

STORY & YOUR STARTUP

TELL A STORY THAT CONNECTS



Keep it simple

As a startup, you need to always be prepared to tell a story that connects. And the best way to do that is to keep it simple. Simple for you to remember & simple for them to understand. If you'll stick to just a few core elements in your messaging, it will be infinitely easier to communicate your big ideas & increase engagement in your startup.

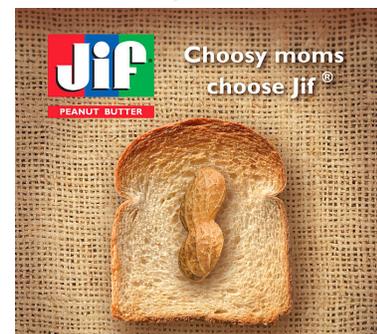
The customer is always the hero.



The size of the obstacle is in the eyes of the beholder.



The goal is always deeper than surface level.



STORY HAS 3 CORE ELEMENTS

A hero who encounters an obstacle while reaching a goal

At it's core, a story has just 3 core elements; a hero, an obstacle, and a goal. As Don Miller says, your brand is not the hero; your customer is. Nike almost never talks about it's sneaker specs. With Just Do It, the customer is always the hero. And even though the obstacle may seems small to some people, if you've found the right market, it's huge to them. Snickers has positioned itself as the answer to hangri-ness, certainly a first world problem, but a big deal to the guy who doesn't want to be Betty White on the football field. With every great story, the goal goes much deeper than surface level. It's about how the hero will feel & what achieving their goal will say about them. JIF peanut butter capitalizes on identity branding with it's tagline: "Choosy moms choose JIF."

A STARTUP EXAMPLE

MORE THAN A VIRAL VIDEO

A consistent story



A lot of people remember Dollar Shave Club's viral video. One of the reasons it worked so well was its simplicity. It was easy for people to get the message & share it with their friends. Founded by a former improv actor, Dollar Shave Club has applied story-based principles to all its messaging. Over & over, they position men as the hero, time & money as the obstacle, and a great shave as the goal.



**"WE HELP GUYS GET A GREAT SHAVE FOR
JUST A FEW BUCKS A MONTH."
SHAVE MONEY. SHAVE TIME.**

KEEP YOUR BIO SIMPLE

Write a story where your founder is the hero

On their about page, they don't waste time explaining their founders' extensive marketing & product development backgrounds. Instead, they simply tell a short story about the pair meeting at a holiday party (the heroes), and discussing their mutual frustration with buying razors (the obstacle) before deciding to fix the shaving experience altogether (the goal).

A STARTUP EXAMPLE

THE ELEVATOR PITCH

Tagline + Bio + Key Insight + Current Status



If Mike & Mark were building an elevator pitch, we'd tell them to combine their tagline & bio with their key insight & current status. It would look something like this:

INTRO: Hi, I'm Mike, founder of DollarShaveClub.com.

TAGLINE: We help guys get a great shave for just a few bucks a month.

BIO: I was working as a digital marketing director when I met my co-founder, Mark Levine at a party and we started discussing our mutual frustration in buying razors. People had been complaining about razors for years -- the outrageous prices, the shave technology "breakthroughs" that nobody actually needed, the painful shaves with a dull old blade, and the stupid plastic razor fortress in every store. Mark & I agreed that the shaving experience sucked so we decided to fix it.

INSIGHT: It started by figuring out what people actually wanted: a great shave without the overpriced shave tech and the inconvenience of trudging to the store. Our idea was as simple as it was revolutionary: a club that delivered razors right to you.

CURRENT STATUS: So now we've partnered with one of the world's leading razor manufacturers to make that idea a reality.