

Your brand narrative strategy and story elements are guided by the proven Story Cycle System™ conjured by Park Howell at The Business of Story.

Park has been applying his brand story creation process for more than 20 years growing business who follow it by as much as 600 percent.

We trust it will do the same for you...like magic.



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Initial Brand Assessment:

The following content is based on the StoryCycle Genie™ initial output. Genie descriptions/instructions are in bold. These are the resources fed into the Genie:

- Brand name: The Agency Management Institute
- <https://agencymanagementinstitute.com/>
- <https://agencymanagementinstitute.com/meet-ami/>
- <https://agencymanagementinstitute.com/meet-ami/ami-serve-agencies/>
- <https://agencymanagementinstitute.com/meet-ami/ami-manifesto/>
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/drewmclellan/>

Here is a quick overview of your current brand narrative as guided by the Story Cycle System™. Read through it first then revise anything you like. Once you've clarified it, the Genie will reveal your refined brand story.

Initial Brand Assessment:

Agency Management Institute (AMI) is a management consulting business specializing in helping small to medium-sized marketing agency owners improve their business operations, profitability, and sustainability. Founded in 1995, AMI offers a comprehensive suite of services including peer networks, workshops, coaching, consulting, and free educational resources like podcasts and blogs.

The brand positions itself as a trusted guide for agency owners who often feel isolated in their leadership roles, providing them with best practices, community support, and practical tools to run more profitable and efficient agencies while maintaining high ethical standards as outlined in the AMI Manifesto.

RESOURCE: Read Ch. 1, “How to Wield the Guidebook” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).

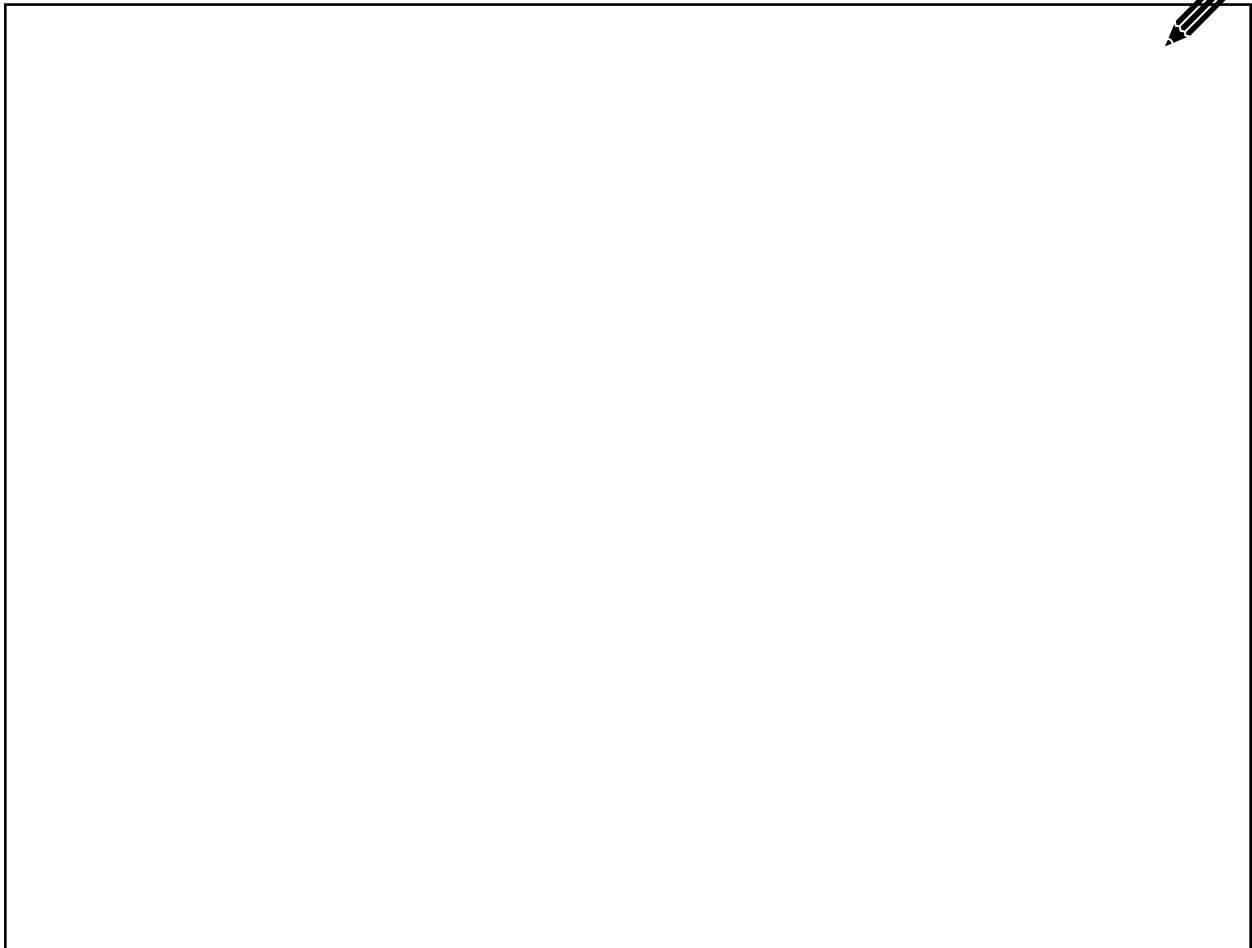


Set the Stage With Your Brand Description:

This is the beginning of the Story Cycle System™ process; the clear and concise articulation of your brand description. This sets the stage for your brand story. Feel free to tweak it in the StoryCycle Genie™ to make it as compelling as you like.

Agency Management Institute (AMI) is a specialized management consulting business dedicated to helping small to medium-sized marketing agency owners transform their businesses into more profitable, sustainable, and enjoyable enterprises. Through a combination of peer networks, workshops, coaching, consulting, and educational resources, AMI provides agency owners with the community, knowledge, and tools they need to overcome the isolation of leadership and achieve greater success.

Feel free to print this document and make notes in the space below with the very human touch of a pen or pencil.



The Heroes in Your Brand Story Are Your Primary Audiences:

Remember that you, your brand and your offering are *not* the heroes in this journey. Your audience's are. Always place them at the center of your brand storytelling as you play the important role of mentor guide. While the StoryCycle Genie™ identifies your top three audiences, consider focusing on your #1 audience because as the Pareto Principle states, 80% of your business will come from your top audience.

We've also included your audience's primary motivators including challenges, fears, frustrations and aspirations. These are the emotional triggers that will help guide your storytelling from *their* point of view: What's in it for *them*. Because nobody buys a solution without a problem.

1. Small to Mid-Sized Agency Owners (1-75 employees):

Challenges:

- Maintaining consistent profitability while managing fluctuating client demands
- Scaling the business beyond the founder's personal capacity and relationships
- Balancing client work with business development and internal operations
- Creating systems that allow the agency to function without the owner's constant involvement
- Navigating industry changes and evolving client expectations

Fears:

- Making decisions that could jeopardize the financial stability of the business
- Letting down employees who depend on the agency for their livelihood
- Being exposed as "not knowing enough" about running a business
- Losing key clients that represent a significant portion of revenue
- Never being able to exit the business on their own terms

Frustrations:

- Making decisions that could jeopardize the financial stability of the business
- Letting down employees who depend on the agency for their livelihood
- Being exposed as "not knowing enough" about running a business
- Losing key clients that represent a significant portion of revenue
- Never being able to exit the business on their own terms

Aspirations:



- Building a business that can operate successfully without their daily involvement
- Creating a legacy that outlasts their personal involvement in the business
- Achieving financial security and wealth through agency ownership
- Being recognized as a leader in their specific market or niche
- Maintaining creative fulfillment while growing the business side

2. Agency Leadership Teams:

Challenges:

- Implementing consistent processes across different departments and client teams
- Translating the owner's vision into actionable plans for the team
- Managing team performance and accountability without micromanaging
- Balancing client satisfaction with agency profitability
- Developing junior talent into future leaders

Fears:

- Making costly mistakes that impact the agency's reputation or bottom line
- Failing to meet expectations set by agency owners
- Losing team members to burnout or competitive offers
- Being unable to solve complex client problems
- Getting caught between client demands and internal resource limitations

Frustrations:

- Lack of clear decision-making authority or guidelines
- Insufficient resources to deliver on client expectations
- Constantly shifting priorities and "fire drills"
- Difficulty measuring and demonstrating their impact on the business
- Inadequate training for their leadership responsibilities

Aspirations:

- Lack of clear decision-making authority or guidelines
- Insufficient resources to deliver on client expectations
- Constantly shifting priorities and "fire drills"
- Difficulty measuring and demonstrating their impact on the business
- Inadequate training for their leadership responsibilities



3. Aspiring Agency Owners:

Challenges:

- Transitioning from practitioner to business owner mindset
- Establishing credibility and a client base without a track record
- Setting up proper business foundations and legal structures
- Determining appropriate service offerings and pricing
- Managing cash flow during the startup phase

Fears:

- Financial failure and potential personal debt
- Not being able to attract enough clients to sustain the business
- Making critical mistakes due to inexperience
- Underpricing services and creating an unsustainable model
- Isolation and lack of support during difficult periods

Frustrations:

- Conflicting advice about how to start and run an agency
- Difficulty differentiating from established competitors
- The slow pace of building a reputation and client base
- Wearing too many hats and handling all aspects of the business
- Uncertainty about which investments of time and money will yield returns

Aspirations:

- Creating an agency with a distinct culture and approach
- Building a business that reflects their personal values
- Achieving greater creative freedom and autonomy
- Establishing financial independence through business ownership
- Making a meaningful impact in their clients' businesses

RESOURCE: Read Ch. 2, “Heroes: How to Understand Your Customers to Build a Tribe” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).



The Foundational ABT Narrative Frameworks for Each Audience:

The ABT (And, But, Therefore) narrative framework uses the three forces of story of agreement, contradiction and consequence for clear and compelling communication.

Think of it in traditional storytelling structure as “Setup, Problem, Resolution.” This three-act structure is how your audiences’ primal pattern-seeking, problem-solving, decision-making buying limbic brain makes meaning out of your message. Here are the steps to craft a compelling ABT:

1. Frame their story by identifying your audience, describe what they want relative to your offering AND define why it’s important to them.
2. Name the problem in your BUT statement by revealing an emotion they are feeling *because* of what problem you will solve for them.
3. Claim your solution in the Therefore statement by starting with what’s in it for them and then how you will help them achieve what they want.

ABT Statements

1. **For Agency Owners:** As an agency owner, you want to build a profitable, sustainable business AND create a legacy you can be proud of.

BUT you feel isolated and overwhelmed because you lack peers to share challenges with and proven systems to implement.

THEREFORE, you can now confidently grow your agency with clarity and purpose backed by AMI's commitment to providing community, proven best practices, and practical tools that have helped thousands of agencies thrive.

2. **For Leadership Teams:** As an agency leader, you want to implement effective systems AND develop your team to their highest potential.

BUT you feel frustrated because you're constantly putting out fires and lack time for strategic thinking.

THEREFORE, you can now transform your agency's operations with confidence backed by AMI's commitment to providing battle-tested frameworks and leadership development specifically designed for marketing agencies.



3. **For Aspiring Owners:** As an aspiring agency owner, you want to build a successful business from the ground up AND avoid costly mistakes.

BUT you feel uncertain because the path to creating a profitable agency is unclear and filled with potential pitfalls.

THEREFORE, you can now launch and grow with confidence backed by AMI's commitment to sharing decades of agency-specific knowledge and a supportive community of experienced owners.

Scribble notes or craft your own audience ABTs below...

RESOURCE: Read Ch. 3, “Stakes: How to Connect With the Wishes and Wants of Your Customers” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).



Your Brand Position Statement:

From what the Genie knows about your brand offering and your audiences, it has revealed the following position statement.

For marketing agency owners who feel isolated in their leadership journey and struggle to build consistently profitable businesses, AMI provides a unique combination of peer community, proven systems, and practical guidance that transforms the overwhelming complexity of agency ownership into clear, actionable steps toward sustainable success and personal fulfillment.

Your Unique Value Proposition:

Your brand UVP encapsulates your position statement into a clear, concise and compelling sentence.

"Building better agencies through community, knowledge, and proven systems."

Notes?

RESOURCES: Read Ch. 4, “Disruption: How Your Unique Value Proposition Will Win the Day” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).

Read Ch. 5, “Antagonists: How to Capitalize on Competitive Forces” or [listen to it here](#).



Crafting Authentic Brand Stories That *Captivate* Your Audience:

Don't tell your audience how great you are...*show* them.

An invaluable part of the Story Cycle System™ is identifying nine one-word descriptors that your branding, sales and marketing team can use as “story themes”.

These real-world anecdotes demonstrate the impact your offering makes with customers. Here's your marketing gold because nothing beats a true story well told to connect with and convert your prospects.

We use our “OOOh Exercise” to develop your descriptors (your brand personality traits) in three categories:

4. Organization (How your brand operates)
5. Offering (What customers experience while working with your brand)
6. Outcomes (What customers receive from your offering)

Organization:

1. **Experienced:**
AMI brings over 30+ years of agency-specific knowledge to every interaction, having worked with thousands of agencies across different specialties and sizes. This depth of experience means they've seen virtually every agency challenge and know what solutions actually work in the real world.
2. **Authentic:**
AMI embodies straightforward, honest communication without sugar-coating challenges or promising unrealistic results. Their team speaks from actual experience rather than theory, creating genuine connections with agency owners through shared understanding of the industry's unique challenges.
3. **Supportive:**
AMI creates an environment where agency owners feel safe to be vulnerable about their business challenges. They foster genuine connections between members and provide consistent encouragement through both successes and setbacks, recognizing that agency ownership can be an emotional rollercoaster.

Offering:

4. **Practical:**
AMI delivers actionable frameworks, tools, and advice that can be implemented immediately, focusing on real-world application rather than abstract concepts. Their resources are designed specifically for the agency business model, with clear steps for implementation.



5. Comprehensive:

AMI addresses all aspects of agency ownership through a holistic approach that integrates business strategy, leadership development, operational systems, and personal wellbeing. Their offerings range from high-level strategic guidance to detailed operational templates.

6. Accessible:

AMI makes agency expertise available through multiple formats and price points, from free podcasts and blogs to more intensive peer groups and coaching. Their content is presented in clear, jargon-free language that makes complex business concepts understandable.

Outcome:

7. Profitable:

AMI helps agencies achieve consistent profitability through improved financial management, strategic pricing, and operational efficiency. Their members typically see significant improvements in AGI (Adjusted Gross Income) and net profit percentages.

8. Balanced:

AMI helps agencies achieve consistent profitability through improved financial management, strategic pricing, and operational efficiency. Their members typically see significant improvements in AGI (Adjusted Gross Income) and net profit percentages.

9. Confident:

AMI transforms uncertain, overwhelmed agency owners into decisive leaders who trust their business instincts and strategic direction. Their community and resources eliminate the isolation of leadership and provide validation for difficult decisions.

Here's an example anecdote. We don't tell people the StoryCycle Genie™ is empowering, we *show* it!

You know that great feeling when you've helped empower someone by showing them a new, more effective way of doing something?

I saw it when our ZOOM session began at 9:30 am on a cold February 12. Steve Smallman, Founding Partner and Chief Strategist at Fifteen4 Creative in Chattanooga, TN, was one of our StoryCycle Genie™ beta testers. Having been in branding for the tech industry for several decades, and having toyed with general AI, he was skeptical that we could improve on ChatGPT and other agents.

*Then he loaded their **fifteen4.com** website into the Genie and watched its magic unfold. He was excited to share what it immediately revealed*



"I saw both a quick output that was more than satisfactory...man did you just save a couple weeks of work. It described Fifteen4 as 'A strategic creative agency that transforms complex B2B narratives into compelling brand experiences, specializing in enterprise technology and professional services companies through a blend of of strategic thinking and creative execution.'

"And I was like, okay, well that's better than I've ever figured out how to say it."

Jot down potential anecdote ideas you can use with your brand descriptors.



Your Emotional Promise:

From these descriptors, we arrive at the singular overarching emotional promise your brand delivers to everyone who works with and in your business.

Your promise is your North Star to evoke a consistent emotion communicated through your existing brand story. It's important because your customers buy with their hearts and justify their purchase with their heads.

Emotional Promise: **"Confidence"**

Confidence as the emotional promise because it represents the transformative feeling AMI delivers to agency owners who often struggle with uncertainty, self-doubt, and decision fatigue. Through AMI's community, knowledge, and systems, owners gain the assurance that they're making sound business decisions based on proven practices rather than guesswork.

This confidence permeates all aspects of their business and personal life, allowing them to lead with conviction, communicate their value more effectively to clients, and trust in their vision for the future.



Your Physical Gift:

While your emotional promise connects on a visceral buying level, your brand's physical gift is the measurable outcome your offering provides. This connects with the logic/reasoned driven brain that justifies the emotional purchase.

The gift is important because your brand stories are *not* about what you make but *what you make happen* in your audience's life.

Physical Gift: “Clarity”

AMI cuts through the confusion and complexity of agency ownership to provide clear direction and actionable steps. Agency owners often feel overwhelmed by competing priorities and uncertain about which path to take. AMI delivers the gift of clarity through structured frameworks, peer insights, and expert guidance that illuminates the way forward. This clarity manifests in concrete deliverables like strategic plans, operational systems, and financial benchmarks that transform vague aspirations into defined, achievable goals.



RESOURCE: Read Ch. 6, “Mentor: How to Humanize Your Brand With its Promise, Gift and Personality” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).



Your Brand Personality Archetypes:

What is the “feel, tone and voice” of your messaging? A powerful way to create an authentic, consistent and compelling personality for your brand is by using archetypes. From your current brand expression, the Genie has determined your primary archetype influenced by your secondary archetypes.

Brand Archetypes

Primary: **The Sage**

The Sage archetype perfectly captures AMI's core identity as a wisdom-sharing entity focused on education, insight, and truth. AMI's extensive content creation through blogs, podcasts, and resources demonstrates their commitment to sharing knowledge.

Their approach is thoughtful and analytical, helping agency owners make better decisions through deeper understanding rather than quick fixes. The Sage's quest for truth aligns with AMI's commitment to honest conversations about agency challenges and their dedication to helping owners see their businesses objectively.

Secondary: **The Guide/Mentor:**

As a secondary archetype, the Guide/Mentor reflects AMI's hands-on approach to supporting agency owners through their journey. Unlike the more intellectual Sage, the Guide is actively involved in the hero's journey, offering practical advice and emotional support along the way. AMI embodies this through their coaching, peer groups, and workshops where they don't just share information but actively guide implementation and provide accountability. The Guide archetype emphasizes AMI's role in helping owners navigate challenges rather than simply understanding them.

Secondary: **The Everyman or Woman:**

The Caregiver archetype represents AMI's nurturing approach to the agency community. This is evident in how they create safe spaces for vulnerability, foster connections between members, and demonstrate genuine concern for the wellbeing of agency owners beyond just business metrics. The Caregiver's protective nature aligns with AMI's desire to shield owners from common pitfalls and their emphasis on building sustainable businesses that support owners' lives rather than consuming them.

RESOURCES: Read Ch. 7, “Journey: How to Increase Customer Engagement Through the Stories You Tell” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).

Read Ch. 8, “Victory: How to Celebrate Wins on the Customer Journey From Brand Awareness to Appreciation” or [listen to it here](#).



Your Brand Purpose Statement:

Let's declare your Brand Purpose Statement: what you do beyond making money that elevates the lives of everyone you touch. It's important to let your colleagues, customers and the communities you serve know what you stand for to make you stand out in your market.

Brand Purpose Statement

"Agency Management Institute exists to help people transcend the isolation and uncertainty of agency ownership into confident leadership and sustainable success."

This purpose statement is powerful and effective for several key reasons:

1. **It centers on human impact** - The statement begins with "help people," emphasizing that AMI's primary purpose is about serving humans, not just businesses. This human-centered approach resonates emotionally and positions AMI as a people-first organization.
2. **It acknowledges real pain points** - By directly naming "isolation and uncertainty," the statement validates the genuine struggles agency owners face. This acknowledgment creates immediate resonance with the target audience who feel seen and understood.
3. **It identifies the specific context** - The phrase "agency ownership" clearly defines AMI's specialized focus, immediately filtering for relevance to their target audience while establishing domain expertise.
4. **It presents a clear transformation** - The statement maps a journey from a negative state (isolation and uncertainty) to a positive outcome (confident leadership and sustainable success), creating a compelling before-and-after narrative.
5. **It balances emotional and practical outcomes** - "Confident leadership" addresses the emotional/personal transformation, while "sustainable success" speaks to the practical business outcomes, showing that AMI delivers both internal and external results.
6. **It aligns with the Sage/Guide archetype** - The concept of helping others transcend challenges reflects AMI's primary brand archetypes, reinforcing brand consistency.
7. **It's aspirational yet achievable** - The statement promises significant transformation without making unrealistic claims, maintaining credibility while inspiring action.



8. **It's concise and memorable** - At 20 words, the statement is brief enough to be remembered and repeated, making it an effective communication tool.
9. **It differentiates from competitors** - Many business consultancies focus solely on metrics and processes, but this purpose statement positions AMI as addressing both the emotional and business aspects of agency ownership.
10. **It creates a "why" beyond profit** - The statement articulates AMI's reason for existence beyond making money, giving both employees and customers a meaningful mission to connect with.

This purpose statement works because it succinctly captures the essence of AMI's impact while creating an emotional connection with their audience through authentic understanding of their journey.



RESOURCE: Read Ch. 9, “Moral: How to Declare Your Brand’s Purpose to Amplify Your Impact” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).



Overarching Brand Narrative:

Now let's take all of the story elements from above and craft your overarching brand narrative.

Brand Narrative

In the complex and often isolating world of marketing agency ownership, Agency Management Institute stands as a beacon of clarity and community. We understand that behind every agency is an owner navigating the delicate balance between creative excellence and business sustainability, often without a roadmap or peers to turn to for guidance.

Founded on the belief that no agency owner should have to figure it all out alone, AMI has spent decades gathering insights from thousands of successful agencies and distilling them into practical systems that work in the real world. Our experienced team speaks the language of agency life because we've lived it—we know the late nights worrying about payroll, the challenge of pricing creative work, and the weight of responsibility for employees' livelihoods.

Through our peer networks, workshops, coaching, and resources, we help agency owners transcend the overwhelming challenges of leadership and emerge as confident decision-makers with clear direction. We don't just offer theoretical advice; we provide battle-tested frameworks that can be implemented immediately to improve profitability, operations, and quality of life.

What sets AMI apart is our unique combination of community, knowledge, and practical systems. We create spaces where agency owners can be vulnerable about their challenges and find both emotional support and strategic solutions. Our comprehensive approach addresses all aspects of agency life—from financial management and team development to personal wellbeing and succession planning.

The result is not just better-run agencies but transformed lives. Our members discover the confidence that comes from making decisions based on proven practices rather than guesswork. They gain the clarity to focus on what truly matters in their business. And perhaps most importantly, they build agencies that support their desired lifestyle rather than consuming it.

In a world where many agency owners feel isolated in their leadership journey, AMI provides both the wisdom and the community to ensure a more fulfilling, balanced path to sustainable success. We exist to help people transcend the uncertainty of agency ownership into confident leadership and lasting achievement, creating a legacy they can be proud of.



Brand Narrative Reduced to 100 Words:

Agency Management Institute stands as the trusted ally for marketing agency owners navigating the isolation of leadership. We've distilled decades of experience into practical systems that transform uncertainty into confidence.

Through our unique blend of peer community, industry-specific knowledge, and proven frameworks, we help agency owners transcend common challenges and build sustainably profitable businesses.

Our comprehensive approach addresses both the strategic and emotional aspects of agency ownership, creating clarity amid complexity. We don't just improve businesses—we transform lives, enabling owners to build agencies that support their desired lifestyle rather than consuming it. With AMI, no agency owner walks alone.

Foundational ABT Statement Based on the Brand Narrative

As a marketing agency owner, you want to build a profitable, sustainable business AND create a fulfilling professional life where you're not constantly overwhelmed or isolated in your leadership journey.

BUT you feel uncertain and alone because you lack proven systems and a community of peers who truly understand your unique challenges.

THEREFORE, you can now transcend these limitations with confidence backed by AMI's commitment to providing industry-specific knowledge, practical frameworks, and a supportive community that has helped thousands of agency owners transform isolation and uncertainty into confident leadership and sustainable success..

RESOURCE: Read Ch. 10, “Ritual: How to Build Repeat Business to Simplify Your Life” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).



Voila! Your Initial Brand Story Narrative Strategy is Complete:

This is the first pass at how your brand is showing up in the market. You might see some gaps in your storytelling and some opportunities to make it more enthralling.

Simply return to any area that needs refinement. Make your edits and your faithful Genie will do the rest. Your wish is its command.

Once you're done, you'll receive the final overview of your brand narrative.

Remember, it will probably be about 90% there. You will bring 100% of your human touch to make it uniquely your own. But at least you'll have the heavy lifting of the first draft done for you. Think of the StoryCycle Genie™ process as turning a blank page and your blank stare into the beginning of brilliance.

The StoryCycle Genie™ can now create first drafts for all of your marketing materials with no hallucinations because it specifically pulls from your refined brand story:

- Website content
- Customer personas
- Advertising
- Social posts
- Sales presentations
- Video scripts
- Competitor brand stories
- Blog posts
- Podcast intros
- Event outlines
- You name it!

RESOURCES: Read Ch. 11 & Ch. 12 ,“How to Debut and Scale Your New Brand Story” in *Brand Bewitchery* or [listen to it here](#).

Read Appendix One: “Using the Story Cycle System™ for Presentation Creation” or [listen to it here](#).

Read Appendix Two: “How to Craft Your Origin Story Using the Heroes Journey” or [listen to it here](#).

You can access the entire *Brand Bewitchery* book [here](#).

