

Branding for Writers

Branding is a mystical concept for many writers, or even a dirty word. I prefer to think of branding as another tool, a way to focus yourself so you can stay on track. If you pin down and put into words what you are trying to achieve, that goal can always be in sight.

I saw a TEDx Talk and the speaker was talking about your deathbed. He said you only have room for about 7 people around your deathbed. So in your life you need to find those 7 people and cultivate your relationship with them, invest in them.

Writing is the same in some ways, you can write creatively and do whatever you want. But if you focus your writing on specific things, you get more out of that investment. If you need to invest 10,000 hours to master a skill then you don't want to be wasting any of the hours you have available.

This is why I think branding is important, even if some creatives think marketing is a dirty word. As long as you let your branding remain flexible as you evolve, all it does is give you a strong footing to start from. **Branding enables you to be intentional when a new opportunity arises, to judge if this is something you want to develop or just another drain on your time and energy.** Some think they are stifling their creativity with planning, but I don't think there's any problem with being creative intentionally.

When you buy a book, you are trusting that author to entertain you, to tell you a good story and leave you feeling satisfied. Your blog and social media presence can help to establish that you are a trustworthy writer and people can invest their visits/time/buys/money on you.

A lot of bloggers make the mistake of paying to make their site pretty and think that is taking the next step, but are disappointed when they don't see any improvement in traffic. This is because the bones of their site haven't seen any changes. You have to focus your content to be consistent and attract people you can provide value to. **Those people you can truly reach are the ones you should be speaking to, in your writing and your brand.**

I'm linking some worksheets here. These worksheets are all available online free, although often you have to sign up for a mailing list

These are somewhat in order from wide to narrow. I suggest you read over the titles and pick one that excites you, then do that worksheet and think of 3 action points that you could do to implement what you learned. Then repeat next week, or next month, or whenever you have time to do another.

Happy hunting!

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Know Your Why

Your Why is your motivation, your purpose, the thing that drives your inner compass.

TED Talk: How Great Leaders Inspire Action

http://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action

Discover Your Why Workbook <http://liveyourlegend.net/email-updates/>

Discovering Why Purpose Pack <http://sourcesofinsight.com/discover-your-why/>

Brand Personality/Archetype

Brandality Quiz from Kaye Putnam gives you percentages, good info in the results she sends

<http://kayeputnam.com/brandality-quiz/>

Primary Archetype Quiz from Cerries Mooney Creative more personal, free with email opt-in, good info in the results she sends <http://cerriesmooney.com/how-to-complete-the-test/>

Brand Psychology Workbook <http://kayeputnam.com/youre-in/>

Brandality Workbook <http://kayeputnam.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Worksheets-Interactive.pdf>

Personal Brand Obituary

http://eo2.commpartners.com/users/afcl/downloads/Brand_Worksheet_Instructions.pdf

Share Your Brand Story http://hopkinsprinting.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Brand-Worksheet_Brand-Story.pdf

Brand Story Worksheet <http://www.yourwriterplatform.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Brand-Story-Worksheet-PDF.pdf>

Understanding Your Brand <http://www.themogulmom.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Understanding-Your-Brand-A-Self-Analysis-Worksheet-%C2%A9-2016-The-Mogul-Mom.pdf>

Use Your Voice <http://byregina.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Use-Your-Voice-Worksheet.pdf>

Essence/Purpose/Vision/Mission

Purpose Practice <http://www.unstuck.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/purpose.pdf>

Get Brand Clarity http://www.tizzit.co/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Brand_Clarify_Workbook.pdf

Defining Your Brand Purpose <https://www.dropbox.com/s/l1jum85of77uomh/worksheet-intentional-brand-purpose.pdf>

Brand Essence Worksheet <http://www.smallgigsmarketing.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Brand-Essence-WorkSheet-from-Small-Gigs.pdf>

Identify Your Value Proposition <http://www.marketingexperiments.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/MarketingExperiments-Value-Prop-Worksheet.pdf>

Elevator Pitch/Statement

Brand Positioning Statement http://contagious-ideas.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/BCSI-Brand-Positioning-Worksheet_FNL.pdf

Upgrade Your Elevator Pitch <http://s3.amazonaws.com/media.skillcrush.com/skillcrush/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Elevator-Pitch-Worksheet.pdf>

The Elevator Pitch
http://www.ehadvising.com/ehfiles/downloads/Elevator_Pitch_EHADvising.com.pdf

Tagline/Slogan

Blog Header Tagline <http://designyourownblog.com/wp-content/uploads/Blog-header-tagline-worksheet.pdf>

Nailing Your Tagline <https://s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/building-authentic-brands/BAB-Tagline+Worksheet.pdf>

Platform/Social/Site

In How to Blog for Profit Without Selling Your Soul, Ruth Soukup talks about developing 5 main categories of content. These can be categories/types/values offered. This way a visitor/reader can go straight to the thing of most value to them.

Next you develop pillar content (also called cornerstone content) for each of these categories. This would be the pieces that offer the most value and are best representative of your work. If something were to go viral/become a bestseller you would want it to be one of these pieces. There's nothing worse than something going viral that has nothing to do with anything else you're doing, you get all those visitors that you have nothing else for.

I believe that many of the writers in our group, especially older writers, are unlikely to blog often or have an active social media presence. However, people are using Facebook as a search engine, so it is important to have some sort of presence, even if you are just using your personal page. It is considered acceptable to create Facebook Page and just start the description with a disclaimer that it is not updated often.

Blogging

Blog posts have shifted, it is no longer ideal to post every day. Less frequent, higher quality posts get better search engine positioning. You can post as infrequently as once a month. However, Google heavily penalizes inconsistent posting, so you need to commit to whatever schedule you settle on.

How to Create an Editorial Calendar <http://aeolidia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/aeolidia-editorial-calendar.pdf>

Planning Your Content Strategy <http://aeolidia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/website-content-strategy-aeolidia.pdf>

Targeted Traffic to Your Website <http://aeolidia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/aeolidia-targeted-traffic.pdf>

Writing

Writer's Statement <http://www.eadeverell.com/wp-content/uploads/statement.pdf>

Creating Intentionally downloads directly
<https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=oB-6N-EIfT9nLbUF5RkxORTlyVko>

Marketing/Audience/Customer

Target audience is something that is hard for writers to pin down. I found this site where you can search popular media and see what their audience is interested in. So if the people who liked Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy would love your work you search for that. Or search for your favorite thing in the universe, in theory if it resonates with you then that is reflected in your work. This will show you the kinds of things you can share on social media that your audience will find value in.

Customer Profiles (ie Moulin Rouge) <http://customer-profile.com/entertainment/movies/romance-films/moulin-rouge-audience-analysis.html>

Target Audience: Identify <http://www.yourwriterplatform.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Target-Audience-Part-1-Worksheet-PDF.pdf>

Target Audience: Understand <http://www.yourwriterplatform.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Target-Audience-Part-2-Worksheet-PDF.pdf>

Find Your Readers as a Fiction Writer <http://cooksplusbooks.com/wp-content/uploads/How-To-Find-Your-Readers-as-a-Fiction-Writer.pdf>

Dream Customer Exercise http://aeolidia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/dream-customer-exercise_Aeolidia.pdf

Ideal Customer Profile Tizzit <http://www.tizzit.co/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/ideal-customer-profile-workbook.pdf>

Ideal Customer Profile Beyond Mastermind downloads directly http://www.brandonpugsley.com/?download_id=d0837cfaa1ea6fc908fafcedd3590d3

Business Plan

One Page Business Plan Template <http://allindiewriters.com/downloads/wwg1onepgbizplan.pdf>

Business Plan for Writers downloads directly <http://jamigold.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Business-Plan-Worksheet.docx>

Author Business Plan <http://www.yourwriterplatform.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Author-Business-Plan-PDF-v.2-1.pdf>

Good luck!

Melissa French

