue streams your brand offers and what those products help your customers avoid. If you have more than five products or revenue streams, you'll want to use outside space to list them. You can also break your products into categories and define negative experiences your customers will avoid within those categories of products. For now, though, let's keep it simple. Choose five products or services and define the negative results your customers will avoid by using your products.

Examples:

PRODUCT OR BRAND		NEGATIVE RESULT THE CUSTOMER AVOIDS
Financial Trust Home Loans	→	**You won't feel like a number with us**
The 40-Day Detox Diet	→	**In three days you'll lose that blah feeling**
CarMax	→	**Our 25-point checklist ensures you aren't buying a lemon**

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What failure is your brand helping your customers avoid?

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Watch Module 7: That Results in Success

MODULE 7
THAT RESULTS IN SUCCESS

Author Frank Herbert said "There's no real ending, just a place where you stop the story." The story you are inviting potential customers into, then, is not a story about all of life and it's not a story about your customer's entire life; it's just a story about whatever internal and external problem your products and services provide solutions for. And moreover, it's about positive results they will experience if they engage the solutions you offer.

A simple mention or nod to a happy ending may be the most flammable component to the StoryBrand strategy. If a customer cannot envision how your products and services will take them somewhere good, they will likely wonder why your products or services matter.

The least legal-sounding line in the *Declaration of Independence* is the most quoted, and it's all about a happy ending. If Thomas Jefferson wouldn't have mentioned, in paragraph two, that *all men are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness* it is doubtful the document would have accumulated such social force. But really? In a nation-defining document, a bit about happiness? Absolutely. People buy results. What's the point of declaring our independence if it isn't going to produce an opportunity for happiness? The document's wide-spread acceptance speaks for itself.

The most flammable of the StoryBrand elements is often the most neglected, but it doesn't have to be. Figuring out what results your customers will experience if they engage your products and services isn't that complicated.

The process you'll want to use to feature happy endings in your brand communication is threefold: first, you'll want to identify a specific product you sell, then you want to answer what

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external problem that product solves, then define what positive emotional results a customer may experience if they use the product.

The breakdown might look like this:

PRODUCT		EXTERNAL PROBLEM SOLVED		EMOTIONAL RESULT
New Vacuum	→	**Cleaner Floors**	→	**Clean house, peaceful mind**
Landscaping service	→	**Time gained**	→	**More time to enjoy the yard, less time wrestling with it**
Online checking account	→	**Real-time personal financial info**	→	**No more cash-register fear. Money is in the account.**

When we're talking about comedic results, we're talking about happy endings. Can you boil down a positive emotional result you're selling with each product you offer? There will likely be many, of course, but remember the rule of clarity: focus on one result, per product. Customers get confused when you bombard them with too much information. Pick the strongest, positive emotional result and run with it.

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Use your BrandScript to clarify what positive results your clients can expect if they engage your products and services:

BRANDSCRIPT: SUCCESS

Brainstorm the Module

Make a BrandScript Decision

What will our customer's life look like if they use your product or service?

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PART THREE

Execution

Introduction

Understanding how story works takes a little time. Soon, though, you'll be watching a movie and thinking, "Hey, this must be the guide" and "She just called the hero to action." You'll begin to see the patterns soon enough, and every time you do, you'll better realize how much we are hardwired to engage stories.

The same is true in your branding. Soon, you'll begin to analyze your communication pieces through the StoryBrand filter, and the clearer you make them, the more you'll tap into the draw story has on the human brain.

Still, stories only attract people if they're told. If what we learned through the StoryBrand framework doesn't get applied in our brand strategy, we won't see any changes in our bottom line. As William Zinnser says, "Writers love to have written." None of us like to do the actual work.

But we must.

What you'll likely experience as you begin to execute your brand strategy is confusion. You won't be sure you're doing it right. But don't worry. All writers feel this way when they're writing their stories, and you'll feel the same as you execute your BrandScript. Execute it anyway. Keep making changes to your website, your keynote, your sales pitch, and any of your other brand materials. Once you start moving, you can edit as you go. The point is this: keep making the story of your brand more and more clear. A clear and compelling story will always win.

To find clarity, step outside your business and pretend you know nothing, then take a look at your materials. Are they easy to understand? Would somebody outside your industry be interested in knowing more? Are you using too much inside language? Are you talking about emotional results people will experience if they engage your products? Are you bragging to your competitors or are you endearing customers? Are all seven elements of the StoryBrand strategy represented in your materials?

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It's only when you begin to practically apply the StoryBrand strategy that it becomes clear. The more you work at it, the better of an editor you will become. Soon, you'll be able to look at anybody's website and know where they're confusing people and you won't make that same mistake yourself.

In Part Four of the StoryBrand framework, we've included a long checklist of things you can do to execute your strategy. It will not be possible to check off everything on this list and honestly, if you do, it will be overkill and you will confuse your customers. This checklist is meant to help you analyze your current materials and create new materials that get results.

We recommend reviewing your BrandScript at least once each month and twice each year with your entire team. We also recommend reading through this checklist each quarter to see if there is anything you can do to clarify your message.

The checklist is broken into categories so the further you go, the further you've executed the StoryBrand strategy. The early sections of the checklist are foundational while the later ones will take more time and knowledge to execute. Still, the later items will prove incredibly profitable for you, so keep moving until you've executed them all.

You'll find as you execute more and more of the items on this checklist that more and more customers will begin to respond. Your revenue should increase exponentially as the story your brand is telling becomes more clear.

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Watch Execution, Video 1: Filling Out a BrandScript

Filling Out a BrandScript

The way the StoryBrand course works is you learn the core concepts then watch each of the SB7 module videos to clarify your own message. Once you've brainstormed each of the 7 points in the SB7 framework, you transfer your best answers to a one-page BrandScript. This BrandScript will be the heart of your message moving forward. Your message will be clear and compelling and you'll get a greater response from any audience.

Once you learn to fill our a BrandScript you'll be able to use it for all kinds of projects. Whether you're re-designing your website, giving an important keynote or launching a new product, creating a BrandScript will insure you communicate clearly. In this video Don fills out a BrandScript and walks you through the process.

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Watch Execution, Video 2: Implementing the Framework

The StoryBrand Checklist

EXECUTING YOUR BRANDSCRIPT

HERO

- [ ] Have you defined a general desire your customers share?
- [ ] Is your customer's general desire reflected in your brand materials? If so, where? If not, where can you include it? Images? Text? Testimonials?
- [ ] Have you defined why your customer's desire is good or noble?
- [ ] Have you rid your BrandScript of language that makes your brand seem like the hero?
- [ ] Does your company slogan reflect a "result" your customer will experience if they use your products or services?

HAS A PROBLEM

- [ ] Is your customer's internal problem reflected in your brand materials?
- [ ] Are you using too much "inside language" to define your customer's problem? Can your customers understand you?
- [ ] Are you featuring customer testimonials that talk about the problems they were experiencing that you helped them resolve?

MEETS A GUIDE

- [ ] Does your brand material include testimonials that demonstrate your ability to help customers resolve their internal and external problems?
- [ ] Have you used statistics to communicate how much experience you have?
- [ ] Are you overusing statistics and testimonials so you look more like the hero than the guide? If so, should you cut back a little?
- [ ] Do your brand materials reflect a "we've been where you are and made it out successfully" mentality to your customers?
- [ ] Are you expressing empathy for your customer's problem in your brand materials? If so, where? Are you doing it enough?

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AND GIVES THEM A PLAN

- [ ] Have you identified how your brand is "the same but different"? Does it immediately help people understand what you do?
- [ ] Are you implementing a Process Plan? What's it called? Does it offer extreme value?
- [ ] Have you made a value agreement with your customers? Is it clear and does it establish confidence? Have you named it?
- [ ] Is there a paradigm shift you take your customers through? Is that shift simple and understandable?
- [ ] Do you have a loss leader you can offer your customers? A free PDF in exchange for an email address?

AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION

- [ ] Have you identified specific calls to action you can feature in your BrandScript? How are they worded? Are they clear?
- [ ] Have you decided upon transitional calls to action? What are they? What do people get when they engage them?

THAT RESULTS IN A SUCCESS

- [ ] Does your BrandScript state how a customer will feel after engaging your products and services?
- [ ] Is it clear how your customers will feel after their internal problem is solved by your products or services?
- [ ] Is your language clear enough that your entire sales team can use a line from the BrandScript to say how people will feel after they engage your products and services?
- [ ] Are you sure you've listed results as well as features and benefits in your BrandScript?
- [ ] Can you include a list of each of your products and revenue streams along with a result customers will experience if they engage them? Would this help your sales team communicate why your customers should buy?

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THAT RESULTS IN A FAILURE

- [ ] Have you defined a general consequence that might happen to your customers if they don't engage your products or services?
- [ ] Are you overusing negative imagery or text? Remember, the tragic element is salt in a recipe. Don't leave it out, but don't use too much.

GENERAL EDITS

- [ ] Is there anything in your brand materials that won't fit into one of the seven StoryBrand elements? If so, can you remove it?
- [ ] Is there "inside language" in your BrandScript? Can you get rid of it?
- [ ] Is each element of your BrandScript short and concise? Can you go back through and cut words out of it?
- [ ] Can you create a customer survey that will help you edit and refine portions of your BrandScript?
- [ ] Do you need to change your company tagline so that it reflects a result your customer will experience?

EXECUTING YOUR BRANDSCRIPT

- [ ] Have you completed your BrandScript?
- [ ] Have you met with principle team members to discuss and edit your BrandScript?
- [ ] Have you had a designer lay out your BrandScript so it's visually appealing and understandable?
- [ ] Have you created a Keynote presentation to announce your BrandScript?
- [ ] Have you distributed your BrandScript to your entire team?
- [ ] Have you delivered your BrandScript keynote to your entire team?
- [ ] Have you created a game to help your team understand your BrandScript? Wheel of Fortune? Jeopardy? Have fun!
- [ ] Have you included your BrandScript in "new employee" packets?
- [ ] Have you featured your BrandScript online so those you do business with can read it?
- [ ] Have you delivered your BrandScript to outside vendors and contractors so they better know who you are?
- [ ] Have you taught your team to identify brand communication that is "off script" and encourage your team to use the term "off script" to keep brand communication clear and compelling?

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Editing Your Brand Materials

YOUR WEBSITE

- [ ] Is there a direct call to action above the fold of your website?
- [ ] Are there direct calls to action on every page of your website? Are they clear?
- [ ] Is there one clear idea communicated on your website that is obvious and communicates a result?
- [ ] Is there a transitional call to action that offers something of value for free?
- [ ] Is your transitional call to action hooked to an automated follow-up email system that features direct calls to action?
- [ ] Can every word, button and image on your website fit into one of the seven StoryBrand categories? If not, can you get rid of it?
- [ ] Are there images on your website that display how a customer will feel once their internal problem has been resolved by your products or services?
- [ ] Is there too much information on your website? Is it cluttered? Are there too many links? If so, can you trim it down?
- [ ] Have you started a blog featuring articles and information your customers might find valuable?
- [ ] On the side of your blog, are you featuring ads for your products and services?
- [ ] On your blog, are you capturing email addresses in exchange for free information?
- [ ] Is your company tagline featured consistently on your website?

YOUR EMAIL CAMPAIGNS

- [ ] Are you capturing email addresses in exchange for free information for your customers?
- [ ] Are you emailing your clients free, valuable information with an ad for your products within the email?
- [ ] Are you emailing your customers about specials?
- [ ] Are you emailing customers when "time is running out" on specials?
- [ ] Are you emailing customers on important holidays that can be associated with your products and services?
- [ ] Are your email blasts short, to the point, clear and compelling?

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YOUR PLACE OF BUSINESS

- [ ] Is there signage in your retail space that features results people will experience if they use your products or services?
- [ ] Is there signage in your retail space that features the plan you offer your customers?
- [ ] Is there a physical demonstration of the failure you help customers avoid with your products and services?
- [ ] Have you changed over your "on hold" music to feature aspects of your BrandScript?
- [ ] Can you feature decals on your front window with a message from your BrandScript?

YOUR KEYNOTE

- [ ] Does your keynote explain what your customer wants?
- [ ] Does your keynote explain why your customer has good intentions?
- [ ] Does your keynote explain what your customer's internal and external problem is?
- [ ] Does your keynote help people understand your brand is a trusted guide?
- [ ] Do you express empathy for your customer in the keynote?
- [ ] Do you present yourself as an authority in your field of exerts?
- [ ] Do you present a plan to break through the customer's confusion?
- [ ] Do you call your customer to action?
- [ ] Do you talk about the consequences you help your customer avoid?
- [ ] Do you demonstrate the happy ending you will help your customer create using your products and services?
- [ ] Can you give your keynote in the form of a story about one of your customers?
- [ ] Are the images in your keynote a visual reflection of the themes?
- [ ] Have you had your keynote laid out professionally?
- [ ] Is your company tagline featured in your keynote?
- [ ] Can you tell a story to demonstrate some of the seven story elements? If so, please do.

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PROMOTIONAL VIDEO

- [ ] Have you made a video you can post online about your brand?
- [ ] Does your video identify your customer's internal and external problem?
- [ ] Does your video express empathy and understanding for your customer?
- [ ] Does your video explain why you're an authority in your field of expertise?
- [ ] Do you talk about your plan in your video?
- [ ] Does your video call your customer to action?
- [ ] Does your video talk about the negative consequences you help your customers avoid for not using your products and services?
- [ ] Does your video demonstrate the happy ending you can help your customers experience?
- [ ] Is your company tagline featured in your keynote?
- [ ] Can you feature a brief, concise customer testimonial in your video?

YOUR STAFF

- [ ] Is your staff familiar with the BrandScript?
- [ ] Does your staff have a line they can say that helps customers understand how you are "the same but different"?
- [ ] Can your staff explain the plan you offer your customers?
- [ ] Does your staff know the appropriate times to ask for a purchase, and are they following through?
- [ ] Is your staff introducing customers to transitional calls to action?
- [ ] Is your staff getting customers email addresses and entering them into your database?
- [ ] Do you have uniforms? Can your corporate slogan be featured on them?
- [ ] Can each member of your staff tell a story about a former customer that ends with a positive internal and external result?

YOUR PRODUCT PACKAGING

- [ ] Does your product packaging include your company tagline?
- [ ] Can you feature a result your customer will experience on your product packaging?
- [ ] Can you feature an endorsement (with a result) on your product packaging?
- [ ] Can your plan be featured on your product packaging?

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PROJECT _____

THE ONE PAGE BRANDSCRIPT

A CHARACTER

What do they want?

WITH A PROBLEM

External

Internal

Philosophical

MEETS A GUIDE WHO UNDERSTANDS THEIR FEAR

Empathy

Authority

AND GIVES THEM A PLAN

Summarize your plan

THAT CALLS THEM TO ACTION

Direct

Transitional

THAT RESULTS IN...

SUCCESS

Successful Results

FAILURE

Tragic Results

IDENTIFY TRANSFORMATION

From

To

STORY BRAND

StoryBrand.com

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The StoryBrand Online Marketing Course is designed to help each participant, as an individual, clarify their brand's identity, making their marketing simple, clear and actionable. During the StoryBrand Online Marketing Course you will be instructed in the seven tenants of the StoryBrand 7-Part Framework, based on the proven power of story formulas to help you engage customers.

The StoryBrand 7-Part Framework, the supporting StoryBrand Online Marketing Course materials along with follow up resources available exclusively to StoryBrand Alumni (together the "StoryBrand Portfolio"), including but not limited to "The Perfect Sales Letter," "Use Your BrandScript to Turn A Profit," "5 Things Your Website Should Include," "Clarify Your Corporate Narrative," "How to Tell a Story," "Make Sense of Your Company's Financial Story," "What Big Business Can Teach You About Marketing," "Creating Brand Evangelists," "Your Brand is Not the Hero," "How to Turn A Blog into A Profitable Business," and "Your Customer Profiles May be Wrong" are the proprietary intellectual property of Donald Miller Words, LLC.

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