

NICHE AUDIENCES ...

2021 CHAMPION PLACEMAKER WORKSHOP #1 | APRIL 15, 2021

If you market your destination to a mass audience,
your communications will be less impactful.

If you talk to people honestly about experiences they're already passionate about,
they'll listen. You'll cut through the noise. Passionate groups also become
your best storytellers and advocates. They'll help do the marketing for you.

*Reminder: Rather than trying to be everything to everyone,
niche marketing allows you to focus your efforts on a smaller group
of people who will have a greater interest in what you offer.*

ELKHART COUNTY'S IDENTIFIED NICHES:



**CULTURAL
EXPLORERS**



CREATIVES



ROADTRIPPERS

CULTURAL EXPLORER

Cultural Explorers want to experience local culture when they travel. They like to dive into a place; seeing how people live, learning local history, and admiring craftsmanship, art and music. In Elkhart County, this niche has two main themes: Amish and Arts & Crafts. The Amish Cultural Explorer is interested in the Amish way of life, while the Arts & Crafts Cultural Explorer is more interested in all things handcrafted and locally made.

COMMUNICATING WITH THE CULTURAL EXPLORER

Each topic listed below covers the types of experiences which are most likely to drive the Cultural Explorer to visit Elkhart County.

Conversation topics

1. Local history - Cultural Explorers have a keen interest in historical facts and trivia. Play into this by telling the stories behind your buildings, parks, establishments and goods.
2. Human interest and local culture - Cultural Explorers are interested in how other people think and act. Tap into this by telling stories about the people who call Elkhart County home.
3. Events and time of year - Events can be the deciding factor in choosing to visit a destination, so share details on upcoming activities that cater to the Cultural Explorer. Mention what it's like to visit in each season and what to do during that time.

KEYWORDS AND KEY PHRASES FOR THE CULTURAL EXPLORER

Using the Elkhart County brand story, we have extracted words and phrases from the Elkhart County brand story that are most relevant to the Cultural Explorer. Use the words outlined below when communicating with this niche. Taking part in this exercise will help you stay on brand when writing content and attract the right audiences.

Keywords:

Craftsmanship, handmade, creativity, fun, friendly, energetic, makers, musical instruments, quilts, history

Phrases:

- A well crafted place
- The Amish way of life
- Growing diversity
- A vibrant arts scene
- We leave our mark on everything we hold
- Classic small towns
- Close-knit communities

CREATIVES

Creatives see things a little differently. This niche community includes artists, musicians, designers, writers, woodturners, sculptors, illustrators, painters, embroiderers and quilters. When they travel, they want to learn new skills and be inspired - often by participating in the local arts and music scene. Like the Cultural Explorer, Creatives also seek out locally-made goods which gives them a chance to connect with local makers.

COMMUNICATING WITH CREATIVES

Each topic listed below covers the types of experiences which are most likely to drive Creatives to visit Elkhart County.

Conversation topics

1. Human interest and local culture - Highlight what it is that makes your destination truly creative - vibrant community, murals, history of making, notable residents of Elkhart County.
2. Elkhart County as an inspiring setting - Creatives are looking for a place that inspires them. People can be inspired by the history of a place, the architecture, the people who live there now or renowned figures from the past. Creatives residents, in particular, are looking for a place that celebrates and nurtures their artistic endeavors.
3. Events and time of year - Events can be the deciding factor in choosing to visit a destination, so share details on upcoming shows that cater to Creatives.

KEYWORDS AND KEY PHRASES FOR CREATIVES

Using the Elkhart County brand story, we have extracted words and phrases from the Elkhart County brand story that are most relevant to Creatives. Use the words outlined below when communicating with this niche. Taking part in this exercise will help you stay on brand when writing content and attract the right audiences.

Keywords:

Craftsmanship, handmade, creativity, energetic, makers, musical instruments, quilts, diversity

Phrases:

- A well crafted place
- Vibrant arts scene
- We leave our mark on everything we hold
- From the Elkhart Jazz Festival to local shows and productions
- Your next artistic adventure
- Entrepreneurial spirit
- Meet the makers

ROADTRIPPERS

Roadtrippers love life on the road. They seek the freedom to explore nature and different landscapes without a strict plan. RVers are an essential part of this community - and a passionate one. Some use their vehicles for vacations, while others live full time in their RVs. Travel motivators for this niche include seeing iconic landmarks, completing bucket list road trips, exploring national parks, visiting renowned campsites and escaping routine.

COMMUNICATING WITH ROADTRIPPERS

Each topic listed below covers the types of experiences which are most likely to drive Roadtrippers to visit Elkhart County.

Conversation topics

1. RV culture - Roadtrippers choose to visit places that offer RV-friendly experiences and infrastructure including quality RV sites, parking opportunities, services and entertainment.
2. Time of year and events - RV travel allows for a more flexible travel schedule. Capitalize on this fact by inspiring people on the road to stop by Elkhart County.
3. The natural and urban environment - RV travelers want to experience different scenery as they drive across regions and states. Describe to potential visitors what they will see here.

KEYWORDS AND KEY PHRASES FOR ROADTRIPPERS

Using the Elkhart County brand story, we have extracted words and phrases from the Elkhart County brand story that are most relevant to Roadtrippers. Use the words outlined below when communicating with this niche. Taking part in this exercise will help you stay on brand when writing content and attract the right audiences.

Keywords:

RVs, motorcycles, craftsmanship, handmade, friendly, outdoor recreation, active lifestyle

Phrases:

- A well crafted place
- Classic small towns and energetic centers
- The handmade welcome mat is always out
- No matter how far you roam, reminders of what's made here are all around
- Explore the roads less traveled

NICHE AUDIENCE ASSIGNMENT

STEP 1:

Pick one niche and highlight the topics that your business could talk about.

STEP 2:

Pick one topic and write an “elevator speech” that speaks to people in your chosen niche. Keeping in mind, this could be used for in-person, social media, website and more!

For example, if you run a cafe or a shared workspace, you might talk about how your surroundings inspire Creatives, here’s an example to get you started:

Niche: Creatives

Topic: Elkhart County as an inspiring setting

Usage: Social Media post

Our studio might only be 5-years-old but our building is well over 150! We hope the history of this place inspires you during your next visit.

P.S., If you use our co-working space to create magic, we want to hear from you! Share what you’re working on below and we’ll cover your next coffee :)

NICHE:

TOPIC:

“ELEVATOR SPEECH”:

WHAT IS STORYTELLING ...

2021 CHAMPION PLACEMAKER WORKSHOP #2 | APRIL 22, 2021

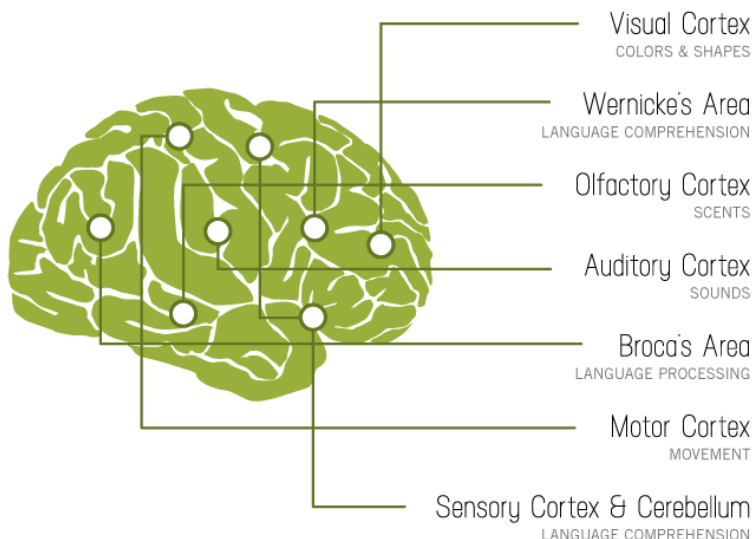
Stories help us make sense of the world around us, connect with others and inspire action. We are able to remember stories much more easily than data and facts.

Remember: a great story turns a product into an experience.



**YOUR BRAIN
ON DATA**

vs



**YOUR BRAIN
ON STORIES**

WHY DO WE TELL STORIES?

- *Stories help us make sense of complex ideas*
- *Stories bring us together*
- *Stories inspire us*

WHAT MAKES A GOOD STORY?

1. **Entertaining.** *Good stories keep the reader interested in what's coming next.*
2. **Educational.** *Good stories spark curiosity and add to the reader's knowledge bank.*
3. **Universal.** *Good stories tap into emotions and experiences that most people undergo.*
4. **Organized.** *Good stories follow a succinct organization that helps convey the core message and helps readers absorb it.*
5. **Memorable.** *Through inspiration or humor, good stories stick in the reader's mind.*

BRAND STORYTELLING EXAMPLES

*Storytelling is part of **Nike**'s strategy to convey its values and authentic character. 'Just Do It' inspires people to take action.*

***Apple** describing how their products benefit you rather than explaining the tech behind it.*

***Bombas** do more than sell socks. They share stories of customers and the people they serve through customer purchases.*

***Starbucks** - turning a product into an experience*

***GoPro** - adventure stories told through the lens of the customer*

***Thor** - sharing the adventures behind the lifestyle*

***Whole Foods Market** - celebrating natural and organic foods through maker stories*

***Ben & Jerry's** - sharing their values and inspiring action*

TURN YOUR PRODUCT INTO AN EXPERIENCE ASSIGNMENT

Using the five principles of what makes a good story and the national examples outlined above, write a story about your product, event or attraction without using data in the box below.

Good Example:

Goshen Brewing Company is a family friendly brewpub that serves farm to table craft beers, food, and weekly live music.

Great Example:

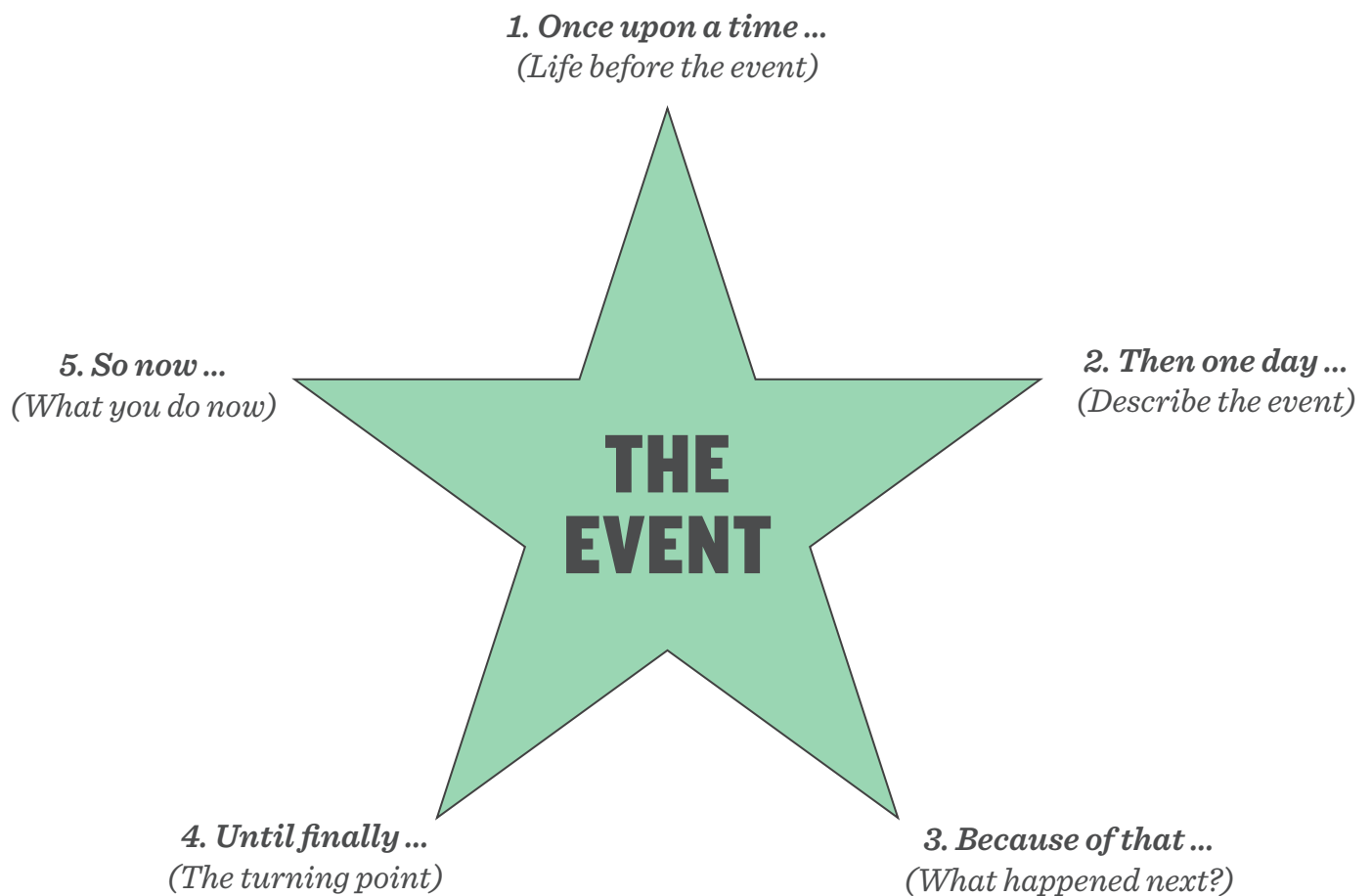
Goshen Brewing Company was founded by two Goshen College graduates with a passion for craft beer and a love of Goshen, Indiana. Housed in a refurbished industrial building that flows into a great outdoor space, you'll feel the vibes the minute you step foot in this cool space.

HOW TO TELL YOUR ORIGIN STORY ...

2021 CHAMPION PLACEMAKER WORKSHOP #3 | APRIL 29, 2021

Why is storytelling so important? Stories help us make sense of the world around us, connect with others and inspire action. We are able to remember stories much more easily than data and facts.

Remember: a great story turns a product into an experience.



ORIGIN STORY

An origin story is a story about how your business came to be. All future stories and events should stem from your origin story.

Reminder: Consider how living in Elkhart County shapes your story. Keep our brand assets and personality traits in mind when writing your own origin story.

HOW TO TELL YOUR ORIGIN STORY ASSIGNMENT

It's time to write your origin story! Use the 5 boxes below to fill in your story. Take inspiration from the example to get you started.

Need more inspiration?:

Listen to Seth Godin's podcast episode on Origin Stories or read this article by Inc. Magazine.

1. Once upon a time ... (Life before the event)

What did you want back then? How old were you? Where did you live? When did this happen?

"It was 2006 and I was living in Chicago, balancing my job as a waitress with painting commissions. I was worn down by big city life and it showed in my art".

2. Then one day ... (Describe the event)

Think about this section as a scene with details that the reader can connect with.

“Then one day I walked past a gallery and saw the most beautiful painting. I stepped inside to take a closer look. I read all about the artist and her life in a nearby small town”.

3. Because of that ... (What happened next?)

What relevant events were then set in motion? What obstacles did you have to overcome?

“Because of that I realised that the city no longer served me. I tried to get back into the grind but it only left me feeling more in need of change”.

4. Until finally ... (The turning point)

Describe the moment when you really committed to a new direction. Reflect on how you changed and what you learned.

“Until finally, I decided to go. I organised short-term accommodation to test the waters and found a light-filled studio to work from (the studio of my dreams!). I packed up the car for the one-hour drive feeling unsure of my decision to move to such a small town. Would it inspire me or leave my longing for the lights of Chicago?”

5. So now ... (What you do now)

Describe what you do now, and connect it to the story.

“So now it’s been 8-years and I’m still here. This place has supported my growth as a sometimes painter to a full-time artist. I’m constantly inspired by my surroundings and the community of makers who live here. I always thought that I had to live in a big city to make it as an artist. Boy, was I wrong! Living here just feels right”.

THE STORYTELLING PROCESS ...

2021 CHAMPION PLACEMAKER WORKSHOP #4 | MAY 6, 2021

You will have lots of facts, figures, and messages to get across in one story.

These steps will help you tell your story to the your most enthusiastic fans in the most effective way.

1. Know your audience.
2. Define your core message.
3. Decide what kind of story you're telling.
4. Establish your call-to-action.
5. Choose your story medium.
6. Write.
7. Share and respond.

THE STORYTELLING PROCESS ASSIGNMENT

Let's look at writing your story in a different way! Use the boxes below to fill in your story.

*Remember you can have several stories for different audiences. Parts of the story may overlap, keep that in mind when filling out these boxes. **Psst - spice this assignment up a little (or a lot, you're the storyteller!)** and create a short video and submit to Janis at janis@eccvb.org. We would love to share your video during one of the workshops.*

1. Know your audience

Who wants to hear your story? What niche(s) will you be speaking to?

☐

Cultural Explorer

☐

Creatives

☐

Roadtripper

☐

Other (and why): _____

2. Define your core message

Is your story selling a product or promoting an event? Explaining a service or discussing an issue? Black and white: what is the point of your story (in 10 words or less)?

3. Decide what kind of story you're going to tell

To determine what kind of story you're telling, work out how you want your audience to react. Remember, storytelling goals incite action, tell people about yourself, convey values and foster community or collaboration.

4. Establish your call-to-action (CTA)

What action do you want your audience to take after reading, hearing, or watching your story.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Try / buy product</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Buy a ticket</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Become a member</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Sign up for eBlast</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Refer a friend</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Share to social profile</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other: _____</i> | | |

5. Choose your story medium

What form(s) will your story be? It is helpful to keep in mind how your story could be told through different mediums.

- | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>written</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>spoken</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>audio</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>digital</i> |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|

6. WRITE

With your core message, audience objective, and call-to-action already established, this step is simply about adding detail and creative flair to your story.

[SEE NEXT PAGE]

7. Share and respond

Once your story is written (and reviewed), share it on the most suitable channel and stick around to chat with the audience. If your time is limited, focus on at least answering any questions left by your audience.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc)</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Email list</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>YouTube, Vimeo</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Podcast platforms</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Blog, guest post on another blog or publication</i> | |

WRITE YOUR STORY

With your core message, audience objective, and call-to-action already established, this step is simply about adding detail and creative flair to your story.

CONTENT MARKETING ...

2021 CHAMPION PLACEMAKER WORKSHOP #5 | MAY 13, 2021



Why is content marketing important?

Content marketing helps you:

Educate customers and potential customers about the products and services you offer.

Guide people along the customer journey. *For example, convert awareness to booking.*

Build relationships between your customers and business.

Show people how your products/services solve their challenges (through storytelling).

Grow a community around your brand.

FINDING AND CREATING GREAT CONTENT - A CHECKLIST

Inspires interest or motivates action; video/photo albums.

Grabs attention; stops people from scrolling and focuses them immediately.

Entertains; shows remarkable visuals.

Informs; provides local tips/insider information, or event dates and time of year to visit.

Adds value; exclusive offers or deals/demonstrate value in terms of money and time.

THREE WAYS IN WHICH CONTENT CAN HELP A BUSINESS ELEVATE ITS REPUTATION

1. Builds awareness.

Content about a business makes people aware of its personality and the experiences it offers. By consistently producing and sharing quality content, a business increases its exposure.

2. Generates revenue.

Businesses can publish content that encourages people to visit their websites or e-commerce platforms. This way, they can build interest and trust in their brands, products and services. You can motivate people to take action by sharing informative and helpful content.

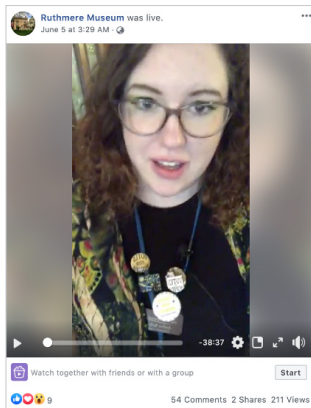
3. Creates loyalty.

Each piece of valuable content builds trust. With consistency, businesses can build loyalty by helping people solve problems or find the experiences they want most.

TYPES OF CONTENT MARKETING

- Social media
- Audio
- Video
- Blogs/articles

CONTENT MARKETING EXAMPLES



Ruthmere Museum created a call-to-action to join their virtual trivia session. The engagement generated from the live trivia event was incredible and is a great example of providing value and building community.

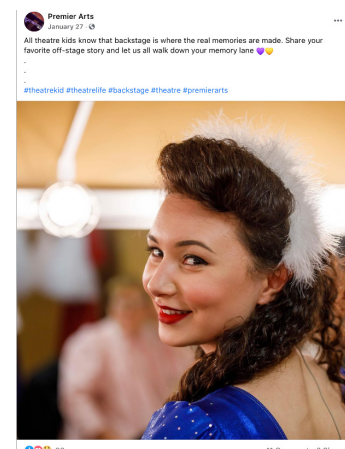


The Electric Brew highlights their services offered outside of their brick-and-mortar storefront. Encouraging community involvement, supporting fundraisers and tagging partners help build your audience.



Elkhart Civic Theatre provides inspiration in the form of quotes during a difficult time. This is supported by a heartfelt message to their community.

Premier Arts does a great job of asking questions and engaging in conversation with their audience. The answers to these questions can either provide a behind-the-scenes look at the business or organization or provide thoughtful and helpful answers.



Extra Information – some of the information below was not covered in our slides but may be helpful as you plan your content marketing.

Content marketing strategy checklist:





- ☐ Set goals and KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).
- ☐ Choose content channels.
- ☐ Work out what type of content you want to create.
- ☐ Create a budget (content creation time plus \$ for paid posts).
- ☐ Create the content.
- ☐ Distribute the content.
- ☐ Measure results and adapt content accordingly.

CONTENT MARKETING ASSIGNMENT

Write a social media post using one of the above examples as a guide and template by either creating a call-to-action, ask a question to engage your audience in a 2-way conversation, provide inspiration in the form of quotes or spotlight locals.

EXTRA CREDIT: THIS IS A HELPFUL TOOL TO USE LATER AS WELL.

Use a calendar to plan your content in advance. Aim to create at least two weeks worth of content. This template is available for you to edit to suit your requirements. We also recommend creating around 7 themes which represent you as a business.

Week 1	Date	Date	Date	Date
DAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	THURSDAY	SUNDAY
FACEBOOK	7.20PM	8.00PM	8.30PM	8.30PM
Copy	Write copy here	Write copy here	Write copy here	Write copy here
Image/video link				
Theme/keywords	THEME 7. Shop Local	THEME 3. History	THEME 2. Maker profile - coffee roaster	THEME 1. Downtown
Image preview				
Published? Y/N				
INSTAGRAM	7.20PM	8.00PM	8.30PM	8.30PM
Copy	Write copy here	Write copy here	Write copy here	Write copy here

BEST PRACTICES LEARNED FROM WORKSHOPS




Story Telling best practices

- Embodies DNA – All stories should be rooted in identity.
- Adds value – Stories make people aware of the products and offer.
- Encourages investment – Stories can help potential customers decide to spend time and money with you.
- Builds trust – Creates loyalty through authenticity and engagement.

Social best practices

- Consistent posting
- Planning annually, quarterly, and on a monthly basis
- Select the right format for the right objective
- Use our brand assets and personality traits as content themes

Match the right content to the right channel

 Facebook <hr/> Images, videos, links, a highlight reel of all the stories and news your business has.	 Twitter <hr/> News, links, join timely conversations. Retweet others with good stories.	 Instagram <hr/> Images and videos that inspire and capture moments. A place for your highest quality imagery.
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Remember: you don't need to be on every channel. Only focus on the channels that work for you and where you can dedicate your time.

Guiding communication principles

- Engage with your audience, don't broadcast
- Provide value
- Be honest
- Treat fans/followers as advocates

My key takeaways: