

# DISCOVERING YOUR PURPOSE IN THE DIGITAL WILDERNESS

A Guidebook for Brands



# WELCOME TO BASECAMP

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Your brand lives in the hearts and minds of your audience.

But mainly, it lives online.

Whether it's a person, place, or thing, your brand is the key to turning your passion into a successful career. It can help you find purpose as an entrepreneur, professional, or creative.

Deciding to follow your passions is a great first step. But building a brand around your passion is a process. It involves creating content for digital platforms and engaging in commerce.

Navigating your brand is like finding your way in the digital wilderness.

After years of working in marketing, I'm still discovering new platforms and tools. They help me become more efficient, knowledgeable, and effective with branding.


This guidebook is a collection of wisdom from five years of working in content marketing. Like a wilderness guide, I want to provide you with direction on this wild frontier.

These are all the insights that have helped me find my way with brand building.

It's easy to feel lost when you're developing (or becoming) a brand in the Information Age.

We have more platforms and content at our fingertips than ever. Formal education doesn't fully prepare us for careers in today's economy. So, we can easily lose our way when trying to figure things out on our own.

Maybe you're not making enough to cover the bottom line. Or you might be unable to break into certain markets. There's always something that feels insurmountable when trying to reach a new level.

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person from the waist down, walking through a field of purple crocuses. The person is wearing grey pants and brown boots. The sun is low in the sky, creating a lens flare effect on the left side of the image. The background shows a grassy hill under a bright sky.

Going into business can feel overwhelming. It's like you're alone without the resources you need to survive, let alone thrive.

This guidebook is for anyone who feels lost in this wilderness. Use it as a compass to help you find your North Star.

### Who should read this?

- **Entrepreneurs/Solopreneurs** who are starting a brand.
- **Creatives** who need guidance in their careers.
- **Professionals** who are looking for passion in their work lives.

When someone isn't happy with their job, it shows.

A lack of engagement at work could be a sign that you're unhappy with your career.

After reading this guidebook, I hope you will be closer to finding your purpose.

Passion can take you from where you are now to where you have always wanted to be.

All you have to do is believe it's possible.

# HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR BRAND'S PURPOSE



How do you define a purpose-driven brand? More importantly, how do you start a purpose-driven brand today?

It requires a combination of technical savvy, people skills, and an understanding of what motivates you.

If you've been a professional for decades or are starting out, there is a simple way to inject purpose into your brand.

I created a brand framework to help guide your business to its highest purpose. It's based on Ikigai, a Japanese philosophy that helps you find your purpose in life.

It begins with discovering your passions. That's followed by understanding how your content can contribute to your niche. You should also engage in commerce that provides value to your target audience.

These actions will help you find your tribe on the platforms they use to share their stories with the world.

Now, let's dive into purpose-driven brand marketing.

Discovering your brand's purpose is more important today than ever.

It begins with the four spheres that make up the **Purpose-Driven Brand Framework**. Each sphere represents a vital component of your brand, with purpose in the center.

Like a compass, this framework will help you navigate toward your North Star. That's where your passions and purpose align with the needs and values of your target audience.

## WHERE TO START: CONNECTING WITH WHAT MATTERS

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Turning your passions into a purpose-driven brand requires discovering your niche. The process will also help you find your tribe.

You'll find your brand's ultimate purpose at the intersection of your passions, platforms, content, and commerce activities. You should avoid some pitfalls along the way, so proceed with caution.

Why begin with passion instead of purpose?

Because passion is the jet fuel that will keep you motivated. It makes you unique and connects you to others.

In the end, you'll have a comprehensive understanding of your purpose in all areas of business.

## WHY CREATE A PURPOSE- DRIVEN BRAND?

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Finding your purpose is more than just a motivational exercise. It's a way to connect your brand with what matters most to your audience.

According to Kantar's Purpose Study, **purpose-led brands had seen their valuation surge by 175%** over the past 12 years versus a growth rate of just 70% for listless brands uncertain of their role. (Kantar 2018).

In addition to that, 64% of global consumers find brands that actively communicate their purpose more attractive. **62% of people want companies to take a stand on issues they are passionate about**, and 52% say they are more attracted to buy from certain brands over others if these brands stand for something bigger than just the

products and services it sells, which aligns with their personal values. (Accenture 2018).

## LET PASSION GUIDE YOU

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When you're passionate about something, you'll make personal sacrifices for it. For example, we usually have no problem waking up early for an exciting trip. But we might hit the snooze button five times before getting ready for work on a weekday.

We tend to compartmentalize our hobbies, careers, income, and personal interests these days. And that worked for most people before the Information Age.

But platformization has created a need for experts, enthusiasts, experimenters, curators, and teachers. So, corporate America isn't your only option anymore.



## WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

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Discovering your true passions begins with exploring what you're curious about. We live in a data-driven world, so a great place to start is the content you consume on social media platforms. Every influencer or hashtag you follow can be a gateway to your inner passions.

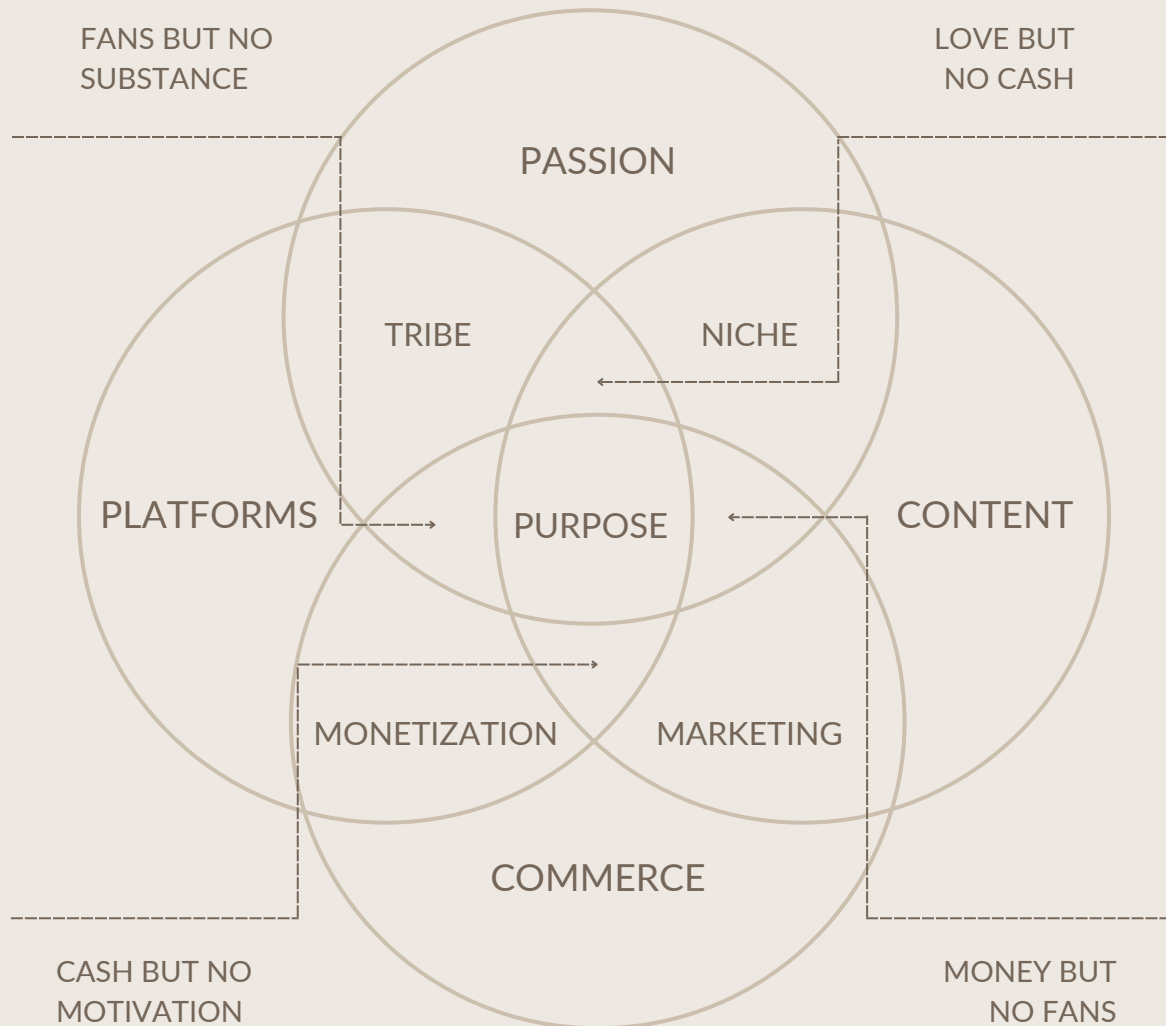
Do you like making pancakes on the weekend? There could be something there. Home cooking could be a niche for you to explore. You could write the ultimate guide to fluffy pancakes. You could offer pancake-flipping workshops or create how-to videos for YouTube.

Discovering your passions sounds fun. But you might wonder how to take something from a passion project to a brand. That's how it can make you money, help support your family, and even help you change the world.

This **brand framework** will demystify purpose-driven branding and help you navigate the digital wilderness like a pro. Now, let's get started.



## THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRAND FRAMEWORK



The spheres of the **Purpose-Driven Brand Framework** represent the four main components of a 21st-century brand. It includes the pitfalls you can experience when you are deficient in one area.

With your **purpose** in the center, it shows the synergy created by locking

all four spheres into place.

Your **passion** is your true north.

When you're passionate about something, it shows. This is how you attract others to your brand. That's why it's the key to unlocking your niche and finding your tribe.



Creating **content** is how you contribute to your niche. It's also how you generate value for your target audience.

Focusing only on money can veer you off the path, but not engaging in **commerce** at all can stop you in your tracks.

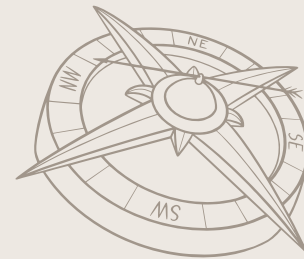
Monetization and marketing are how you sustain a brand over time.

**Platforms** are the mechanisms for monetization. They're where you find your tribe and how you share your wisdom with the world.

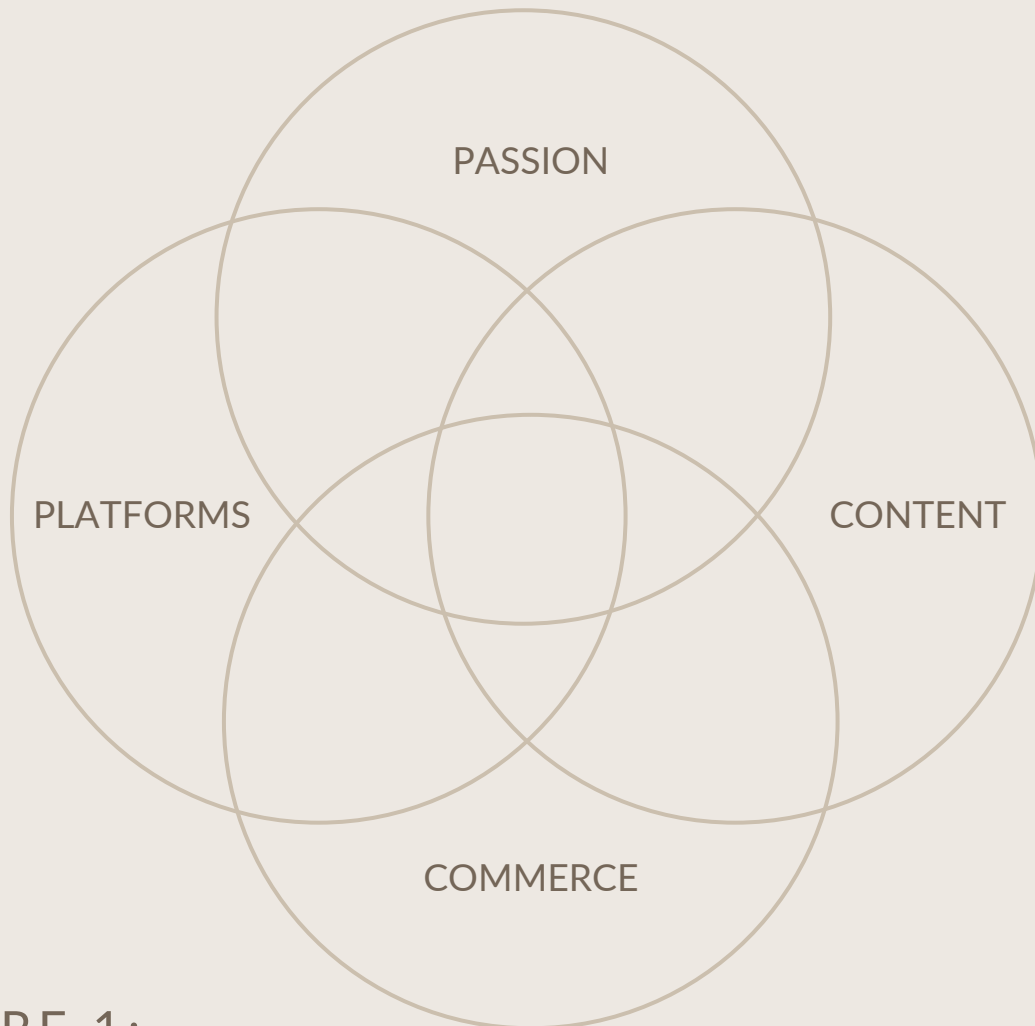
Running a purpose-driven brand is where you want to end up at the end.

This framework is your guide to finding your way through the digital wilderness.

Now, let's do a deep dive into each sphere and how they relate to one another.



# THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRAND FRAMEWORK



## SPHERE 1: PASSION

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Passion is a magnet.

A compass uses Earth's magnetic field to help guide you in the wilderness. Passion creates a similar pull that can guide you to your purpose.

We naturally gravitate toward certain

things in life. Sometimes it feels like our passions distract us from our work. You can see that as something to remedy, but leaning into your passions would be much more productive.

Stop resisting the urge to find your joy. Instead, leverage that magnetic

pull to attract others to what you love.

Why be a mediocre account manager when you can be a creative force in fashion?

Let your passion be your guide, even if it's something as simple as the foods you love to eat or the clothes you love to wear.

## SPHERE 2: CONTENT

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Creating content is how you contribute to your niche and share your story with the world.

Today we have more platforms than ever, creating a need for quality content in every area of life. The idea isn't to promote yourself but to make positive contributions to your market or industry.

You can be the best baker in the world, but how will you let people know if you don't tell your own story?

Content strategy is why some brands rise to the top of search engine results, and others get lost in the shuffle. It takes a lot of organic content to get your point across

to your target audience. Search engines use content (and links to that content) to determine the value of your website.

So, the more substantive your content, the easier it will be to market and monetize your brand.

## SPHERE 3: COMMERCE

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If you're not engaging in commerce, you're not running a business.

To generate income from your brand, offer a product or service that adds value to people's lives.

Commerce shouldn't be your sole focus, but it makes your brand sustainable over time. And it's also what will help you gain market share.

There are various ways to monetize a brand. You don't have to sell a product or service to generate income. But you do need to focus on covering your costs and generating enough revenue to support your growth.

What can you do for your target audience that can please them in a

way that your competitors can't?

Begin with a solid value proposition. That will ensure that your commerce goals will be met with success.

## SPHERE 4: PLATFORMS

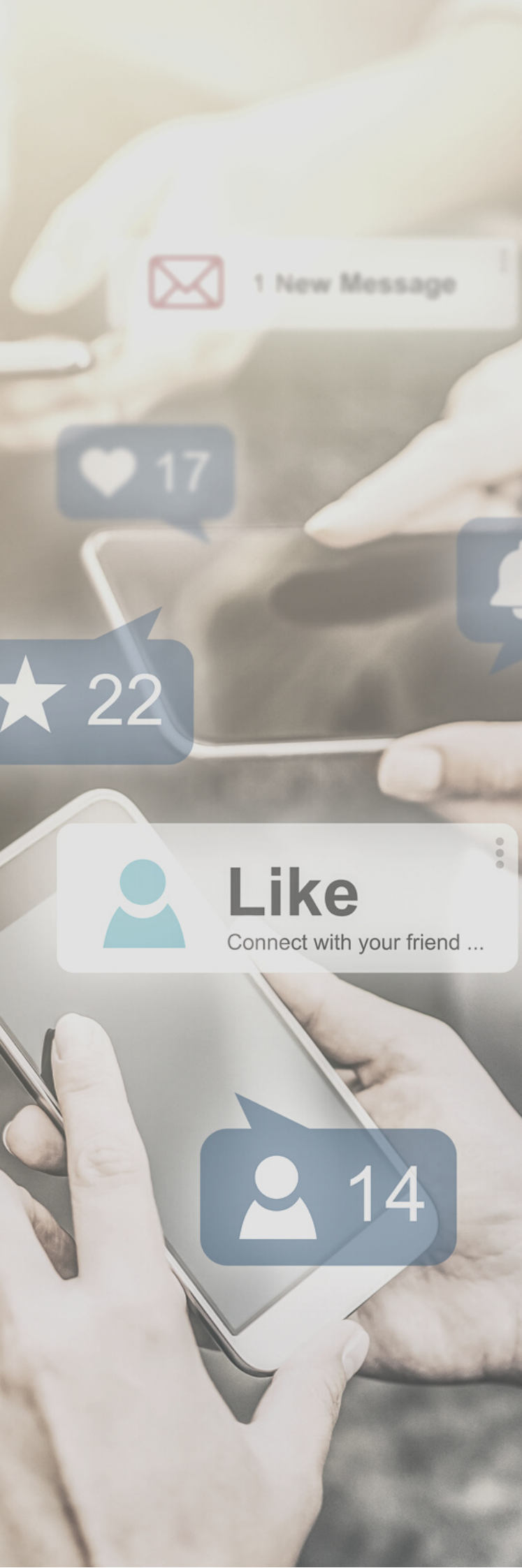
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Platforms are the gateway to connection.

They are the most significant difference in how we do business now versus fifty years ago.

For many, what happens on social media and digital platforms is the basis of their reality. That's why using platforms properly is a huge part of creating a successful brand.

Take Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson as an example. He makes most of his income as a movie star. But he leverages his activity on social media platforms to market his movies. He told *Forbes*, "Social media has become the most critical element of marketing a movie for me. I have established a social media equity with an audience around the world. There's a value in what I'm delivering to them."



## THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRAND FRAMEWORK



### INTERSECTION 1: **NICHE**

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The intersection between passion and content is where you find your niche.

Your niche is a crucial part of your brand strategy. It should inform the organic keywords you target. That will help the search engines drive the right traffic to your content.

Experiment with your content at first. Then, pay attention to what brings you closer to the audience you're looking for.

Over time, you will have enough data from analytics to zero in on what people want from you. And that should be the basis of your content strategy moving forward.

The most important thing to focus on here is specificity. The more general your keywords and audience, the more difficult it is to break through the noise. You have to be strategic and opportunistic when penetrating a competitive market.

So, go deep within your passion and figure out how to create unique and specific content. Don't worry if it's for a smaller audience at first.

That's the first step toward finding your niche.

## INTERSECTION 2: MARKETING

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So, you've discovered your passion. And you've started creating content to share your story with the world.

Now what?

If you have spare time and income, this may be as far as you want to go. But if you want to create a brand, you need a financial component.

You want to start with a marketing plan to create commerce around your passion and content. This component still requires content but takes it a step further.

Marketers aim to turn members of your target audience into customers.

Content marketing, influencer marketing, affiliate marketing, and social media marketing are great ways to promote your brand today.

They are also ways to generate data and insights about your target audience.

If you aren't marketing effectively, you may never be able to turn your passion into a brand.

## INTERSECTION 3: MONETIZATION

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The rise of digital platforms has ushered in new ways to generate revenue for a brand.

Platform and content monetization provide new income opportunities for brands. They can supplement commerce activities and help cover the bottom line.

To achieve monetization, you have to engage on platforms and find your tribe.

Influencer marketing is born from this sphere. Even if you aren't an

influencer, you can still create passive income with a following.

Executing an effective monetization strategy takes time and a good amount of content. But it's worth the effort.

If you have a hobby or interest that costs you money, consider monetizing it.

This is where many side hustles are born.

## INTERSECTION 4: TRIBE

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Finding your tribe and making them happy creates brand loyalty. This can last a lifetime, even generations.

But it doesn't happen overnight.

It starts with connecting with like-minded individuals across platforms. Your shared passions or interests create the initial spark.

The relationship grows when you create value with your content and brand promise.

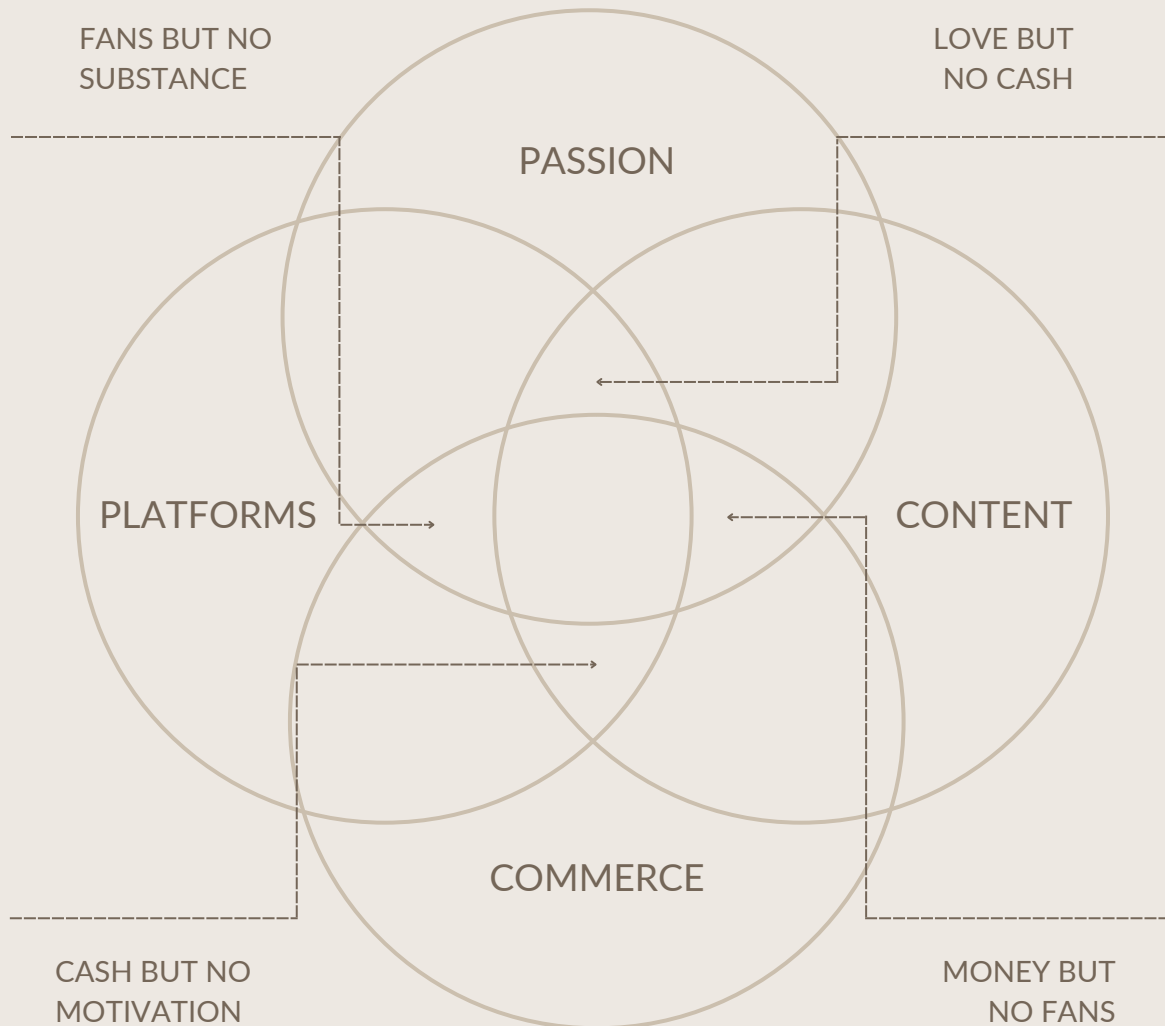
Sharing your story is a great way to solidify this connection with your tribe.

Your values, mission, and messaging are how you make this connection grow over time.

Now, let's explore the pitfalls that appear when your brand is deficient in one of the main spheres.



# THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN BRAND FRAMEWORK



## PITFALL 1: **LOVE BUT NO CASH**

The first pitfall is finding love but not generating income with your brand.

Sometimes we confuse being purpose-driven with doing everything for free. But as most of us know, time

is money.

There is a limited amount of time the average person can spend on a passion when it doesn't bring them any income.

So, to turn your passion into a brand and avoid this pitfall, you need to engage in commerce.



This effort will make your brand sustainable.

## **PITFALL 2: CASH BUT NO FOLLOWING**

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Some brands have done business for years but haven't developed a digital following.

As a result, your brand is creating income but doesn't have an audience.

That can work for a while. But to build long-term success, you need to develop a following across platforms.

## **PITFALL 3: CASH BUT NO MOTIVATION**

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Have you ever sat in bed when your alarm clock went off and wondered what you are doing with your life?

If so, the chances are that you lack motivation.

Often, we feel we have to motivate ourselves to continue on our chosen

career path. But if your motivation exists elsewhere, you may need to reconsider your career.

Is it time to pivot toward something that you're passionate about?

Injecting your passion into what you do to earn an income is the key to avoiding this pitfall.

## **PITFALL 4: FANS BUT NO SUBSTANCE**

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Engaging on platforms isn't enough to create lasting relationships with your audience.

You can build a following without creating quality content for your niche. The problem here is that your audience will become starved for substance.

Having fun on Instagram or TikTok is great.

But what are you sharing with your audience that will make them lifelong fans of your brand?

## USING THIS FRAMEWORK TO FIND YOUR NORTH STAR

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Using this brand framework to find your purpose will lead you to your North Star.

Doing business in the Information Age can feel overwhelming. Data and insights can guide you in many directions. It can leave your head spinning if you're unsure about your purpose.

Your purpose should always be at the center of your brand marketing activities. This will not only give you direction, but it will help you find your tribe along the way.

And the best part is that once you align these spheres, the sky's the limit to what you can achieve.

Now that you understand the **Purpose-Driven Brand Framework** let's bring it to life.

The following pages contain articles, resources, and insights for purpose-driven brands. Use it to navigate the digital wilderness, one step at a time.





ALTON ROAD DIGITAL

You can apply this framework to any brand that's searching for purpose.

This ebook will explore each component and the areas where they intersect.

You will learn how people have turned their passions into meteoric success.

We will compare social media with the Silk Road. What can we glean from the vast trade networks of the past? How can we apply it today?

I hope these words inspire you to find your North Star and guide you to your life's purpose.

**BOB GRAMATGES**  
**BRAND EXPLORER**