Getting your story straight

Building a great product and business on the strength of a simple story

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Behind every great product is a great story

YOU DON'T GET TO 500 MILLION FRIENDS WITHOUT MAKING A FEW ENEMIES
Story structure

- Characters
- Motivation
- Plot
- Symbols
- Customers
- Insights
- Problem/solution
- Logos/icons
Basic story elements for your product

1. Target audience (characters/protagonist)
2. Customer insight (motivation)
3. Problem definition (plot set-up)
4. Value proposition (plot imperative/narrative)
5. Reasons-to-believe – product delivery (plot resolution)
6. Positioning (context)
7. Attributes and personality (tone, voice)
Pick a target – who is the main character in your story?

Find a first (and second target) customer
Listen well and gain insights
Keep the conversation going
Pick a 1st target customer and nail it
Eventually find and serve your 2nd target customer, etc.
Who’s the target (main character) in this story?
Dig for a compelling insight – what is their motivation?
Deeper insights inspire better products

Understand the character in your story: IBTEC 2009 finalist
What insight is this based on?

ToneCheck™ by Lymbix

Don’t send the wrong message.

Studies show e-mail messages are interpreted incorrectly 50% of the time. ToneCheck™ is an e-mail plug-in that flags sentences with words or phrases that may convey unintended emotion or tone, then helps you re-write them. Just like Spell Check… but for Tone.

Avoid continuous editing and unnecessary conflict with ToneCheck™.

*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 2005

Bob,

You should get off of your pedestal and listen to your sales team. They do support you and will do what needs to get done.

Sincerely,
Mary
Problem definition – set up your plot

Great products fill a need…
Clearly define the problem

IBTEC finalist 2009

**pain**

Roti (chapati or phulka) is the staple diet of 800 million Indians who eat 2.4 billion rotis every day.

Roti making is such a skillful, tedious and time consuming task that people are resorting to unhealthy means such as frozen rotis, bread, or they are eating more rice.

There is NO COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC KITCHEN APPLIANCE like a Rice cooker to make rotis with just a click of a button in the market today!
So you can solve it

IBTEC finalist: Rotimatic

Rotimatic

Revolutionary kitchen appliance
Compact as a mini microwave oven
Enables anyone to make rotis!

'Rotimatic prints readymade cooked rotis, literally!'
Problem definition often comes from an observed insight

Why do ordinary kitchen tools have to hurt your hands?
Why can’t there be wonderfully comfortable tools that are easy to use?
What's the problem?

discover the **cheapest** method of travel

compare cost of:
- flying
- driving
- train
- bus

Where are you coming from?
City from*

Where are you going?
City to*

GO
What’s the problem?
Be USEFUL (have a Value Proposition)
What does the character in your story aspire to?

Base it on your insight
It becomes your product imperative
Hold it sacred in all product decisions
Solve big perceived problems

0 to Internet in Seconds

Splashtop lets you access the Internet seconds after you turn on your computer!

Inside scoop

HP announces QuickWeb netbooks and notebooks

Tuesday, September 15th, 09
HP has just announced their new lineup of netbooks and notebooks. We at DeviceVM are excited to point out that a number of new systems feature HP QuickWeb functionality, powered by...
Keep the value proposition simple

A global community of friends and strangers answering one simple question: **What are you doing?** Answer on your phone, IM, or right here on the web!

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**About Twitter**

*About us*

*Where did the idea for Twitter come from?*

*Why do so many people seem to like Twitter?*

*Isn't Twitter just too much information?*

**Why do so many people seem to like Twitter?**

Simplicity has played an important role in Twitter's success. People are eager to connect with other people and Twitter makes that simple. Twitter asks one question, "What are you doing?" Answers must be under 140 characters in length and can be sent via mobile texting, instant message, or the web.

Twitter's core technology is a device agnostic message routing system with rudimentary social networking features. By accepting messages from sms, web, mobile web, instant message, or from third party API projects, Twitter makes it easy for folks to stay connected.
It’s OK if it’s personal

All of the staff at MOO have active online social lives - not for work, just for fun. We love the web. Over half of us have our own website, or blog, and pretty much all of us share our photos online with our friends.

Our first product, MiniCards, came about when we realized that sometimes, we wanted to hand out details of our personal sites, and we just didn’t have a nice way to do it. A business card was too cheesy, too serious, or too... businessy, and didn’t represent us the way we really are. A hastily scribbled piece of paper is more personal, but who ever has paper or a pen when you want it? We needed something else.

So we made MiniCards. Little cards - about half the size of a business card - with your own photos, designs and text on. Made in boxes of 100 with the option of having a different image on every one.
What’s the value prop?

Receive your household mail online instead of on paper!

Your household mail is delivered online in a secure, private, verified mailbox.

It is electronically organized, filed and stored for you, forever, for free.

You can view mail, pay a bill or print an exact copy any time you want.

Sign Up - It’s Free!

Secure
Zumbox offers bank-level security and is compliant with strict security standards, keeping all your mail and sensitive information completely safe and secure. More »

Private
You are the only person who can read your mail. There is a Zumbox for every street address, and you can even create one for each person in the household. More »

Central
Manage all your mail in one place. Whether you receive it digitally or on paper, you can store it all in your Zumbox and access it anytime from anywhere. More »

Verified
We verify your street address by sending you a security code via the USPS which only residents can receive. All senders are also verified, so no scams, ever! More »
What’s the value prop?
Product Delivery – Give the story a happy ending

Your product has to pay off your value proposition
Articulate your “reasons-to-believe”
Connect the dots for your customers
What makes the Starbucks experience?
Make it clear what your product is (and how it works)
Show how you deliver on the value proposition

Dear big, fat fashion industry...

The fashion market is dominated by big corporations. Full stop. These verticals and brand-giants are the ones that rake in the money in fashionland.

Professionally melting trends into products, simplifying them to meet mass appeal, producing them in unbelievably large quantities under varying working conditions. All buried by huge marketing budgets, and seamless shopping experiences.

But wait a minute, something’s odd.

Where do all these ideas for trends come from? In most cases, not from the corporations selling them. The trends come from young designers working in their small studies, from fashion students around the world or from creatives on the streets of our cities.

But starting out as a young designer is insanely hard to handle, not speaking of taking it to a professional level.

Sadly, in reality most young designers fail. Not from lack of talent but just due to the complexities and hardships of market mechanisms. In the end stands huge talent, never having the chance to live up to it’s potential...

What if somebody changed the game?

Fundamentally.

Change it into something more fair and diverse.

Change it into something that mirrors the immense talent out there.

This is exactly where the model of Garmz steps in.

We at Garmz have dedicated ourselves to enable fashion talent.

You design fashion, we provide the rest.

1) Marketing

Designers can promote and present themselves through uploading their work and get instant feedback from a worldwide audience and customers.

2) Production

If a design is successful, Garmz handles the production for you, at zero cost and risk for the designers.

3) Distribution

Garmz offers a complete webshop system, selling the finished fashion to customers worldwide.

And at the end: Profits shared with the designer. Fair and square.
Positioning – give your story context

Make it distinctive, true and compelling

“The healthy fast food”
The master: The computer for the rest of us
Give your product a frame of reference

The OS that makes your computer work like an appliance...

- By comparison:
  - **The Microsoft Windows OS** is clunky and gets worse over time
  - **Google Chrome OS** isn’t available on your device yet
  - You can get it on YOUR computer (you don’t need to lots of $ for an **Apple device**)
“Originally, we weren't exactly sure how to market the Touch. Was it an iPhone without the phone? Was it a pocket computer? What happened was, what customers told us was, they started to see it as a game machine. We started to market it that way, and it just took off.” (Steve Jobs, 09/09/09)
How is stay.com positioned?

Get your free personal travel guide
Download, print and share your guide for free

Where do you want to go? GO
Maybe: London, Paris or New York?

Make Your Own Travel Guide

Forget about your already outdated travel books. We have updated information on thousands of places to visit for your next vacation or business trip.
Functional attributes and voice – add texture to your story
Southwest attributes: fun, on-time, inexpensive

We Weren’t Just Airborne Yesterday

Time flies when you’re having fun!

More than 38 years ago, Rollin King and Herb Kelleher got together and decided to start a different kind of airline. They began with one simple notion: if you get your passengers to their destinations when they want to get there, on time, at the lowest possible fares, and make darn sure they have a good time doing it, people will fly your airline. And you know what? They were right.

What began as a small Texas airline has grown to become one of the largest airlines in America. Today, Southwest Airlines flies over 100 million passengers a year to 66 great cities all across the country, and we do it more than 3,200 times a day.
Virgin America personality: sexy!
Two gaming companies... different personality?
Tell a great Story

A good story is one that anyone can tell (and is true!)
Your product or brand becomes this story
Be brief: distill down to the essence of your story

“I would have written you a short letter, but I didn’t have the time.”

Pascal (or Twain)
The art of story telling
Ideas that Stick

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simplicity</th>
<th>Concreteness</th>
<th>Emotions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unexpectedness</td>
<td>Credibility</td>
<td>Stories</td>
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Some of you are probably like me and come from one of those families where you are the only one who knows how to turn on the computer, change the height of your mom's office chair, or tie your shoes. So every time one of the aforementioned tasks has to be completed, they're yelling for (s/t?) you. Ever since I got accepted to MIT, though, it's gotten significantly worse. Why didn't my mom's favorite reality show tape last night? "ASK HER, SHE'S THE MIT STUDENT." Photo printer is doing nothing but eating paper? "GET THE MIT STUDENT. SAVE THE TREES." 14 x 22? "YO, MIT GIRL."

My name is Jess K. ’10, and I am indeed an MIT student. I've lived in California all my life, where it's okay that I wear t-shirts and flip flops in December. When it gets below 60 degrees here, we cry. So not only do I have to wrap my head around this whole thing of going to College, capital C, I have to wrap my body in something other than breathable cotton.

My name is Keri Lee, and I'm a member of the class of 2010. (Yeah. I'm new here. Let's hear it for built-in excuses for not knowing what's going on!) I was born in Jamaica, but I moved to the Miami/Fort Lauderdale area in Florida at age seven. (Kellan '09 from England, who lives a floor above me, says this makes me half an international student. I don't agree. Yet.) Notice the aforementioned locations. Jamaica, Florida - and the very tip of it at that. I'm still struggling to understand this concept of it being cold (waaaaaahhh?!). I've never even seen snow, so it's a sure bet that I'll be the girl running around in the courtyard screaming at the first sign of flake. Yes, I will do it even if there are only maybe three and a half of them and they melt before they even reach the ground. It's the principle of the thing.

I live in Senior Halls, which is awesome. We host Steer Roast every year. We have a tire swing, Enough said.

I like theater. I do a lot in it - especially behind the scenes. Power tools are
Jobsian storytelling

- A headline
- A villain
- A simple slide
- A demo
- A holy smokes moment
So...

What’s your story?
Extra credit
What’s the problem?

Now playing: Virtual Insanity

wait... what?

We created this site for those of you that have a song stuck in your head and you can’t get it out no matter what you do. Using the latest in reverse-auditory-melodic-unstickification technology, we’ve been able to allow our users to “unhear” songs by hearing equally catchy songs. So really all we’re doing is making you forget your old song by replacing it with another one... sorry.

follow us

Stay up to date on all the latest site news and connect with unhearit admins on facebook and twitter.

facebook.com/unhearit

twitter.com/unhearit
But look before you leap

We deforested the hills
Try to manage the story as best you can?
Get the story back on track

JetBlue's Customer Bill of Rights

Bill of Rights information

Above all else, JetBlue Airways is dedicated to bringing humanity back to air travel. We strive to make every part of your experience as simple and as pleasant as possible. Unfortunately, there are times when things do not go as planned. If you're inconvenienced as a result, we think it is important that you know exactly what you can expect from us. That's why we created our Customer Bill of Rights. These Rights will always be subject to the highest level of safety and security for our customers and crewmembers.

JetBlue Bill of Rights compensation inquiries:
It is not necessary to email inquiring about whether your delayed or canceled flight qualifies for compensation. Our compensation team will determine whether your flight qualifies for compensation per our Bill of Rights and if compensation is awarded you will receive notification within seven days via email or approximately 2 weeks via regular mail. Click here to learn more about our Bill of Rights. Thank you for your patience.

Required fields are marked by *

What are you concerned about? *

Please share your concern below:

If your concern is about a JetBlue crew member, please provide their name if available:
Refresh your story
How does innovation happen?

Getting to the Idea

IDEA

Getting to Go

Insights
Names

Stories
Showtime
Defense