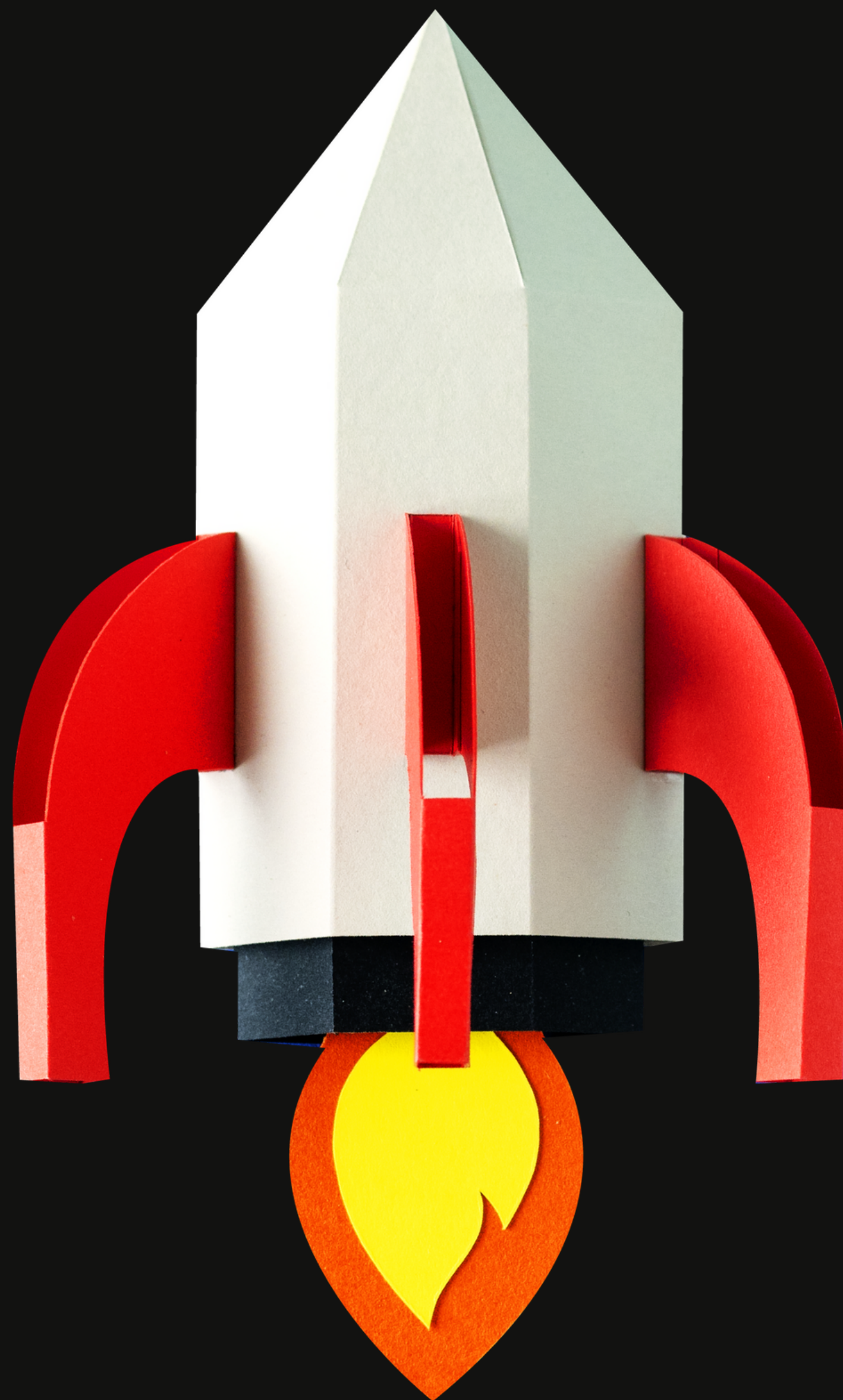


HOW TO BUILD A DIGITAL BRAND



5 Simple Steps to Launch Your Project

by CHRIS CHURLINOV

"If you can't dream up worlds that might be, then you are limited to the worlds that other people describe."

John Hargrave

Hello, World!

My first experience with digital media goes way back to when I was still in high school. Except, back then, digital media wasn't such a big part of our lives. And I wasn't even thinking about the business side of things at all. I was just excited about creating different pages where people can join and be a part of a group. Marketing wasn't even a tiny dot on my map.

But it turns out those same pages later helped shape my knowledge of social media.

When I started Business School with the intention to study marketing I was shortly disappointed to find out that none of the things important in today's culture were being taught in classes. Instead, the focus was cast mostly on solving abstract problems.

As an alternative, I started focusing more on learning new marketing strategies online by following people who were actually part of digital businesses themselves.

Most of my colleagues were categorizing my disinterest in school classes as a bad trait. However, I knew that I was learning the most important stuff online, with the help of successful mentors. Still, I decided to show up on classes and build up my knowledge of business in general.

During the last 10 years, I've been a part of all the changes that the big social platforms have implemented. Most important of all, I was always interested in the updates they made.

Always first in line to check out the new beta version or try a new feature. I even notice when they update the tiny continents on the planet notification icon.

A few years ago, I was ready to start working on my own business!

I learned how to build a website, I set up social media accounts, and a business plan. After everything was set up and put together, I quickly failed to put in the necessary action towards achieving my digital goals. At the time, it felt like I'm not ready.

For a long period time, I was stuck, and all I did was just absorb new information instead of taking real action towards my goals. Eventually, I would get tired of the idea that I'm working on. Soon I would go to a new one. Build a new website. Create a new brand. Create new social media accounts. Fail again...

Let's go, again.

And again.

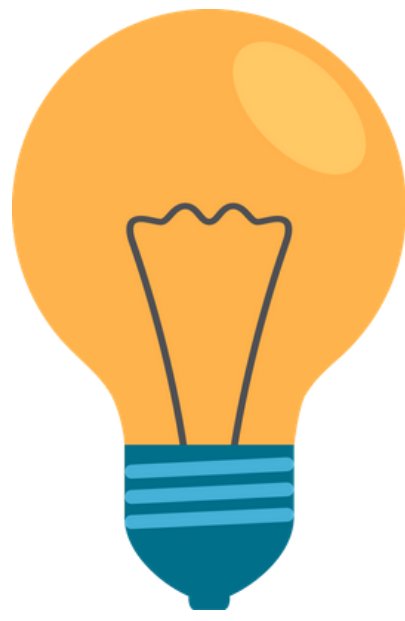
Again...

I learned a lot from creating all those different brands. But I was missing the most important lesson of all. Give it your all. Create a business that brings value to people and a business that lasts. Create a real strategy for yourself, not just a weak plan that comes to an end soon after it's been set up. Share your message and do more for the world.

That is why I bring you this book and the website. I will share everything I've learned so far in simple and actionable steps.

The ideas presented are a combination of my experience, my education, and the amazing things I've learned from many other content creators, authors, marketers and more.

Now, if that sounds good let's go! It's time.



THE BIG IDEA

Our brain never stops working. You have an idea about this great thing you want to create. As you think about it more, you realize that sounds great, and you want to bring it to life.

The first question you're probably asking yourself is "Where do I start?". How can you organize all your thoughts and transform them into actual work?

One thing that holds us back the most is overthinking. When your brain is going at it, and you don't know what to do next, you will end up doing nothing. The desire to even start working on your idea soon disappears because you feel stuck.

The truth is, there is no starting line. Any action taken towards bringing your idea to life is a step forward. It might not be perfect at the beginning, but it's all good because now you've learned something. Nothing starts off being perfect.

While working on many different projects during the past few years, I've come to better understand the creation process. For the purpose of this book, I've organized everything you need to do for your digital brand in five parts. All together, they will put things into a perspective, and give you a better understanding of where to start and what to do next.



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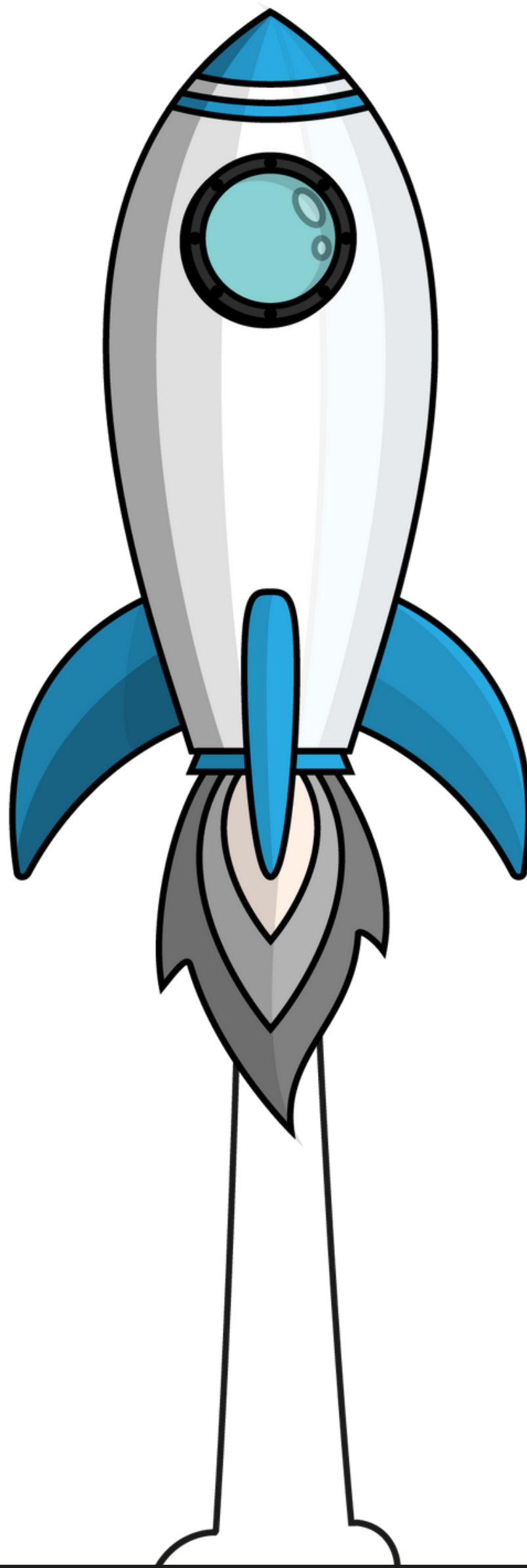
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APPENDIX

PART 1

BRAND IDENTITY



BEFORE YOU START

Before you start establishing your brand identity there is something important I want you to think about. That is the value that you provide with putting yourself or your brand out there. The end goal might be to monetize your work, but I encourage you to forget about the money for now.

Instead, move forward thinking about the value you're delivering to people with your work. In the fast world that we live in, you need to be the best at what you do, and you need to always deliver on your promise.

THE NAME GAME

If you're creating a personal brand as an individual this part is already a given. If you're trying to build an independent brand with another purpose, then you are in for name shopping.

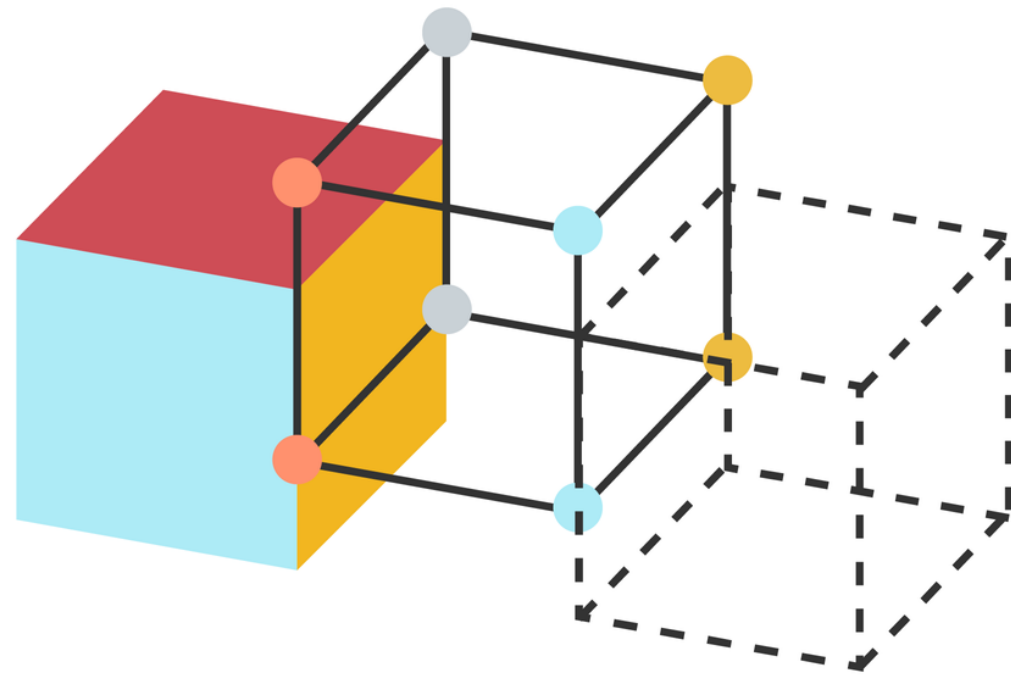
If you do not have a name for your project yet, don't worry and don't let that stop you from doing other meaningful work towards your goals. Remember that overthinking stops you from taking further action.

Something that can help you come up with a name is creating a list of keywords connected to your idea. Create a list of 50 words that represent your brand and terms related to the topic.

This list can help you when you're choosing your name. You can mix and match, or you can modify. Choose your name based on your keyword list, or come up with an unique name for your brand.



CREATE A LIST OF KEYWORDS. NAME YOUR BIG IDEA.



KEY BRAND ELEMENTS

A couple of years ago, when I was taking a marketing class we had the assignment to analyze a brand of our choice. With 5 people per group, each one of us had to work on a different aspect of the brand.

Together, we had to create a 50-page report on the brand that we pick. As soon as my group was formed, I was quick to suggest which brand we should choose, I didn't even have to think about it. And everyone immediately accepted my suggestion.

We decided to write about Uber.

In my head, this was an ideal brand candidate. A cool and simple black and white logo. A short and memorable name. It offered an innovative service, and best of all, it was slowly taking over the market. It just seemed like the perfect package to pick apart and analyze.

There are several elements that form a brand, and they all fit together like a puzzle. I like to divide them into three parts, visual elements, story elements, and value elements.

BRAND PURPOSE

The purpose of your brand ties together the value you provide with a stronger meaning behind it. It will help drive your brand behind the scenes, but it will also let people know what you stand for. If your brand is a shiny new car, then your purpose is the engine inside. It constantly drives your brands forward.

Having a purpose means two things. You need to have a mission and a vision for your brand. This is often represented by two public statements that better describe any business.

The mission part of your brand outlines your story, and who you are. Think of it as a description of what you do, and what your brand stands for.

The vision part defines your aim for the future. It is everything that you're working towards and all the goals you're trying to achieve. Having a strong vision lets people know what you're going to do, but it also sets goals for you as a reminder of your big dream. It will remind you of what you're working for, and it will keep motivating you to accomplish what you set out to do when you started your business.

Think of them as a map of where your brand stands, and where it's headed for in the future.



WRITE A MISSION AND A VISION STATEMENT.

VISUAL BRAND ELEMENTS

The visual part of the brand identity is usually the first thing that people see. When something grabs our attention, we stop and take a closer look. They say that you shouldn't judge a movie by its Netflix thumbnail, but we always have an initial impression when we see something for the first time.

The visual identity is a combination of visual elements used to express the purpose, mission, and value of a brand to its consumers. That usually includes brand colors, a logo, fonts, visual language, and content display.

Since it is the first thing that people get in contact with, here are a few things that a well-designed visual identity should successfully get across to potential consumers:

- Visually communicates the brand purpose and values
- Makes the brand stand out with a unique style
- Makes the brand easily recognizable
- It's well set-up and pleasing to the eye
- It's consistent across all products and channels

The most successful brands offer high-quality products and services to begin with, and the visuals and packaging are an additional feature that increases the value even more.

BRAND COLORS

Let's start by talking about the colors of your brand because they can easily set the mood right from the start. When we see a color, our brain automatically attaches a specific meaning or emotion to it.

For example, you are probably familiar with the use of green color to confirm, or red color to cancel an action in most user interfaces.

Red can also be used to deliver a warning or a mistake, so when you see it, your brain goes in alert mode, signaling you to be cautious. Text with green color usually delivers good news.

In another setting, the colors red and blue used together can often indicate hot vs. cold. Showering at a friend's place is already complicated enough, can you imagine no color indicators on the shower?

Different combinations of colors come together to deliver a more complex and aesthetically pleasing presentation of the brand.

Start working on your visual identity by choosing the right colors and harmonies to represent your brand and the feeling that you want to inspire in people that will be using your products or services.

You can use the chart of color use across different markets on the next page to get some colorful inspiration.



CHOOSE BRAND COLORS.

THE LOGO

Moving on to the logo of your brand, I often see it as an equivalent to a profile picture. A good logo should be representative of the brand and always recognizable by the consumer.

It is important to have a logo that fits in the modern world and the industry that the brand is in, as it is a vital asset in brand perception by consumers.

Depending on the type of brand, there are different logo styles, that might work for different purposes. Logo styles include Word-mark logos, Letter-mark logos, Abstract logos, Pictorial logos, Mascot Logos, Emblem logos, and any other combination between those.

When you're building a brand, make sure that you pick the right logotype for your project.

McDonald's does it with fries, Starbucks does it with mermaids, and Nike does it with a swoosh. Logos are a way for brands to mark their territory, to tag their content, and their products. Your logo should:

- Capture the brand name and message
- Use colors that represent the desired emotion
- Think about placement across different materials
- Keep it clean and simple
- Represent your brand accurately

Many of us aren't designers, so If you don't have the skills to create your own logo, you can maybe sketch out a few ideas and find someone to design it for you, or you can pay someone to do so on the internet. Websites like Fiverr are often used to outsource design work.



A good way to come up with a logo idea is to think about the keywords that best represent the brand, together with the feeling you want to inspire in people.

Go back to your list of 50 keywords connected to the brand, sketch out a few ideas based on them, see what seems to work the best, and finally work on designing the final version of your logo based on that.



SKETCH LOGO IDEAS.

VISUAL LANGUAGE

Digital content has evolved to make it easier for the consumer to understand information by representing as much of it as possible, with the help of visual elements instead of plain text.

There are many ways that a brand can visually express its identity, purpose, and intent. The visual elements can include typography, icons, data presentation, photos, videos, motion graphics, and so on.

FONTS AND TYPOGRAPHY

Something that might not be obvious right away is using typography and fonts to express brand identity. There are tons of different fonts out there, and to spice up the boring text for your brand copy is a sure way to improve the visual quality.

Some brands, like Facebook, do not have a logo at all, and instead, they rely highly on typography to express their visual identity. Another famous example is the Coca Cola typography, which can be immediately recognized by people across the world.

CONTENT ARCHITECTURE

Our brains are trained to process, categorize, and understand a lot of visual information. The way that visuals and text elements are displayed, can have a significant impact on the consumers' decision of whether they pay attention.

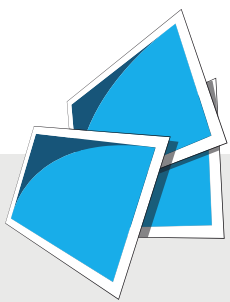
Different sizes, weight, and colors can guide the eye of the consumer to the most important places first. Use special fonts to give accent to the different areas and categories of information in your text for better navigation.

BRAND STYLE

Putting it all together, the logo, the colors, and all other visual elements should come together and form a style that is unique to your brand. Of course, that can mean a lot of different things.

There are brands that draw inspiration from others, or brands that must look a certain way in order to fit in with the industry, but adding a personal touch can set your brand apart.

Find a way to capture the personality of your brand and transfer it into the content and products that you produce. Create a mood board with pictures that represent the feeling that you want to give to people. Use the mood board as a style guide for your brand.



CREATE A STYLE MOODBOARD.

For now, we've got it all set up for the brand identity part, and we can move on to part two. You can always come back and edit something if you think it can use improvement, or if you want to add more details.

TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER:

In entrepreneurship class, we had to come up with a new product and prepare a business plan. To describe our ideas about the new products, we used something called "The Elevator Pitch".

Let's assume you're riding the elevator with an important person who is a possible investor. All you have is 90 seconds before the door opens and they walk away. How do you present your project to them?

What would you say to them in order to present your product and manage to capture their interest? Go!



SUMMARIZE YOUR VISION.

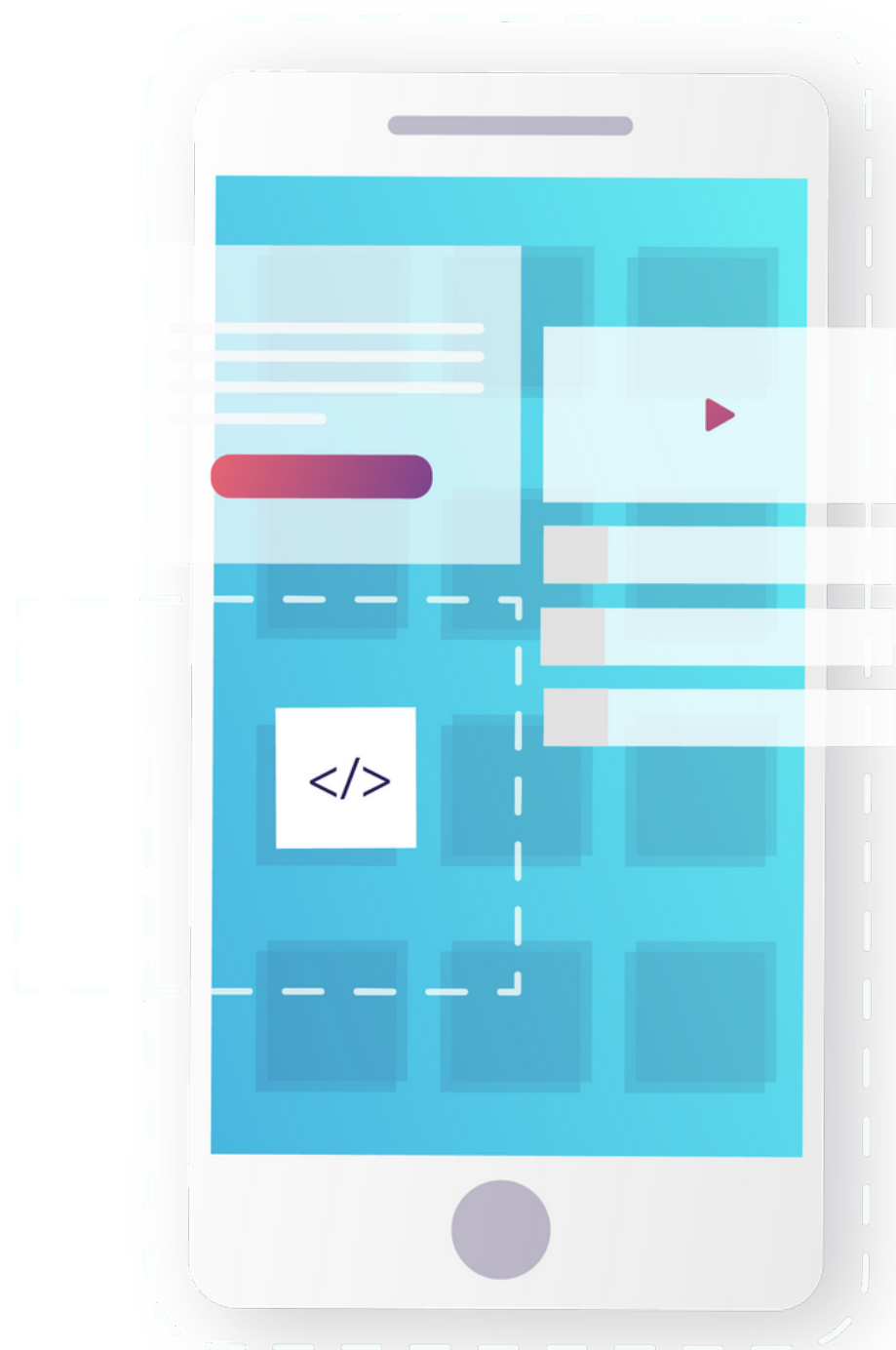
GETTING YOUR BRAND ONLINE

Once you're set on a name for your brand, you need to get your content online by setting up social media pages and a website.



NAMECHEAP
AFFILIATE PARTNER

Namecheap is the domain and hosting provider for our website. It is an affordable and easy to use service that will help you get your business online. I recommend you check it out if you don't have a hosting package already.



Hosting for Just \$2.88/month

Free WHOIS protection for your private information

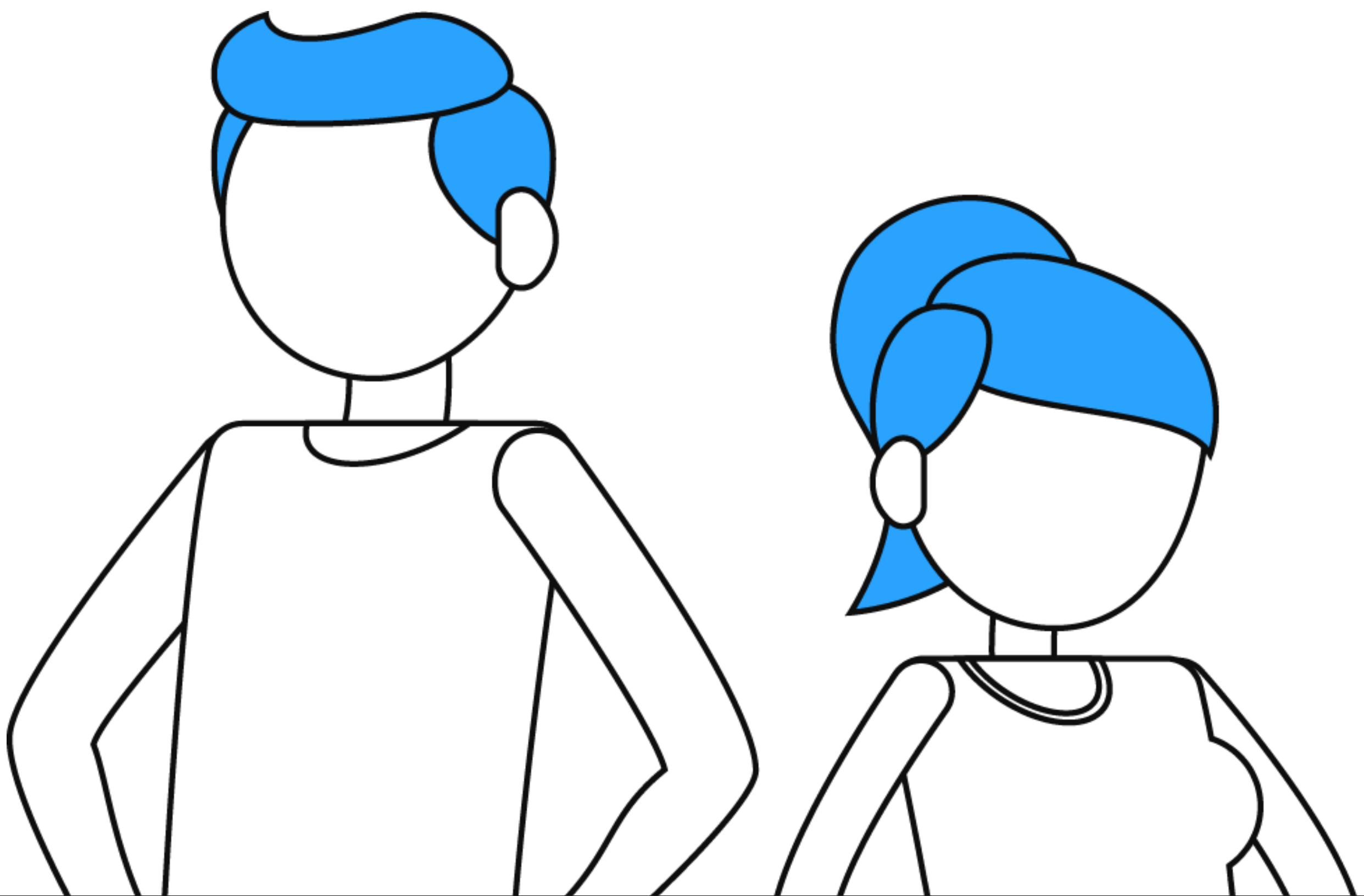
Free SSL certificate green lock

Live Chat Support 24/7

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)

PART 2

TARGET CONSUMERS





TARGET CONSUMER PROFILES

At the beginning of my digital marketing journey, I thought that exposing my social media pages to as many people as possible will bring more followers to my brand. So, I was investing my money in placing paid ads in front of a general audience.

This strategy turned out to be completely wrong. I mean sure, there was some engagement, but I was definitely not spending my ad budget wisely.

When it comes to increasing your audience, it's not always about the number of people that see your ad, or even the amount of people that follow you. Instead, the focus should be on getting your brand, message, product or service in front of the right people for your brand.

There is a simple way to get inside the mind of a potential customer. We do that by creating target audience profiles to describe our potential consumers, and we try to design them as close as possible to a perfect match.

Having hundreds of devoted followers that will engage with your content or customers that love your brand is much better than having thousands of people that don't contribute much.

There is usually more than one type of customer you're targeting so your brand might need a few audience profiles. How do you start making them?

STEP 1: OUTLINE BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

The first step in creating a profile of a customer is to outline all the characteristics that are relevant to the target audience. For the scope of this step, I created Steve.

Let's say that you run a web development agency in Boston, and your main goal is to help individuals and small new businesses build their first website.

Your target customer Steve is a 29-year-old freelance writer from Boston. He has already graduated from university and lives in Boston. He finds his freelance jobs online, using third-party websites. His income is around \$1800/month.

Steve would benefit from a website where he can market his personal brand and offer his freelance services independently, and this is where your agency comes in.



STEVE
FREELANCE WRITER

PROFILE

AGE: 25-30

GENDER: SKEWS MALE

EDUCATION: BACHELOR

INCOME: 1800\$ / MONTH

LOCATION: BOSTON

RELATIONSHIP: SINGLE

Create a profile with demographics that fit a large portion of your target audience. Narrow down their age, location, income, education, job title, gender, or anything else that is useful for your brand to know.

Depending on the type of market that you're going to serve, you most likely need more than one customer persona for your brand.

STEP 2: ADD SOME PERSONALITY

In this next step, we will go beyond the typical demographic characteristics of a customer and think about their lifestyle and personality. Why?

When you have a clear picture of how they spend their time and attention during the day, it will become easier to find a place for your brand in their lives. You need to fit into their routine and help them by making the problems that they face daily easier to solve.

How does the lifestyle of target customers look?

Walk a mile in their shoes. Do they work from home, an office, another type of building? Do they have kids, a partner, are they single? Go into as much detail as you can think of here.

All of that is important because when you know the regular things that the target does, it is easier to see the problems that they might face.

What problems does a target customer face?

We use products, services, and social interaction to somehow improve our standing in the world. Therefore, we consume the things that we believe will do the best job in doing so.

Steve is probably not very happy with the commission cut from the third-party website, and having a personal website that you offer to build will help that.

Find problems, big and small, that your target audience is facing, and you can help solve for them.

How does the lifestyle of target customers look?

Your brand is here to help customers improve and reach their lifestyle goals. Think about the things that they're trying to achieve and how your product or content fits into that.

In this example, their goals might include improving their freelance income, organizing their time in a smarter way, learning more about marketing, and improving social media presence.

Having an insight into their goals will help you speak to them when you're promoting your services or creating content for them.

How do brand goals align with the customer goals?

Think about the solution to a problem or the result that you're trying to give to your customer. That does not mean the sale that you're trying to reach or the action that you're trying to get from people.

If you're offering web design services, the goal of your brand should be to help people build amazing websites that align with the customer goal of getting a high-quality personal website. Those are your ideal customers.

However, not every single person, will decide to purchase the web design service, some may be in it just for your social media tips, others may want to purchase a video course from you and so on.

GOALS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• IMPROVE INCOME• LEARN ABOUT MARKETING• INCREASE SOCIAL FOLLOWING• ORGANIZE WORK HOURS• OTHER

PROBLEMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HIGH COMMISSION CUTS• NEEDS MARKETING HELP• NEEDS TO IMPROVE SOCIAL• NEEDS A WEBSITE• OTHER

STEP 3: BRING SOLUTIONS TO THEIR PROBLEMS

You can provide solutions to your target consumers on multiple levels of value. For example, a web agency can offer at least three levels:

Level 1: This is usually the free value level. In the digital world that can be something along the lines of blog posts, tutorials, videos, or any other content. In the physical world, it would be a sample, first session free, a consultation, and so on.

Level 2: The next step on the value scale is something that the customer can use by themselves, like a course on building a website, a book about marketing, or a workshop.

Level 3: This is the highest level of the value scale, and for the agency, it would include website design with collaboration, marketing consulting, or any other large problem-solving service that they offer.

OUR SOLUTIONS

LEVEL 1:

- Create articles, videos and e-books about web development

LEVEL 2:

- Create paid courses and workshops about web design and marketing

LEVEL 3:

- Different tiers of web solutions and marketing assistance

HOW CAN YOU SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF YOUR CONSUMERS?

ANTICIPATING CONSUMER INTENT

Think about the various moments that people go through when they choose the products they use, who they follow, or where they get their haircut.

Let's say that Steve has experience with technology and believes that he can create a website by himself.

Day 1: He goes on a search engine deep dive, to find the need for products and skills he needs for building a website.

Day 2: He explores all the solutions and products that he discovered. He narrows it down to three choices.

Day 3: He moves toward a final choice even more by comparing features, prices, and by analyzing the overall benefits of each solution.

Depending on the importance of the purchase, people can spend multiple days going back and doing research on their initial problem, need, or desire.

After the purchase, he will interact with the product, receive its value, and form perception for the brand. Ultimately forming a relationship with the brand as time goes by.

All these moments are opportunities for your brand to fill in the blank by making sure that you provide the right content, product or solution across the stages of their journey. Think about these moments, write them down and use them as a cheat-sheet when you're creating digital content for your brand later on.



CREATE DETAILED CONSUMER PROFILES.

PART 3

THE BUSINESS MODEL





MONETIZE

So far, you've worked on establishing who you are, and what your brand represents. Now, we should move on to finding your place in the digital world.

If your goal is to monetize your work, I want you to think about the business model that your brand belongs to. There are now many ways you can earn money or monetize your work online.

I will categorize monetization in three groups: Content-Based, E-commerce, and Lead Generation.

Many digital brands can move into more than one direction, and you can always mix and combine different business models. However, I suggest you focus on just one model at the start and possibly expand in the future.

CONTENT BASED MONETIZATION

Displaying ads on your website is the most popular way to monetize your work online. That works best if you have a content-based website like a blog, a news site or a niche site. People visit for the information and value you provide, and they are presented with ads of third-party content.

Advertisements can be combined with any other business model.

If you choose to display ads on your website, be careful not to overflow your content with a lot of ads. This can be a big turn off for visitors, especially the new ones.

The ads you display on your website should be relevant to your niche. A website that reviews the newest gadgets, for example, needs to show technology related advertisements.

The most popular service for content monetization is Google AdSense. You will automatically get the right advertisers for your niche and earn money, by displaying relevant ads. There are some conditions to be eligible for their program, but a legit brand should not have any problems fulfilling them.

Monetizing video content is also very popular, and still on the rise. With Youtube being one of the most popular social platforms in the world, the number of people that make videos is growing. This is due to the fact that you can create a channel on any topic, niche or interest.

E-COMMERCE

Digital Products

The benefit of selling digital products is that once you create a finished product, you do not have a lot of responsibilities, such as continuous production, shipping, etc. A digital product can be a course, an app, an e-book and so on.

You can sell your digital product on your own website, or you can find a website that provides that service for you. Amazon is good for selling e-books as a form of self-publishing. Google Play allows you to sell phone applications if you're a developer. Skillshare lets you create a course if you're an expert in your field.

Digital Services

Selling digital services can include anything from digital design, virtual assisting, social media management and more. You can create your own website, where you offer your services. Or, another option is finding work through websites like Upwork, Fiverr, and other websites.

Physical Products

Another e-commerce option on this list is creating a physical product. You don't have to own an actual store space, to sell physical products online. You can use drop shipping services or warehouse the products at a private location.

However, in many cases, that can require a team of people, rather than just you as an individual. The cost of selling physical products is higher, so make sure you go in prepared if you choose to do so. Shopify is the most popular choice for an e-commerce solution.

REVENUE SHARING

Affiliate Marketing, Influence Marketing & Lead Generation

Influencers have been taking over the internet game, in the past few years. Promoting products and referring their followers to brands has proven to be profitable in many cases. That is a form of affiliate marketing. Websites that refer people to services are doing the same thing.

When you reach a certain following, you can start suggesting products and services to people. When they buy or use the product you recommend, you get a % of the profit you generated for the affiliate company.



MARKET REASERCH

Each market works on the basis of supply and demand. For example, if you're creating an e-book or a course about mathematics that you plan to sell, then you need to spend some time researching the market before you step in.

You can do that by using the power of search engine by observing and researching relevant topics. To build on the mathematics example, before you start your research set out a few goals.

- How many people are currently offering simmilar courses online?
- What do most of the existing mathematics courses teach?
- What are the average prices of courses?
- Are there enough people out there that are looking for online help?

Once you have your questions ready, start searching for your answers. Look through niche websites, forum discussions, question boards, and even ad postings. You can write down notes and learnings that will help you form your brand offer.



EXPLORE THE MARKET.



MARKET POSITION

The type of market that you're entering will most likely be a competitive one. That means, there are many people and brands, offering the same thing you are.

That is where that market research comes in handy. Think about the information you collected, and how it serves your brand.

- Does your brand stand out from the competition?
- Is there something people are looking for, but nobody offers?
- How can you be different than everybody else?
- What do you bring to the table that your competition doesn't?

Here, I go back to the value point I mentioned earlier. A brand that provides value to its audience will have an advantage right away.

There are millions of pieces of content uploaded to the internet each minute. That means that your brand needs to stand out in some way in order to get noticed.



EXPLORE THE COMPETITION.



RESOURCES

The costs of the different business models can vary a lot depending on your goals, the tools you use and the possible investment. If your brand is content creation based, you won't need a high initial investment. If you've chosen to sell physical products online, the resources you need will be significantly larger of course, and so on.

There are three resource categories that every digital brand has, but it is not necessarily always limited to just those.

1. Domain, Hosting and other website tools – The first category are the fixed costs regarding your web presence. The domain is the .com address of your brand, which you need to purchase, hosting services will keep your website online, and any other website tools that you choose to use might contribute to the web cost.

2. Services – Are you hiring people that will help you run your brand? Things like website development, logo design, copyrighting and so on can all be outsourced. Other services like mentors, accountants, or warehousing, might also apply to your type of business.

3. Promotion and Other Investments - That is not a necessary thing at first, but most online brands use paid promotion as a form of getting traffic or increasing their audience. Other investments might include licensing content from others, paid software, and so on.



PREPARE A BUDGET PLAN.

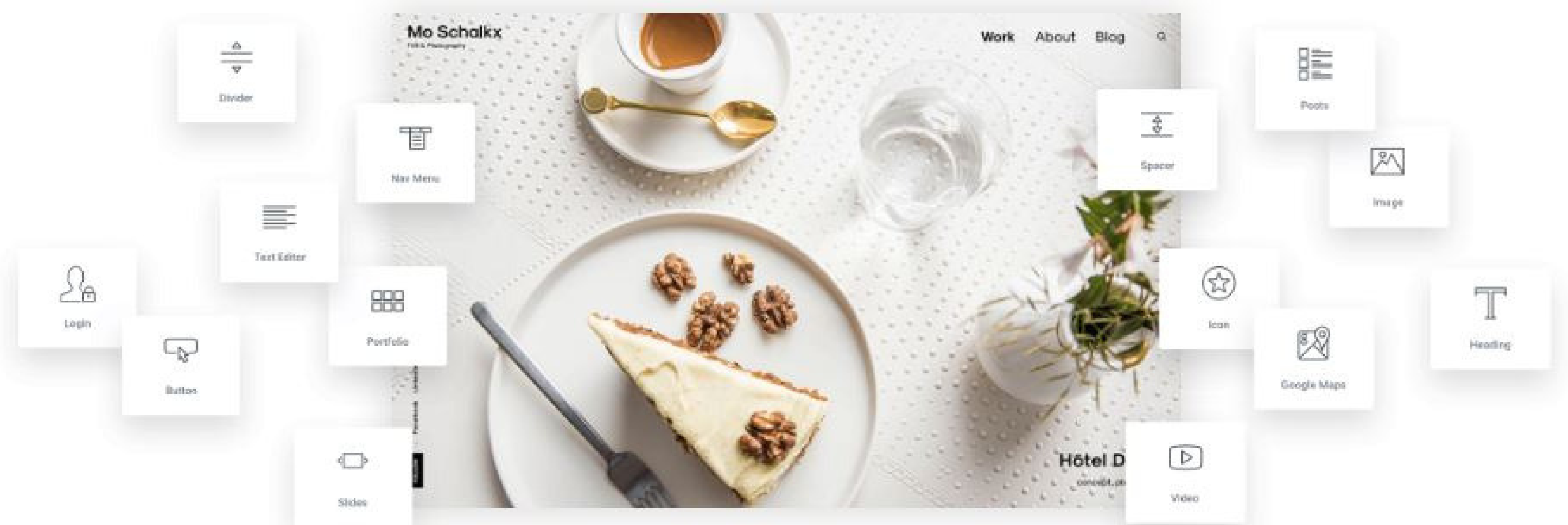
YOUR BRAND WEBISTE

No matter what kind of business you're running the website of your brand always needs to look amazing. If Wordpress is your platform of choice you can do that by installing helpful plug-ins.



ELEMENTOR
AFFILIATE PARTNER

Elementor is a free tool that lets you set up and edit every part of your webiste. It is what we use to keep our webiste looking fresh.

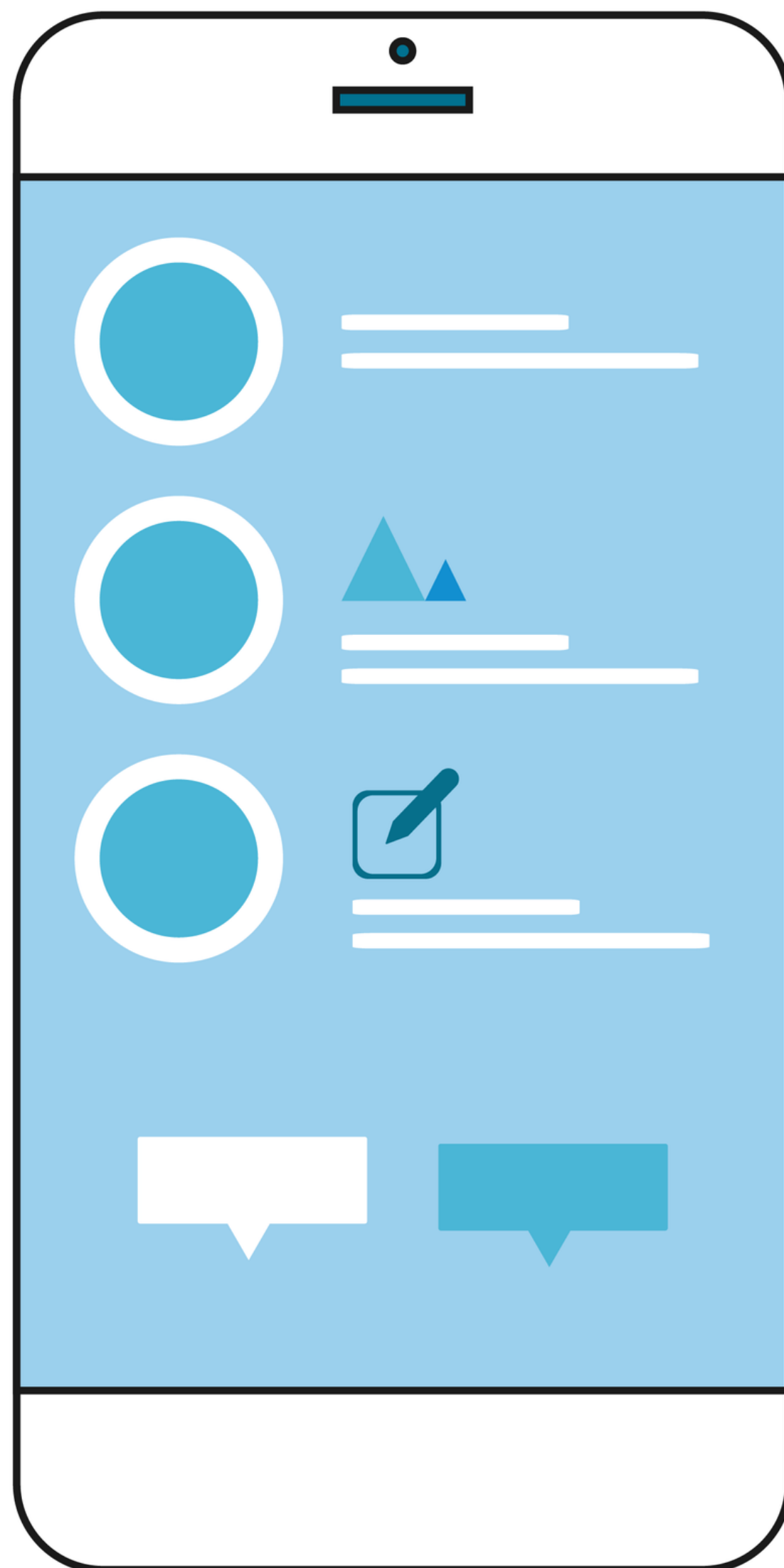


Elementor was built for you. Designers, developers, marketers, and entrepreneurs. Create amazing landing pages, design a blog, customize your online store – everything is within reach!

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)

PART 4

DIGITAL CONTENT





CONTENT IS KING

With the broad use of technology and the increase of information consumption, we are all familiar with the term content. You can listen to it on your way to work, it is on TV while you're chilling at home, your friends send it to you, and you're reading it right now.

It seems like everyone needs to produce content these days, and in a way, it has become the norm in the digital world for brands, professionals, and even regular people.

Our minds have become trained to notice when the content quality is good, and when certain things are not good, they don't make sense, or they are not executed well.

Exceptional content is always supported by a well thought out strategy. The content strategy of a brand is the strategic planning of content management and distribution, as part of the overall branding strategy.

A content marketing strategy makes it easy for a business to stay organized, and to deliver their brand message by using the right marketing channels. It sets the direction in which the brand will move, in order to improve the long-term positioning and credibility of the brand.

The strategy is used as a road-map in a way, not only for the brand but for the consumer journey as well. A good content strategy should outline the goals of your content and the desired goals for the consumer.

SETTING BRAND CONTENT GOALS

Goal setting is essential because it helps brands to stay consistent with the content they produce, track their performance and to understand their audience better. It will help you keep your eyes on the target, to stay organized and motivated with the fast pace of creating content for several channels and platforms.

There are five areas to consider when building a system of goals about the content that you or your brand produces.

STEP 1: SPECIFIC GOALS

Let's start by thinking of the desired result, and then work our way back to the specific actions that you need to perform to reach the content goal. To improve the chances of success, for the goals you set out for your brand, it's important to think in terms of specific results, that are realistic and achievable.

For a new brand, that might look something like this:

- Reach an Instagram following of 1,000 in the first two months
-
- Produce 4 videos per month
-

Don't be vague with the set-up, create specific goals that will be easy to track and measure as time goes by.

GOAL
Increase organic traffic to website by 20 %

STEP 2: CONSUMER STAGES

Go back to the consumer profiles you created in the previous part. Diving deeper into the context of consumer interaction with content your brand can present different pieces of content that are parallel to that stage. There are at least three primary stages to consider:

Exploration: This stage is when the potential consumer is trying to identify a solution for a problem they have, or an opportunity to find content that will somehow fit into their lifestyle. They most likely don't recognize your brand yet, and they are not familiar with the content, the products or services that your brand has to offer.

That means the content presented to them should not push a sale or ask for too much input from them. You're only trying to introduce yourself to them and increase brand awareness.

Evaluation: In this stage, the consumer is familiar with your brand already, or has found you to be interesting, relevant or helpful. They are ready for further engagement with your content. That means that the content presented to them can ask for some input from their side, such as an e-mail contact, a share and so on.

Engagement: These are the people that already gave you their contact, they are in your comments often, they send you private messages and so on. The content you present to them needs to feel even more personal, and you can move them further toward a purchase or other desired engagement.

GOAL	TARGET
Increase organic traffic to website by 20 %	Audience Profile : 1 Stage: Exploring topic via search engines to identify problem.

STEP 3: TRACKING PERFORMANCE

The next step is to attach a performance Indicator to each specific objective. As mentioned above, the goals you set for your strategy need to be measurable so you can track the performance and state of your goals across time.

The desired result is a performance indicator that will let you know how far you've come to accomplishing the goal. For example, if your goal is to create a paid campaign that generates 150 e-mail leads, the KRI will be the number of contacts collected. You can additionally compare the result to the number of people who visited the landing page.

GOAL	PERFORMANCE
Increase organic traffic to website by 20 %	* Track organic sessions with Google Analytics * Track Organic sessions bounce rate

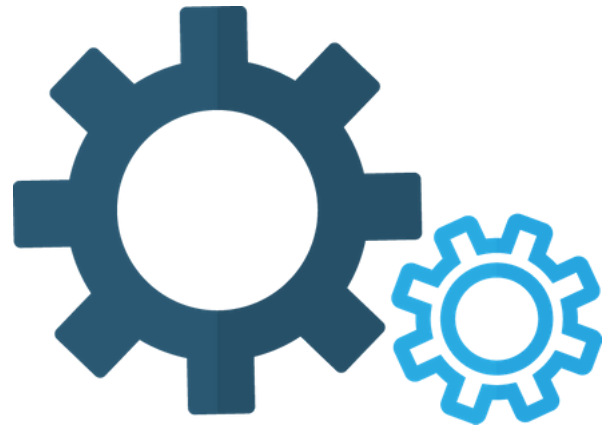
STEP 4: ACTION PLAN

Once you have clear goals and objectives for your content marketing, you can get it all down to the specific actions that will go into the process. Each goal or objective may include one or more actions that are tied to it.

Let's look at the example of increasing website traffic. The specific actions will look something like this:

- Create articles that are optimized for web search
- Increase the number of articles from 5 to 10 articles per month
- Create a paid campaign that will send social media to landing page

TIMELINE	ACTIONS
The month of May * Retain result moving forward for 2 months then scale	* Revise current content to improve SEO * Post 10 new optimized articles about the topic



CREATING CONTENT

Naturally the next step is producing the content you've set out to create and share with your audience. If you've done the other steps, you should already have the big picture of what it is you're trying to accomplish.

➤ OPTIMIZE CONTENT FOR WEB SEARCH

The talk about SEO won't stop any time soon. Brands are looking more and more into optimizing all their content, to make better use of the algorithms that search engines use.

Optimizing your content for search engines can bring you an organic boost in traffic. Make sure that your website or social profiles have smart use of keywords that relate to your content and your business itself.

➤ OPTIMIZE CONTENT FOR DEVICE TYPE

People access the web from different kinds of devices. That means that your website and social media should work on all device types, including desktop, mobile, and tablet.

Think about the platforms and channels that that you use and size your posts according to the standards. This may include creating different versions of the post for different platforms.

OPTIMIZE CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

While SEO can increase your website rank, the use of appropriate keywords and hashtags on social media can also work wonders on your reach.

Using the right hashtags can help you reach new audiences on social platforms like Twitter and Instagram. They are a big part of social media and people are looking through them and following them all the time. Use a combination of general term hashtags, and hashtags relating to your narrow niche topics.

CREATE SHAREABLE CONTENT

While optimizing content for search engines and explore pages is there to bring you new audiences, shareable content is here to spark engagement with both new and existing audience.

Algorithms tend to favor content that gets more shares and engagement than other similar posts.

Take advantage of popular trends, hashtags and happenings around your brand niche and take part in them. Celebrate the holidays with your audience, make a post about a new internet challenge or live tweet a major event.

Sometimes there will be a piece of content that will pick up more attention than usual or when you don't even expect it. That is a perfect learning opportunity for you to analyze the content that your audience loved, and to try and create more of it.

ADD A CALL TO ACTION

Your content can be remarkable, but sometimes the people who see it don't even think about sharing. That is where a call to action comes in. Let them know what you expect from them next, or what they can do with this content. Should they tag a friend? Comment their opinion?

Adding a call to action will boost your organic engagement. Invite people to engage with your content, and the chances that they do will massively increase.

STAY CONSISTENT WITH YOUR POSTS

Consistency is another important factor when it comes to growing your following. Stay on schedule with your goals and produce something new consistently.

That proves to people that get in contact with your content that they can expect new posts and updates regularly. This way, they are more likely to start following you. You can even let them know about your schedule on your social media descriptions or your about page.

Let everyone know what they should expect from your brand. Do not leave people guessing about these types of things, because they will walk away due to lack of information.

COLLABORATE WITH OTHERS

Collab with other people and brands can be extremely beneficial to both parties involved. You will borrow from each other's audiences, and you will help each other reach higher engagement.



CONTENT CALENDAR

A content calendar is a way of planning, organizing, and scheduling specific pieces of content that a brand will produce for its audience during a given period. It can include detailed information about the content format, time of posting, channels and so on.

A content calendar can help you stay organized and consistent with the content you post. It makes it easier for you as an individual or a team to keep track of everything that you need to create, as well as when and where it should go out.

Consistency is also essential when building a digital presence, and the calendar will help you plan and stick to a consistent schedule for posting.

1. Add action items from your content goals
2. Include paid promotion content
3. Mark important upcoming events and holidays
4. Consider channels and times to post content
5. Insert everything into a calendar sheet



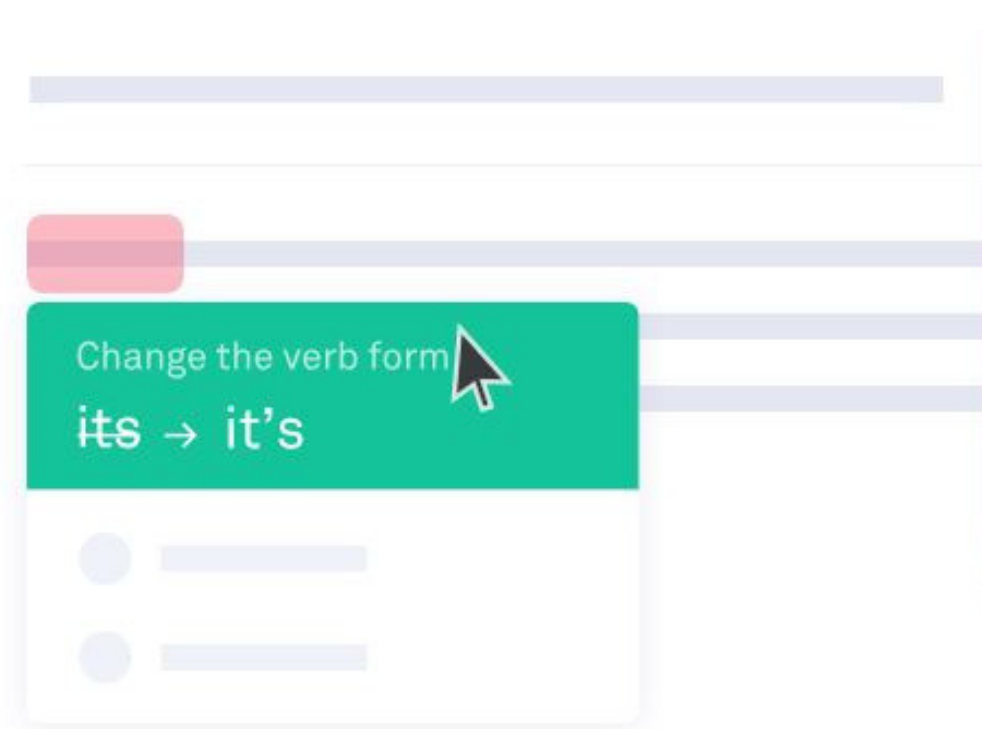
CREATE A CALENDAR BASED ON YOUR CONTENT STRATEGY.

There are millions of pieces of content uploaded in a single second, so how can you make sure that you stand out from the crowd?



GRAMMARLY

AFFILIATE PARTNER



Compose bold, clear, mistake-free content with Grammarly's AI-powered writing assistant.

This one is my personal favorite. This guide is created with the power of Grammarly and I absolutely love it!

You can get the free browser plug-in that will correct your writing anywhere across the web!

[VISIT WEBSITE](#)



Free Social Media Assistant

Grammar, Spelling and Style Correction

Free Browser Extension

Document Editor

PART 5

MARKETING STRATEGY





YOUR MARKETING STRATEGY

A marketing strategy is a game plan for always bringing in new people and growing your brand. By going through the previous steps, you've already started working on parts of your marketing strategy.

During the first step, you chose your brand colors and brand logo, and we talked about how you should tag all your content with them as a personal signature. That way, you're making sure that everyone who views the photo will see your name and learn a bit about you.

Creating customer profiles is also a part of the marketing strategy. You've segmented your audience and you can now present your brand according to their problems and needs.

When you're creating your content schedule, you're also working on your marketing strategy. And I want you to think outside of the box here. Let's say that next month you're releasing an important product for your brand.

If the product is a new design course, then the content you produce this month should go along with your course launch. You can post images with facts about the course topic, or blog posts that explain the reason design learning is a good investment, videos interviews with designers and other similar content.

By doing these things you're continuously working on the marketing strategy for your brand from the core. Additionally you can set-up and run paid campaigns.



MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

A Marketing campaign is an essential tool that can help you stay on track with your digital marketing strategy. Creating specific campaigns can help you push your brand forward and reach your marketing end-goals.

There are many reasons why a brand needs to run marketing campaigns, for example, to introduce new products, to keep a steady stream of new customers, to increase profit, and so on. A business can also run multiple campaigns at once, to support their marketing strategy and goals.

It is necessary for a brand to have a strategic approach that will help run and sustain a profitable business.

1. Set Campaign Objectives

The objectives are the desired outcomes of the campaign. Think about the results that you want to accomplish at the end of the campaign term.

That might look something like this:

- Raise brand awareness
- Get existing customers to purchase again
- Collect more e-mail leads
- Introduce a new product to our customer base
- Reach new customers on social media platforms

2. Choose campaign channels

Next, decide on the platforms that you will be using for the promotion. This may include your websites, e-mail newsletters, or any social media platform where your brand is present.

Each platform may also require different types of content, for example, Instagram Stories are a different format than regular Instagram Newsfeed posts. You need to plan the content fittingly for each platform, such as media dimensions, ad copy, and so on.

Usually, campaigns are run on multiple platforms simultaneously to maximize audience reach.

3. Choose target audience profile

In the next part, you should define the target audience for your marketing campaign. Who are you trying to speak to with this project?

Go back to your customer personas and use them to set your target audience on your advertising platform.

4. Brainstorm and rank ideas

Whether you're working by yourself, or as a team, you should schedule a brainstorming session where you can come up with creative ideas and choose how to present them to your audience.

Grab a piece of paper and write down everything that comes to mind when you think about the target audience, how to speak to them, and how to appeal to their interest. Next, create a list where you rank the top ideas and decide on the ones that you're going to explore further.

5. Make an inspiration board

After you have chosen your top ideas on how to approach the campaign, you can create an inspiration board that includes photos, text, or any other media that portray the emotion that you're trying to inspire in people.

Choose the main colors, the message that you're trying to send, and other visual and story elements.

6. Do some reaserch

One of the purposes of your campaign is to create and distribute valuable, relevant content to attract the attention of your target audience. That means that you should do some exploring about the current trends in your market.

Do some snooping on your competition and see what kind of campaigns they are running, since, you don't want to go in the same direction as them. In fact, you're trying to deliver more value than them.

You can also do some research about the target audience and find out more about the current trends and topics in the community. There are new digital trends that show up every day, and if you're right on time with the content you produce, it will have a positive impact on your campaign.

7. Decide on a camaign timeline

Each campaign requires a schedule that you and your team can follow. Make a plan of the touchpoints of your campaign and the expected dates that you will start and finish.

8. Budget Assessment

I can't talk about the cost of your campaign a lot in this guide, because the costs of a digital campaign can vary a lot. It depends on whether you're a team or an individual, the available budget, the length of your campaign, and more.

Here are the areas you should consider and make a budget for

- The cost of resources you need (ex. Cameras, Software, People...)
- The cost of design (Outsourcing or In-house)
- The cost of ad placement (Depends on platform and running time)

9. Define campaign messaging

An advertising copy is the main text or messaging used through the promotion. Go back to your target consumer profile when you're creating a text copy for your campaign and use that as a guide.

What is the best way to speak to that person? Get into the mind of the consumer by thinking about their lifestyle, their goals and the problems they face. With the text used in your copy, you should appeal to one of those areas in their lives.

The ad can be a photo, a video, text, or any other media type. The most important thing is that it speaks to the consumer on a personal level.

Campaigns usually require more than one piece of content mixed together strategically.

10. Create Landing Pages

A landing page is a standalone page on your website, where you direct incoming traffic and present an offer.

A landing page can be used to present a product, a service, or any other offer. It can also be used to collect information like an e-mail, a sign-up, and so on.

Depending on your campaign goals, you need to optimize your landing page, website home, or social media profile, for customer conversion.

For example, if you're trying to increase social media followers, your profile should tell new visitors what your page is about, what to expect, and so on.

11. Monitor campaign

Once you have the campaign up and running, you can move on to tracking the campaign performance and ROI, and then make changes if you need to.

Being able to track the performance and adjust the campaign specific throughout, are some of the benefits of digital marketing.

12. Create a final report

The final step happens after the campaign is over, and it is about analyzing the results, creating notes about key learnings in order to make decision making in future campaigns easier and to improve the overall marketing strategy of your brand.

Not ready to stop learning?

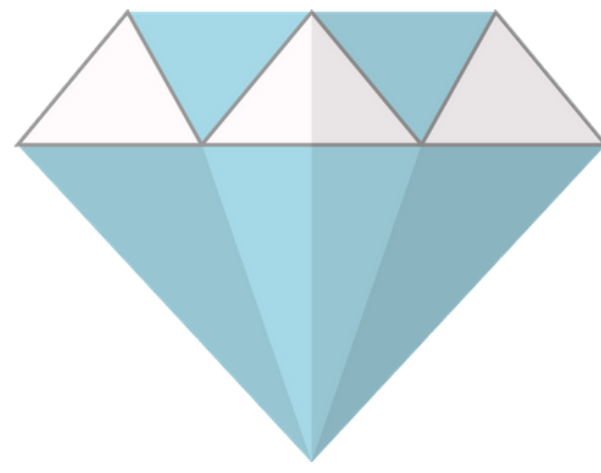
The Digital Brand Blueprint is a community for digital marketers and content creators.

It's a space where you can learn or share your thoughts on marketing, branding, social media, content creation, or topics related to digital media.

We believe in developing amazing brands with a purpose, whether you're working by yourself or as part of a team.

DISCOVER MORE ON SOCIAL MEDIA!





OTHER TOOLS

Here is a list of helpful tools that I use to help me with my digital work. Work smarter and take advantage of the technologies that are available for you today! There is no excuse when it comes to learning new things, improving and growing both as an individual, and as a brand.

Google Trends

Discover trending topics across the world with the help of Google data and insights. Find topics that people are searching for, related searches and use of keywords across time periods.

Google Trends also lets you compare the statistics about multiple keywords so you can get a better idea of how others are using them across the web.

Evernote

Evernote is a great note-taking software that you can use on your device, or directly from your web browser. It will help you create notes and separate them into notebooks for different projects.

Ready to use templates are there to help you keep track of specific business-related activities. And tags will help you locate and sort through notes efficiently.

Evernote also has a web-clipper extension that can make it easy to snip content, save, or bookmark content across the web.

Later

Later is an official Instagram Partner software that can be used to schedule Instagram posts and to find content based on hashtags that you can re-post. It also gives you the ability to connect Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest profiles.

A free plan provides you with 30 posts per month per profile, and one social profile per platform and paid plans vary.

Pexels Photos

Find photos about any topic with the help of this large gallery website. Pexels offers stock-like images that you can use for your brand. They sort images by most popular or recently added, or you can do a manual search.

There is always fresh content available on the website, and you can also search for photos by color, by excluding keywords and more.

Google Search Console

The search console tool is another great addition to your content analysis. It will tell you how well your content is ranking on the search engine index, what pages people have visited based on search and what queries are people finding you through.

You can also analyze the content on single pages to find out more about the health of your pages and their availability.

Yoast SEO

This tool will help you keep your pages optimized for search engines by guiding you through all the necessary steps to create pages and posts that will rank higher.

It is a free WordPress plugin that integrates with your website.

Shopify

Shopify (Affiliate Partner) is currently the most popular platform for e-commerce where you can sell anything. The reason they are so popular is that you don't need any other tools for your shop.

You can get a domain through them, or use a domain you already own. They host your website so you will not have any additional monthly cost for hosting.

They also offer easily customizable themes with zero coding and much more features. I've used Shopify in the past for a drop-shipping store.

CJ Affiliate

CJ Affiliate is a website that lets you partner up with brands and helps you get affiliate offers. This is a platform free to use, where you can find affiliate deals and earn commissions when you refer your audience to publishers.

Canva

This photo editing software is something a lot of social media pages can't live without, including all of ours. It lets you create all types of posts with pre-made dimensions and editable templates.

There are tons of editing options available on the platform, and they are all free to use. Make your content look amazing.

Visme

Another photo editing software that can help you create photos for your brand, but a little bit different because Visme is a pro at helping you create business presentations and infographics. * Affiliate link

Google AdSense

Google AdSense is a program that allows publishers in the Google Network to serve automatic text, image, video, or interactive media advertisements, that are targeted to site content and audience.

You can use this free program to monetize your website content, and it works particularly well for smaller niche websites. Google AdSense is also the program used to monetize YouTube channels by displaying relevant ads on your videos.

Convert Kit

Convert Kit is an e-mail software for creators. Your email list is your biggest asset. With ConvertKit, it's easy to customize and embed forms on your website to turn casual readers into subscribers.

Organizing your subscribers is much easier when you can tag them based on their interests, activity, and more. * Affiliate Link

APPENDIX: WORDS & TERMS

AFFILIATE MARKETING - performance-based marketing in which a business rewards one or more affiliates for each visitor or customer brought by the affiliate's own marketing efforts.

ALGORITHM - a process or set of rules to be followed in calculations or other operations and data processing.

ANALYTICS - information resulting from the systematic analysis of data or statistics.

BRAND IDENTITY - the way a business presents itself to the audience and how it wants to be perceived by them.

COMPETITIVE MARKET - a market where more people or business offer the same or similar products.

CONVERSION - the proportion of people viewing an advertisement that results in them buying the product, clicking on a link, etc.

CONVERSION RATE - the conversion rate is the number of conversions divided by the total number of visitors, expressed in %.

COPYWRITING - the act of writing text for the purpose of advertising or other forms of marketing.

DEMOGRAPHICS - characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, education, profession, occupation, income level, and marital status.

DIGITAL IDENTITY - information on an entity used by computer systems to represent a person, organization, application, or device.

DOMAIN - a distinct subset of the Internet with addresses sharing a common suffix or under the control of a particular organization or individual.

E-COMMERCE - the activity of buying or selling of products on online services or over the Internet.

ENGAGEMENT - the clicks, likes, shares, comments or any other type of user activity on online content.

FREELANCING - a person who is self-employed and is not necessarily committed to a particular employer long-term.

HOSTING - storing (a website or other data) on a server so that it can be accessed over the Internet 24/7.

INFLUENCER - individuals who have influence over potential customers, via a large social following.

KEYWORDS - ideas and topics that define what your content is about.

LANDING PAGE - a single web page that appears in response to clicking on a search engine optimized search result or an online advertisement.

LEAD GENERATION - the action or process of identifying and cultivating potential customers for a business's products or services.

MAILING SERVICE - special use of email that allows for widespread distribution of information to many Internet users ("subscribers").

MARKETING CAMPAIGN - a series of advertisement messages that share a single idea and theme.

MONETIZATION - adapting assets to generate revenue, such as videos, blogs posts etc.

NICHE - products, services, or interests that appeal to a small, specialized section of the population.

SALES FUNNEL - the customer journey towards the purchase of a product or service.

SELF-PUBLISHING - publication of media by its author without the involvement of an established publisher.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO) - affecting the online visibility of a website or a web page in a web search engine's unpaid results.

SOCIAL PROOF - the scale of relevant feedback on digital content. A post with high engagement is usually more trustworthy.

TARGETING -methods to target the most receptive audiences with certain traits, based on the product or person the advertiser is promoting.

VIRTUAL ASSISTANT -generally self-employed person that provides professional administrative, technical, or creative (social) assistance to clients remotely.

WEBSITE TRAFFIC - the amount of data sent and received by visitors to a website.

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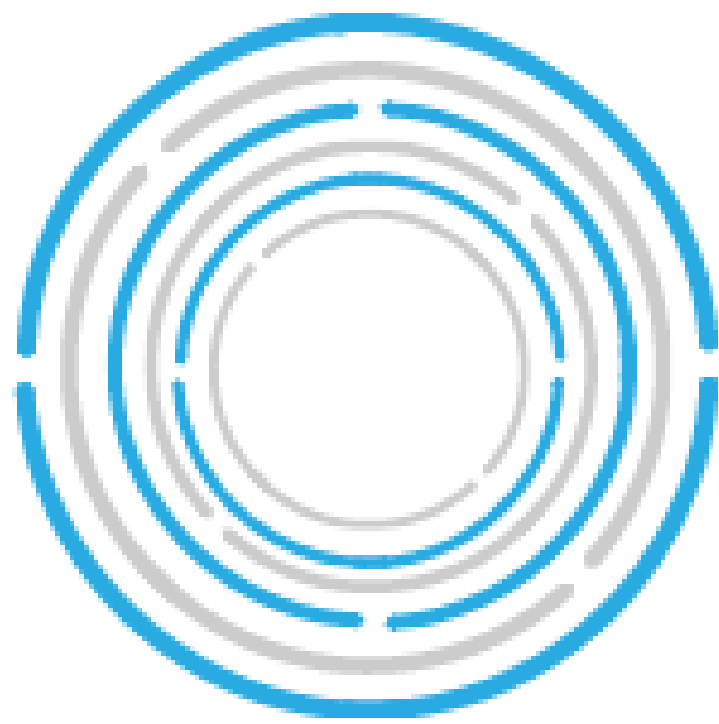
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