

My name is Ashley Selzer. I am a senior at LSU studying Mass Communication with a concentration in Digital Advertising. As you can see, I am a lot of things. We'll go left to right here. So, starting with the top left, I know this is a fitness conference and all, but I enjoy a good soft pretzel. Also, those are two of my absolute best friends on this earth. Underneath them are my two favorite felines; that's Katerina on the left and Bailey on the right. Jumping back up top, I love musicals, and I was lucky enough to get to see three of them in New York over Christmas break. I also love Disney, as you can see from the picture underneath. I was so fortunate to call myself a Walt Disney World cast member for six months on the Disney College Program. In general, I love to travel and see new places, but I also love my LSU, and I'm happy to call it my home.

Why does any of this matter? That's a great question. But it has a simple answer.

Everyone has a story. Yes, each and every one of you has a story. And it's so important when identifying your personal brand. Through this workshop today, I hope that you will get closer to identifying and tailoring your personal stories to your fitness brand and use your uniqueness to stand out from the crowd.

What is your fitness story? I guarantee you that your stories won't look as homogenous as these Instagram tags do. In fitness, it's very easy for us to market to clients the same way. "We help you get healthy and look better." That's the end goal anyway, right? Sure, but there's many different ways of going about this. It's like toothpaste. The end result is making your teeth whiter and your smile shine brighter, but there's a hundred different toothpaste brands to help you do that. So, how do you, the consumer, pick the lucky winner off the shelf? That's where we circle back to the brand.

Every person has a story. Every brand has a story. Thus, you are a brand. Logic, right? You may not see it this way just yet, but let me give you some definitions to help explain what I mean.

David Ogilvy, who is known as the "father of modern advertising," states that a brand is the intangible sum of a product's attributes. I'll say that again, the /intangible sum/ of a product's attributes. Intangible. Like MC Hammer, you can't touch it. So, it is not a logo or a symbol or an identity or a product. It is so much more than that. Marty Neumeier follows up by saying, "A brand is a person's gut feeling about a product, service, or organization."

Here's what a brand really is. It is a choice. It is also a reason for consumers to choose. A brand is a promise. By attaching a brand name to a product or service, that name holds a promise and a set of standards for consumers to hold that brand to. And most importantly, a brand is a relationship. A relationship starts with interaction, and brands have the responsibility to reach out to consumers and get to know them. These things aren't tangible, they aren't monetary, but they are human, and they are real.

Given the characteristics and definitions I've just talked about, can you think of some examples of brands that do these things really well? These brands here on the screen and tons more set themselves apart as distinct choices from their competitors, deliver the promises they set forth in their brand story, and establish meaningful relationships with their consumers that are built to

last. Not only do these brands do those things, but there are other more outward facing characteristics that help make these brands so great.

So, let's go down the list. Consistency in how the brand looks, talks, and interacts with consumers across multiple platforms.

- Powerful visual identity: Let your identity visually represent who and what you are.
- Distinctiveness: Be different. This is how you shine.
- Easy recall: Be memorable. When someone thinks of a TRX instructor or a personal trainer, aim to be the one your potential client thinks of.
- Passion: You got into this industry for a reason, right? So, let the world know that and see how passionate you are about fitness.
- Dynamic stories: Here's where the fun part comes in. We get to talk about that oh-so-important and elusive story of yours.

How can you tell YOUR story? What a great question you're probably all asking! That's where I bring in this worksheet!

- Conversation: Conversation can be tricky, especially if it's only online. But even simply letting your followers and potential clients know who you are and introducing yourself and your attributes to them can be a key determinant in your success.
- Creativity: This is your opportunity to form that powerful visual identity. If you love aqua blue and you want everyone to know it, find a way to work that into your logo or header or even an accent font on your resume. The human mind is so creative, and even if you're not a visual artist or "creative," find a friend or someone in your marketing or communications department who works with graphic design that you can explain your vision to.
- Engagement: If you like them, put a ring on them. You don't want to leave a customer single and eating a half gallon of Blue Bell, right? So, commit to them. Make them feel like they are the most special and individual person, and that you are willing to devote your time to help them achieve their goals.
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO): This one is a bit more complex, but this is Search Engine Optimization, which basically means getting you boosted on Google. Especially if you are a business owner, this is something to talk to a digital marketing or advertising agency about investing in because it will help drive traffic to your website, blog, or other Internet site.
- Authenticity: I can't stress enough about the importance of showing who you are and embracing that. Being unique is being YOU-nique.
- Set SMART goals: If it helps to meet with someone to talk about goals and expectations, then do that. Having someone else see what you want your results to be can help guide you into a time frame for certain tasks and can also help keep you accountable.
- Make a schedule: Speaking of accountability, this one will look different for everyone. But the most important thing is to be reasonable. If you don't have too much time to set aside right now, that's okay. Maybe in a lighter period at school or work, then you can devote more energy to building yourself up further. Just don't let yourself plateau.
- Define your target audience: Ask yourself who you would most love to work with because you know you would get along and understand them. Then start to figure out how you would sell yourself to them.
- Track your progress: For all my busy people in the room, this one's for you. Even if it's a

connection or two on LinkedIn or a small tweak to your resume, progress is progress, and you can give yourself a pat on the back for that one.

-All I can say is keep moving forward and keep striving for greatness. I know you all have the power inside of you to be the best in your craft, and I hope that discovering your story will help you unlock that potential inside of you.

No one can tell your story better than you. How will you tell it?

Personal Branding: How to Make Yourself First Choice

Name:

Major/Field of Work:

How long have you been in your industry?

Do you have any professional certifications?

What got you into your industry?

What are your hobbies and passions?

3 attributes about yourself:

3 things others say about you:

What are your goals (career, personal, etc.)?

What things will help you achieve those goals?

What social media platforms are you comfortable using?

What events/characteristics/attributes are major parts of your identity?