

The Legacy Lounge Podcast with Tiffany Neuman
Season 1, Episode 33
My Go-To Brand Messaging Strategy

INTRO: Hi, I'm Tiffany and you are listening to The Legacy Lounge podcast. If you are a high achieving, mission-driven entrepreneur who wants to elevate your income, impact, and influence, you're in the right place.

I left my corporate career as a creative director for Fortune 500 brands to create a legacy with my work and to support entrepreneurs to do the same. I'm not talking about having your name on a building or statues in your image. I'm talking about leaving behind a positive impact and creating something enduring that can be passed on. You pour your time, energy and passion into your business, so let's make sure your efforts will create a ripple effect that reaches far into the future.

Each monthly series will guide you through the business leadership and life skills you need to successfully leave a legacy that stands the test of time, and each episode is totally valuable on its own. We are here to provide you with the tools and ideas to make massive shifts and quantum leaps in your business, transforming you from entrepreneur into legacy brand.

TIFFANY:

Inside each of us is a natural born storyteller waiting to be released.

I was sitting in a dimly lit restaurant with my gay professor, a girl with purple hair, and a young man who was the best painter I had ever met. It was Jazz Fest in New Orleans, and it was my very first time eating sushi. I thought I was in heaven. The female songwriter felt like she was speaking my truth to me, and every song pierced my soul.

"You've got to try the sake," my professor said. Mind you, I was only 20 years old, but it was close enough. And how could I pass up this beautiful moment? I was literally sitting in awe, wondering how I ended up here. I'd been selected to present my paper on feminist advertising in a national marketing and branding conference and by dissecting various maybelline ads and sharing why they were harmful to women and pitching a new campaign that was more empowering.

My amazing art history professor submitted a handful of papers from his classes, and mine was picked along with the two other students. After presenting, we went out to celebrate. It was in this moment I knew I had found my calling, and looking back, I know it was the first time I was unconsciously competent in my manifesting abilities.

I remember declaring, this is the life that I want. Traveling, speaking, surrounding myself with culture and new experiences.

I had known that I wanted to be a graphic designer and was studying to do so, but I had no idea that there was so much more available to me. And that moment was the beginning of my entire career and professional journey.

And here I am, just over 20 years later, sitting in awe, wondering how I got here, being able to serve powerful women entrepreneurs and creating their conscious legacy brands.

And it all ties back into leaning into my passion and sharing my belief, my why.

How about you? What's your story? I'll save my entire saga for another time. But today we are going to talk about the number one mistake I see people making with their messaging, and it ties back into the story I just shared.

But first, if you have a great product or service, but sales and leads just aren't where you want them to be, there's good news and there's bad news, so let's start with the bad news. Most likely, this means you have unclear messaging. Your leads and potential clients probably don't really understand how you can help them, so unfortunately, they go and sign up with someone else who has a message and marketing they can understand.

And the sad thing is, you might actually be the one that can truly help them.

Now, if this resonates, know that you're not alone when it comes to talking about businesses and how they can help their ideal audience. Most business owners tend to struggle, and that's because they're so close to their products or services, they have a hard time explaining what they do to reach the people they can help most. As I always say, you can't see the label from inside the bottle.

The good news is, though, if you can eliminate the confusion from your messaging, people will begin to pay attention and you'll finally see the results you always knew were possible. When you clarify your message, your brand and website start working for you.

And even better, your clients will begin to speak a viral message that spreads to others and referrals. They begin to pour in.

Now, when we talk about messaging, what exactly does that mean? Messaging can cover so many things. There's messaging on our websites, in our emails, social media, the list goes on.

And I get questions about brand messaging all the time, and for good reason. It's overwhelming. So this month on the Legacy Lounge, I'm going to break down exactly how to clarify and craft a consistent message that will work wonders in your business.

And to begin, we are going to dive into storytelling. If you didn't already guess it, the reason I opened this episode with one of my personal stories is because storytelling is truly key to success.

For great messaging, a great story goes a long way and helps you stand out. I see people getting so excited when they realize a missing link in their messaging is telling stories. Yet when they begin to tell their story, they still see no results a lot of the time.

So to start, I want to share a bit about why storytelling is key. For those of you who have not heard the reasoning, it's actually really fascinating.

And if you didn't know, I am a professor myself, and Mr. Sherry, the professor who changed my life that I mentioned earlier, encouraged me to become a professor, which is also part of my story.

I'm a bit of a nerd when it comes to the why of how things work. So I got really curious about the reason for the popularity of stories among brands, businesses, and actually life in general. Because if you know any good book, any good movie, pretty much everything is set in a story.

Stories are the most powerful tool in human communication. Research shows that the human brain responds to the power of stories in ways that literally influence our brains and actions. When we hear a story, we actually feel and understand an experience, and it allows us to synchronize our minds with the subject of the story.

This is called neural coupling. In the process of neural coupling, a speaker and a listener share the story that allows them to interact in a dynamic way. So as a business owner shares a story, it allows their brand to interact in a dynamic way. Successful neural coupling produces greater comprehension, understanding, anticipation and receptivity, which of course builds trust.

But the thing is not just any story will do.

You must tell a story that has the right context, that produces this neural coupling and aligns with the listener or reader.

So how do you create a story that builds trust? Through empathy and understanding—and this is the biggest reason why most people tell stories and don't see results—they're not thinking about the human on the receiving end and how they will process the information.

When our stories are all about us and have no relevance to the receiver, they fall flat. So now you might be asking yourself, okay, how do I make sure my stories are impactful? I've got you. I'm going to share with you a quick overview of my step by step process on how to tell a story all the way from idea to conception to delivery.

And the very first step, of course, is to select a meaningful story.

When I'm working with clients, so often I ask them to share their story and they share this entire lifelong sequence of events that really has no relevance to their business or their audience. So your stories truly need to be relevant for your audience. And all of us have hundreds of stories we could tell. So how do you know which one to share? So I have a process for doing this with clients, but I'll share it on a high level with you.

The first thing you want to do is think back to moments in your life that really impacted you in some way and then put yourself in the shoes of your audience and feel if it will have an impact on their journey.

So think of those big decisions, embarrassing moments, mistakes, lessons learned. Perhaps the time you did something that didn't go as planned. Within these kinds of prompts you begin to explore moments of vulnerability. Now, a little bit later, I'll talk more about the key to vulnerability.

Because as Brené Brown has taught us, vulnerability is key to relationships, to growing a business.

Yet there's also a time I believe that you can be too vulnerable and it can really hurt your business. So it's a delicate balance.

So if you're not sure how or where to start to develop your own stories, here are some ideas: When did you have a breakthrough moment? What about a time you followed your heart? What's something someone said to you that you'll never forget, who made a massive impact on you and why? What was a moment that was hilarious and sheds a light on your personality?

Now, not all stories have to be groundbreaking. They simply need to be relatable and have a purpose. So once you've got some ideas on your stories, you really want to think about how to develop it. And once you get clear and you know how to develop stories, they'll come to you much faster and you'll be able to craft a story like the one I told in the beginning in like 5 seconds. So once you uncover the story you want to tell, really dig into the details.

Where were you in that moment? Physically, mentally, emotionally? How did it impact your life? What were the results? When you can boil your story down to one sentence, that helps focus on what it's really about.

For example, one of my stories would be it took lying in a hospital bed close to death for me to understand the important role I was truly here on this earth to play.

When you can boil it down to a moment like that, this will help you decide what details to support your main point that you want to include. Remember that any great story, you're not simply sharing events that happen. You're also sharing the thoughts and feelings running through you during those events, so people can actually have empathy and resonate with it.

Now, once you determine how you're going to develop the story and what that one sentence might be, then the structure's next.

A best practice here for storytelling is to start in the action of the story. This draws people in. For instance, I talked about how I was sitting at a table in a dimly lit restaurant. I didn't explain the context leading up and telling about how I won this trip first. I really talked about the action, right?

So from there, decide if you want to tell your story in chronological order. If you want to start at the end and go backwards, or if you want to tell it in a series of flashbacks. Think about books and movies. The most interesting stories often jump around. Yet don't worry about getting too fancy with a structure, because telling a story chronologically is often the best way to go.

The main goal is to take people through the journey so they can experience what you experienced and receive the learnings.

Now, once you know the structure, you want to think about how you've changed. At this point, you know the moment that your story is centered on. And writing the ending can tend to be the hardest part.

The key to a good ending is showing the audience your transformation over the course of the story, even if it's a slight transformation. There's the you that we met at the beginning and then there's you at the end.

Or perhaps you're telling the story of, say, a client transformation. It's not always focused around you. Then you want to go ahead and share the transformation that they receive during the time.

So to wrap things up, end stories on a high note with the lessons learned and how they apply to the listener.

Now, this next step is not really about the crafting of a story, but more of an energetic step. Ask yourself if you're ready to share the story.

If you're considering telling a story that might be rooted in vulnerability or perhaps some trauma, it's important to think about whether you're actually emotionally ready to share that story.

Here are some signs that you might not be ready to tell a story publicly.

If you get stuck on a scene or aren't able to come out of it because you're almost reliving it, this could be a sense of trauma. And if it's really tough to find an ending to a story, it may mean that you're still living it. You might need to press pause and return to the story when you've had more time to process.

Now, this is super important. I have to bring it up because we're told to be vulnerable, like I was talking about earlier. Yet that doesn't mean that we need to share everything from our past or in our lives, sometimes ever. Or sometimes the timing needs to be right.

If your story is deeply rooted in your work, it may be the trigger that allows others to see you as a compassionate guide for their own journey. But never feel that you need to share a story if you're not ready to.

I've actually had some clients that felt pressured by past mentors to share their stories, when actually it was only causing them harm. And I've helped many clients that are truly ready to share their stories, craft them in a loving way that helps to release the emotions behind them once and for all, so they can finally stand in their power and share their truth. So if a particular story feels sticky, promise me you will not skip this step.

Remember that storytelling is not about the storyteller, it's about connection. Really, the purpose of a story is to engage with others, so keeping your stories short and tight is important.

Let it reveal more of who you are, what your values are, and open doors of enlightenment for your audience. If you want your brand to make a real, lasting connection, tell stories instead of simply pushing messaging. This approach to content creation will not only drive more engagement and impact from your efforts, it will transform the way you build and maintain relationships with your audience.

I trust this information has been useful and I'd love to connect with you. DM me on my Instagram @TiffanyNeumanCreative and let me know what was most helpful.

It truly is awesome to hear from listeners so I can continue to create content that serves you best and leads to your legacy. Can't wait to see more of your stories coming to life soon you.

OUTRO: That's it for this episode. Thank you for listening to The Legacy Lounge Podcast. Connect with me on Instagram @tiffanyneumancreative I would also love to hear your feedback to see what resonates with you and what you'd like to hear in the future.

If you love this episode, please provide a review and we will be forever grateful. You can always find links and resources shared on the show by going to yourlegacybrand.com.

Remember what you leave behind is not what is engraved in stone monuments, but what is woven into the lives of others. What are you doing today to pour into others and to leave your legacy?