



**THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BRAND  
STORYTELLING**



## FACTS TELL, STORIES SELL

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### Why every business needs brand storytelling.

Humans love good stories because they are powerful. They help us share traditions, beliefs, and history. They tap into our emotions and can inspire, unite, and empower us so it only makes sense that brand storytelling can also be an effective marketing strategy for your business.

I'm Arielle DiVita. I own DiVita Creative Group. We're a small boutique creative agency based in Southern California that specializes in web development, graphic design, marketing, branding, content creation, training, and consulting. I have seen a lot of changes in my 30-year career. It's getting harder for businesses to stand out in the very crowded online marketplace. Companies of all sizes need to integrate storytelling into their communication strategies to make their brands more appealing and their marketing efforts more successful.

Studies show that people are more likely to remember stories rather than just facts and figures. Outdated marketing strategies that inundate customers with promotions and ads are not only ineffective in today's marketplace but they actually turn people off.

By giving customers a glimpse behind the curtain, your brand story can set you apart from the competition and help them get to know, like, and trust you. A well-crafted brand story should bring to life your company's history, mission, purpose, and values. Its goal is to create an emotional connection that resonates with your ideal customer, motivates them to buy, and encourages them to become loyal advocates of your brand.

## We want to help you tell your brand story

I created the ConnectHER Magazine and website to provide a unique opportunity for small businesses to reach a wider audience, strengthen their brands, and deliver quality content. I also believe in promoting and buying local whenever possible. Everyone is welcome in the magazine but we place an emphasis on businesses in Southern California.

Our "In The Spotlight" article offers an excellent opportunity for businesses to tell their brand story. Whether you decide to write your article or if you want us to, please review this guide for some essential tips on how to write a powerful brand story.



## "IN THE SPOTLIGHT"



Everyone has a story...

## TIPS FOR TELLING A BRAND STORY

### REVEAL THE CONFLICT - BE AUTHENTIC, SHARE YOUR STRUGGLES

Good stories are about overcoming hardship, so it's critical to emphasize your story's conflict. If you describe your struggle and how you overcame it, people will be able to relate to your journey. Some business owners are hesitant to reveal failures or missteps. People don't relate to perfection, so this is a mistake. They relate to struggles and adversity-overcoming journeys that result in victory. Authenticity is essential. People will relate to you and your brand if you are genuine.

### SHARE THE STATUS QUO AND YOUR RESOLUTION

The status quo (or conflict) is how things were or the initial nature of a particular situation. Your conflict disrupted the situation and compelled you to find a solution to the problem. The image of the protagonist battling the proverbial dragon to conquer all obstacles appeals to audiences and gives them an emotional payoff.

### SPOILER ALERT! YOU'RE NOT THE HERO OF YOUR BRAND STORY!

People will resonate with your story because it has meaning in their own lives. They are looking for ways that it applies to their circumstances. When telling your story and marketing your business, it is essential to remember that people are typically self-centered. They want to be (and should be) the hero of the story.



In a standard story structure, the hero is the person who goes on the journey. The hero faces challenges, overcomes them, and goes through a type of transformation. The hero of your brand story is your customer, and your role is to be a facilitator or guide. You and your business are there to support them. Whether it's writing a brand story or developing marketing strategies, it's imperative to remember it's about them, not you. Let your audience know you understand their needs and have solutions to their problems. In other words, show them how your businesses can help improve their lives.

### **SHARE YOUR "WHY"**

Today's consumers prefer purpose-driven businesses over those who just want to make money or capitalize on a trend. Your brand story should reveal your purpose.

Share why you started your business, and how it sets the foundation for your mission, vision, and core values. It can also reveal why you are different from the competition.

### **SHARE YOUR HISTORY**

Share the origin of your brand. Let the audience know where you and your business came from and share some of the events that brought you to the present day. Be authentic and explain how your personal experiences influence your company's goals and mission.

### **BE CONSISTENT**

Brand storytelling is one of the best ways to differentiate yourself from the competition. However, it's only one component of an overall content marketing strategy. Content marketing encompasses any content your business creates to attract and retain customers, and is vital for small business growth.

Reinforce your brand story throughout your content and be consistent on your website, blog, and social media channels. Your customers will likely become loyal brand advocates, and enthusiastically spread the word if they relate to your story.





# A MESSAGE FOR SOLOPRENEURS AND CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS

Solopreneurs and creatives find it challenging to write a brand story for two reasons. The first reason is that the marketing industry insists that a brand story should be about your customers, not you. The second reason is that many solopreneurs are reluctant to talk about themselves. All businesses can benefit from sharing their brand story. For solopreneurs and creative professionals, it's even more vital because YOU are your brand.

Your best brand asset is your own story. Consumers will emotionally connect with your values, mission, and journey. Your story is a source of inspiration because it shows people what is possible.

The marketing industry is not wrong. Your brand story should address the needs of your customers. It is essential to strike the correct balance between sharing your journey and demonstrating to your audience that you understand them. Share the parts of your story your customers can relate to, avoid irrelevant details, and show how your journey influences your mission and purpose.





## FREE ONLINE TOOLS TO HELP YOU WRITE YOUR STORY

- **The Hemingway Editor** evaluates a piece of writing for clarity and simplicity. It calculates readability and highlights adverbs, passive voice, and dull, complicated words.
- **Grammarly** is a proofreading tool that helps you spot grammatical errors, typos, and awkward sentences. If you download the web extension, it will correct anything written in a web browser, even your social media posts.
- **Quillbot** is a paraphrasing tool that can be quite helpful. It paraphrases text you enter (or copy) into it, in different ways according to whether you want a more formal or creative tone.
- **Power Thesaurus** is a great tool to help you when you need to find alternative words.
- **ShareThrough Headline Analyzer** helps you write better headlines for your articles. It gives you a rating score for the quality of your title and offers suggestions for improvement.
- **The Hoth Title Generator** is an excellent free tool for crafting a headline. You have to enter the relevant keywords followed by a desired outcome, common problem, your industry, and target audience.
- **WordCounter** is an online editing tool that counts words and characters. It can also improve your writing by detecting grammar mistakes and plagiarism.

# QUESTIONS TO ANSWER WHEN CRAFTING YOUR BRAND STORY

Here is a comprehensive list of questions you can use to write your brand story. Some questions may not apply to your circumstances. They are thought starters intended to help you write a compelling story. Keep the story simple yet engaging. It's not necessary to include every aspect of your journey. Share relevant facts and look for ways to connect emotionally with your audience.

## WHAT

- What do you do?
- What is the name of your business?

## WHY

- Why did you choose your business name? Does it have significant meaning?
- What inspired you to start your business?
  - Was there a critical moment in your life that motivated you to start your business?
  - Do you have a funny, emotional, or inspiring story that influenced your line of work?
- What problem did you set out to solve?
- Was there a situation you wanted to change?

## BACKGROUND

- What were you doing before you started your business?
- Why did you believe you would be successful? What values, characteristics, or strengths did you offer?
- Did you leverage existing skills/experience or make a complete career change?

## INSPIRATION

- What inspires your creativity/passion?
- What motivates you to keep going when things get tough?
- Are you inspired by anyone (professionally or personally)?

## CONNECTING WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

- What would your customers be surprised to know about you?
- Do you have any fun facts about yourself that your customers might be interested in knowing?
- Do you work with any charitable organizations or causes that you'd like to share with your audience?
- How do you balance your professional and personal life?

## YOUR CUSTOMERS

- Who is your ideal customer (your story's hero)?
- What are their needs, wants, or problems?
- How do you solve their problems, improve their lives, or benefit them in some way?
- What do you have in common with your customers?

## COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

- What do you do differently than your competitors?
- Is there an element of your story that differentiates you from the competition?

## CHALLENGES

- What were your biggest challenges and how did you overcome them?
- Any funny, emotional, or inspiring mistakes/lessons learned you'd like to share?
- How did overcoming your personal or professional challenges impact your vision/purpose?



# BEFORE AND AFTER EXAMPLE OF A BRAND STORY

Below is an example of a typical bio that we turned into a brand story article for our magazine.

BIO

Dr. Lori Ochoa is the founder and owner of Life by Design Inc., a company specializing in personal development coaching, mentorship, and training. She received her doctoral degree in Psychology with an emphasis in Behavior Analysis. Dr. Lori Ochoa has been a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) since 2008 specializing in maximizing human potential, personal development, behavior change and empowerment coaching. Dr. Lori Ochoa is a coach, speaker, and workshop leader in the area of personal development for individuals, companies and organizations.

Dr. Ochoa's coaching, training, and mentorship program is based on Contextual Behavioral Science. Acceptance and Commitment Coaching is an evidence-based process approach which aims to increase psychological and behavioral flexibility in all areas of life. Dr. Lori Ochoa gives her clients the tools to get unstuck and face life's challenges while also taking effective action doing what matters to them based on their chosen life values.

In addition to operating her Life by Design Personal Development company, she is also an Assistant Professor in the Behavior Analysis department at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Anaheim campus. She is also the co-founder of Bloom Behavioral Health, a company specializing in providing behavioral therapy to children with developmental disabilities in Orange County, CA where she currently serves as the Executive Director.

My Story & My Why - When my son was born in 2014, it was one of those moments in my life where I experienced extreme joy and pain at the same time. I was filled with so much love and joy meeting my baby boy and being a new mom. I was also filled with so much anxiety and pain as he was diagnosed profoundly deaf as a newborn.

This was the catalyst that changed the trajectory of life for me. I had been working as a professional with children with developmental disabilities for many years before I had my son as a behavioral clinician. I had the clinical training and expertise to support his development, but I didn't have the tools to help myself cope with my anxiety and painful emotions which impacted my overall wellbeing.

I turned to what I knew best, the science of psychology and behavior. I committed to learning, studying, and applying Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) strategies for myself. Over the years, I have experienced so many benefits from adopting these strategies in my own daily life that I became inspired to share these same strategies with others. We might be climbing different mountains, but we are all climbing a mountain and I want people to know that 1) They don't have to climb their mountain alone and 2) There are evidence-based tools that will help them to climb their mountain more effectively.

I am beyond thankful for my son and that pivotal life trajectory because it allowed me to turn my pain into purpose. A purpose of my own personal self-discovery, personal development, and now being of service to help others optimize their well-being and thrive in life.

# I TURNED MY PAIN INTO PURPOSE



By Dr. Lori Ochoa  
Founder, Life By Design, Inc.

I have a doctoral degree in Psychology with an emphasis in Behavior Analysis. I am a coach, speaker, professor, and leader in the area of personal development. I am blessed to have all of the psychological training and tools needed to help others and manage my personal life.

My son was born in 2014. I was thrilled to be a mom and filled with so much love and excitement at meeting my baby boy. However, I was also overwhelmed with anxiety, fear, and pain because he was diagnosed as profoundly deaf as a newborn.

I thought I had all of the tools necessary to cope with his diagnosis but I soon realized that I didn't have everything I needed. My professional background, training, and experience gave me the expertise to support his development but I needed tools to help me cope with my anxiety and painful emotions which were impacting my family and overall well-being. This was the catalyst that changed the trajectory of my life and career.

I turned to what I knew best, the science of psychology and behavior to help me process my emotions. I began studying and applying Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT) in my own life and saw firsthand how helpful it was. I experienced so many benefits from adopting these strategies that it inspired me to want to share them with others.



I am truly grateful for my son and the pivotal life experience that allowed me to turn my pain into purpose. I'm committed to sharing my story and expertise with others facing similar struggles.

Although they might be different, we are all climbing mountains. I want everyone to know that there are evidence-based tools that can help and that they do not have to climb alone.

## Testimonial from Dr. Lori

"Hi Arielle, I am so impressed and in awe in your ability to articulate and visually display my story so beautifully. Thank you so much and I absolutely love it!" - Dr. Lori

## **MORE ABOUT DR. LORI**

Dr. Lori Ochoa is the founder and owner of Life by Design Inc., a company specializing in personal development coaching, mentorship, and training. She received her doctoral degree in Psychology with an emphasis in Behavior Analysis. Dr. Lori Ochoa has been a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) since 2008 specializing in maximizing human potential, personal development, behavior change, and empowerment coaching. Dr. Lori Ochoa is a coach, speaker, and workshop leader in the area of personal development for individuals, companies, and organizations.

## **CURRENT POSITIONS**

In addition to operating her Life by Design Personal Development company, she is also an Assistant Professor in the Behavior Analysis department at The Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Anaheim campus. She is also the co-founder of Bloom Behavioral Health, a company specializing in providing behavioral therapy to children with developmental disabilities in Orange County, CA where she currently serves as the Executive Director.

## **PERSONAL INTERESTS**

She is a mother of 2 boys and has been incorporating personal development strategies in her own life to support her well-being journey. She enjoys spending time with her family, hiking, yoga, fitness, golf, and all things related to wellness. Dr. Ochoa enjoys being of service to others in fulfillment of her mission to help people maximize their potential and thrive in life.



## **ACCEPTANCE AND COMMITMENT COACHING**

Dr. Ochoa's coaching, training, and mentorship program is based on Contextual Behavioral Science. Acceptance and Commitment Coaching is an evidence-based approach that aims to increase psychological and behavioral flexibility in all areas of life.

Dr. Lori Ochoa gives her clients the tools to get unstuck and face life's challenges. They learn to stop avoiding, denying, and struggling with their emotions. Instead, they discover effective ways to take action and do what matters to them based on their values.

## **HER MISSION**

Life by Design Inc. is a company specializing in personal development coaching, mentorship, and training utilizing the science of behavior to help people live a rich, full, and meaningful life.



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Graphic Design  
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