



THE PROVEN WAY TO TURN YOUR STORY

INTO A MOVIE, SHOW,
OR PODCAST

This step-by-step guide introduces storytellers to a radical, new approach to break their stories into Hollywood.

QUICK PEEK

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LETTER FROM FOUNDER

Dear Storyteller,

If you're reading this, chances are you've been gifted with a spark of inspiration ... one that's led you to envision or write a story. And you're now interested in turning it into a movie, show or podcast.

Given the rise of streaming platforms like Amazon and Netflix and the surging demand for content, there's never been a better time to bring your story into the world.

The problem is that our industry was set up to be extremely difficult to break into, and so people like you have to 'figure it out' on your own, with no good information and no clear path to buyers, financiers and distributors. So many stories that have the potential to make it don't even get the chance.

As a stark contrast to that reality, I founded Voyage because I believe everyone has a story to share, and that everyone deserves a fair shot to be heard.

We've developed a platform that gets your projects into the hands of producers quickly, and with the real-world information and strategy it needs to access financing, production and distribution. I wrote this guide to introduce you to this new approach, and the logic behind it that can shave off the years of effort and networking it typically takes to break into Hollywood and get your story made as a movie, show or podcast.

As you read on, you'll get a clear sense of where the market is heading and how best to approach it. Perhaps for the first time, you'll discover a path that's both inspired and that works!

Together we can do great things!

NAT MUNDEL
Founder & CEO



Why “Break In” in the First Place

Historically the only screens were the 3 broadcast TV networks and movie theaters. All the content competed for a limited number of slots. Period.

A centralized production and financing system (the studios and talent agencies) made a lot of sense in that old world.

But the world has changed. And it's opened more opportunities than ever for people with good ideas. Why?

Because with the advent of streaming platforms, multiplexes, podcast platforms, cable television, the video on demand (VOD), digital distribution, smart phones, all coupled together with globalization, there are almost an infinite number of screens worldwide. And they're all clamoring for content.

NETFLIX + \$20.2B

Netflix has committed \$20.2 billion (yes billion!) in content spend in 2022 alone!

All the streamers combined - Apple, Facebook, Hulu, HBO, Disney+ etc - are estimated to spend over \$230 billion on content this year. And that doesn't include content in theaters, on the cable channels, VOD and television networks!

And the podcast industry is also surging at a combined annual growth rate of over 22% year over year and is the new, hot way to sell movies and shows.

All this is to say that demand for original content has surged like no other time in history!

But how do you develop projects that are right for the market? And when you have the right project, how do you get it into the right hands?

amazon
+
\$13B

Amazon is committed to ~ \$13 billion in content spend.

The Old Way of Breaking In

The traditional way is that aspiring writers and storytellers move to Hollywood, get a catering job or assistant position, and spend 5-10 years figuring out how the industry works and networking to build relationships. Eventually, and if they are lucky... they get an Agent.

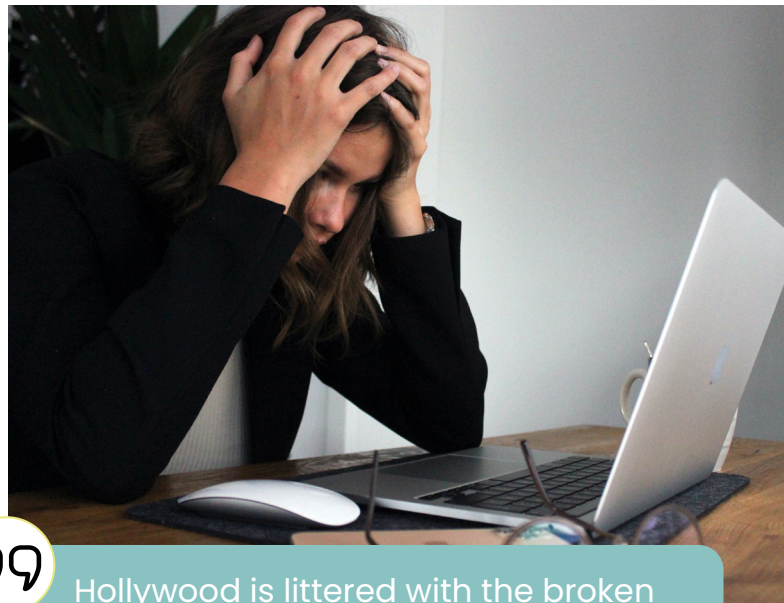
And once they have an agent, they spend more years pitching projects, one after the other like throwing spaghetti at the wall to see what might eventually stick. Unfortunately, only a few of these storytellers catch their 'big break.'

Most never will. Hollywood is littered with the broken dreams of storytellers who've given up, or who never really had a shot.

To be clear, even though I'm referring to this method as the 'old' method, it's still what most people do today. Most live within the myopic view that if only they could get an agent, everything would fall into place.

Now don't get me wrong. This isn't a 'bad' approach. It's what I did. And like most, it took me About 7 years (and a lot of wasted time and several failed projects) before I even 'got' how the system worked.

The underlying problem with this 'trial and error' approach is that it takes forever, is fraught with missteps and failures, and exists in a knowledge and information vacuum - you never really know if your projects will be marketable - so you spin your wheels time with no real results.



Hollywood is littered with the broken dreams of storytellers who've given up or never really had a shot

Plus, and here's the kicker, agents actually don't want to work with you or help you out. Which is why, if you've ever tried, you know how impossible it is to get one.

But it's not you that's the problem. And it's not them either. The problem is the underlying economic model of agenting. Agents can really only pay attention to the top 10% of people who are already earning large sums of money inside the industry. Or those with giant bestselling books with massive publishing deals. Because with the advent of streaming platforms, multiplexes, podcast platforms, cable television, the video on demand (VOD), digital distribution, smart phones, all coupled together with globalization, there are almost an infinite number of screens worldwide. And they're all clamoring for content.

So if you don't fall into one of those categories, it's a complete waste of time, energy and effort to try and get an agent.

Agents are not (and can't be) the champions of new and original voices that many of us hope for.

But There is a New (And Better) Way

For those of you who can't or don't want to move to Hollywood, work as a starving artist for a decade and wait for your big break, there is a smarter, more effective path.

The path lies at the intersection of two shifts in mindset.

The first is pretty obvious...



MINDSET SHIFT #1: **DON'T WAIT!**

Never before in human history have there been so many methods for people to succeed using their own drive and ambition.

The book self-publishing industry, YouTube & TikTok, podcasting, crowdfunding, Uber & Airbnb – all are reflective of this new ethos of 'taking matters into our own hands.' Smart people no longer wait for others to do the work for them or for the systems to change.. Instead, they see the limitations of the system ... and they figure out a way to make things happen on their own.

The old Hollywood centralized model may be one of the last to fall, but it is falling. I assure you!

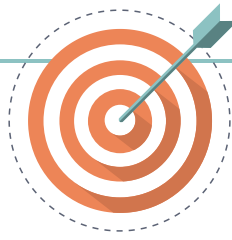
So your job in this new world order is to take ownership of your future and the future of

your project – be in the business of 'making it happen!'

Here's what that means: do the work to understand how your project best fits into the market. Then be prepared to do what it takes to turn your work, story or book into something that's undeniably attractive to decision-makers.

There are an infinite number of ways you can move your project forward when you have a little know-how and a lot of drive. The point is you need to decide that you won't wait to be 'discovered' by someone else.

Now let's move on to the second shift. This one is a little less obvious ...



MINDSET SHIFT #2: **TARGET PRODUCERS** (NOT AGENTS)

The primary thing an agent does for a writer is to connect them with producers.

So they act as a 'middleman.' That means they either pave the way for you, or they, by default, act as a barrier between you and the producer.

That's why you need to target producers yourself.

Now the key to understanding why this works is to understand what motivates different people in Hollywood.

Simply put, a producer has different priorities than an agent.

As we discussed earlier, the economics of agenting, leads them to look for easy transactions. A producer, on the other hand, is motivated by passion, and is looking for the next great project to sink their teeth into.

And frankly, they don't care where it comes from as long as it's great! Plus finding an undiscovered gem from an unknown talent gives them a lot to brag about.

You see how the person's motivation makes a difference?

If a producer becomes passionate about your project and believes it's ready to be in the market, they will put the full force of their will and relationships on the line. That often means they'll spend 2-3 years (for no money) trying to get your project financed, made and distributed

That's why they're much better and more viable targets for the emerging storyteller like you.

But a few words of caution:

1. Producers are highly protective of their time (they have to be). So getting them to say, "sure I'll read your script or listen to your pitch" isn't easyweights. If you target heavyweights from the start, you'll likely be banging your head against a wall.
2. If you target the wrong producer or show them material that's not ready for market, you'll blow your shot
3. Target independent producers first (not the heavyweights with studio or financing deals). Independent producers are often the door openers you need. They look for promising projects and get them ready to bring to the heavyweights. If you target heavyweights from the start, you'll likely be banging your head against a wall.



NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW

THE OSCAR WINNING FILM THE MARTIAN STARTED OUT AS A SELF-PUBLISHED BOOK & BLOG. IT ALL STARTED WHEN AUTHOR ANDY WEIR WAS FED UP WITH THE TRADITIONAL BOOK PUBLISHING INDUSTRY AND DECIDED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.

In 2009, Weir got creative and started posting his story chapter by chapter on his personal blog where anyone could read it for free.

He attracted a lot of attention from science-minded readers, who started asking for the full manuscript.

Once Weir heard this, he published "The Martian" on Amazon's self-publishing arm, where he priced it for 99-cents.

With a huge influx of downloads, after just a few months the book shot up to the top of Amazon's best-selling science fiction list, where it caught the attention of publishing company Random House.

Four days later, Hollywood called for the movie rights.

Voyage's very own **ALIVE DAY** (now a \$50 million studio feature in development with Oscar-nominated producer Mike Medavoy and A-list Director Philip Noyce) started similarly. Sam Hill, an unknown, unpublished author, wasn't content waiting to be discovered.

So he hired a screenwriter to adapt his story into a world-class screenplay. That decision, coupled with the Hill's commitment to do what it takes to get the project directly to producers, landed him a deal with two of the most well known filmmakers in Hollywood.

Tips for Nabbing a Producer

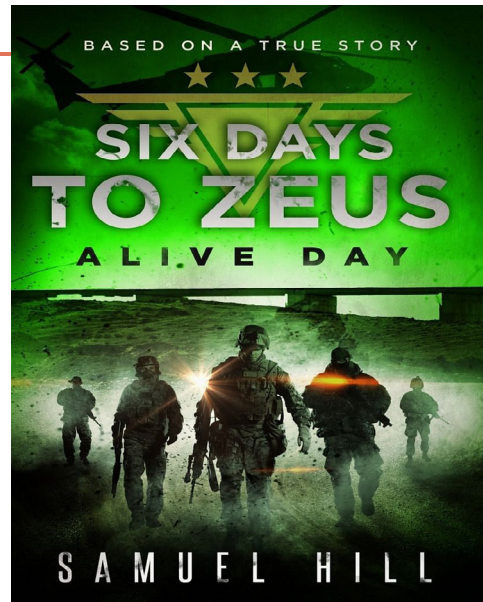
1. KNOW YOUR MARKET!

Producers work in very specific niches in the market. A movie producer typically does not make reality shows, for example, and a kids TV producer doesn't make 1-hr dramas for Netflix. While it's tempting to pitch anyone you can get an introduction to or reach, the scattershot approach will not get your project made, and worse, it brands you as an amateur.

2. BE CURIOUS, COLLABORATIVE & OPEN TO FEEDBACK!

If you can get the ear of a producer, you need to train yourself to listen to their perspective.

I made a critical mistake early in my career. I believed my project was so good that anyone would be foolish to not be interested in it. But the fact is, producers know what's selling in a market, what's not, and why. I wish I had been curious early on so I could have modified my project to be more viable..



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Hill's commitment to do what it takes to get the project directly to producers, landed him a deal with two of the most well-known filmmakers in Hollywood."

You need to be willing to work at understanding why they think the things they think.

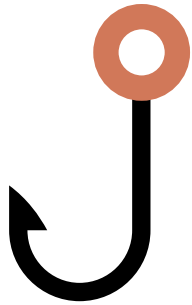
For example, if a producer says, "Your hero is too passive" what they might actually mean is, "without making your hero more active, you won't be able to get a star to play the role. And if you don't get a star to play the role, then the foreign distributors won't pre-buy the distribution rights. If you don't get foreign presales, you won't be able to get the bank debt to finance the remainder of the picture."

I hope you get the idea: be insanely curious.

3. HAVE A GREAT PROJECT!

There's simply no getting around this one. Even though there is more demand for content than ever before, it is still a 'buyer's market.' That means there are more stories available than there are projects that get produced (even though the dynamic is shifting as I mentioned earlier). It's critical that your project makes sense for the market. And it needs to stand out from the crowd.

3 Project must-haves to stand from the crowd



A Great Hook

Besides a great story, book, or script, your project needs a unique angle or point of view. It's the element that sets it apart from all other projects – we call this a hook or a pitch.

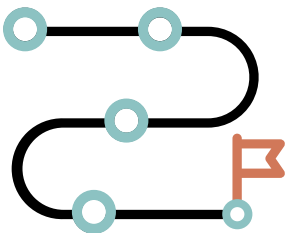
It's hard for storytellers to accept or understand that 99% of the time producers have already heard about projects like theirs. So your hook needs to sound new and different. It must leave the producer wanting to learn more.



A Clearly Defined Market

Without knowing precisely which market your project is ideally suited for, you'll be casting too wide a net. You will come across as unprofessional.

So you must be clear which market is right for your project. And once you know your specific market, you can focus 100% of your time and attention on it (and avoid the proverbial and ineffective 'throwing spaghetti at the wall').



A Project Roadmap

With a great hook and a defined target market, you now need a plan for how to 'attack' that market.

Each market has its own twists, turns, and best practice methods. What's true for an indie drama isn't true for a mid-market thriller ... and what's true for a mid-market thriller isn't true for a cable TV show ... and what's true for a cable TV show isn't true for a documentary ... and so on and so forth. So you've got to get to know your specific market and how it works.

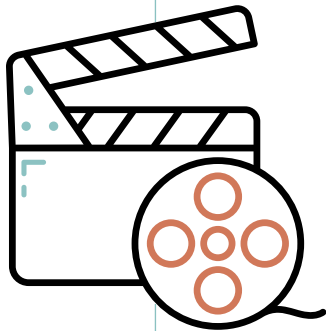
Discover your hook

One of the best ways to start the process of discovering your hook is to experiment with writing your story's "logline."

A logline is a one or two sentence description of your story that boils down its basic premise in a concise & compelling way.

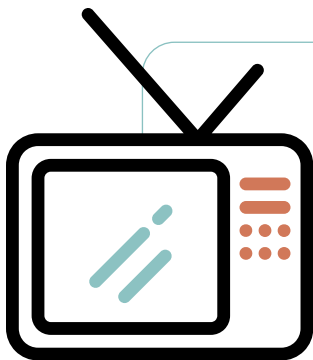
Use this fill-in-the-'bold' logline template as a guide. Then add personalized touches and your individual style to make it your own.

Once you've written your logline, it should start to become apparent where your hook may lie, or that perhaps you don't have one yet. Then you can further develop your project accordingly.



FORMULA #1

[NAME OF STORY] is a **[GENRE]** about a **[PROTAGONIST]** (including a **DESCRIPTIVE FACT** or **TWO**) who wants **[HIS/HER IMMEDIATE GOAL]**, when **[INCITING INCIDENT]** happens and **[ONE MAJOR PLOT POINT]**, he/she goes on a journey to **[ACCOMPLISH GOAL]**.



FORMULA #2

When **[MAIN CHARACTER]** **[EXPERIENCES]** an **[INCITING INCIDENT]**, **[ONE MAJOR PLOTPOINT]** happens on the way to **[ACCOMPLISH GOAL]**.

Why podcasts are the 'hot' new thing

You may not know this, but many of the industry's biggest hits over the last few years are based on podcasts. *HOME COMING*, *THE SHRINK NEXT DOOR*, *DIRTY JOHN*, *WECRASHED*, *SLOW BURN*, *THE DROPOUT*, *THE THING ABOUT PAM* - all based on podcasts.

And there will be even more coming as the industry is snatching up more and more podcasts to turn into movies and shows. Industry backrooms are a flurry with the excited chat about 'podcasts as IP'.

But what does that mean, why is it a thing, and why is it relevant to you?

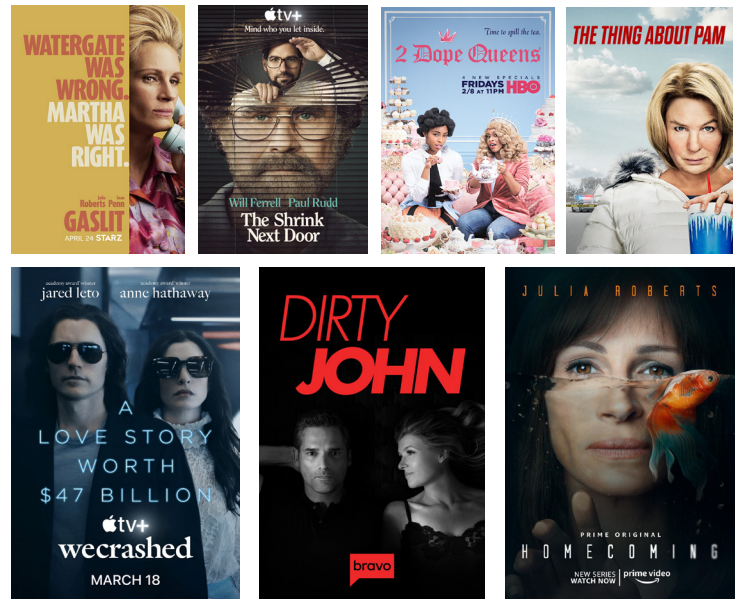
Here's the deal: similarly to the 'economics of agenting' I discussed earlier, the industry loves when a project has reduced risk, and/or proven potential. And a podcast is just that. Whether it's a talk/chat show, a limited run docuseries, or a fully scripted fiction show, a well-produced podcast can demonstrate to executives **two key things**:

1.

Here's what the movie or show is and...

2.

It already has traction.



Executives are busy and with limited attention spans. So when you can make it easy for them to consume your story (like in a car or at the gym or during their commute or morning walk), they'll get to it faster than if they have to sit and read. Plus a well-produced podcast makes it infinitely easier for them to envision the movie/show itself (vs reading and having to imagine what it might be).

Plus, if you can produce a podcast that gets some audience traction, you reach the top 1% of projects in the market that garner serious attention.

Now, producing a great podcast that stands out, and then marketing it so it stands out, is not easy. But you should take note of this path and determine if it might make sense for your story.



About Voyage

"We believe great stories can come from anywhere, and that everyone deserves a fair shot to be heard."

Voyage is an open platform that connects storytellers, producers and audiences to create film, television and podcast content. The platform facilitates a free flow of information, connections, and creates a new world where unbridled creativity meets market demand.

Stories have a new way to find their homes, and the closed doors of Hollywood are now open for business!

EXAMPLES OF STORIES VOYAGE AND ITS PRODUCERS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY BROUGHT TO MARKET:



“

As an independent author I'd experienced the frustration and headaches often associated with dealing with the mainstream literary agencies that are a maze of curt replies, strict guidelines, and 'not accepting manuscripts at this time' notices.

Skepticism came naturally to me after a forty-year career in journalism, but it just wasn't so. Voyage Media was open, friendly, and encouraging. [This process] has all been educational, enlightening, and fun. I recommend Voyage Media for anyone with a good story that has the potential to be entertaining and successful on the silver screen. You'll never know unless you try."



Don Ingram, Cloudfcraft
New Mexico

Author of **MAKING AMENDS IN BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK**, now being turned into a motion picture with producer Brian Young.

Okay so I'm a farmer, and if an entertainment company came out to my farm & tried to tell me how to farm, I would say that just won't work. I learned very quickly that they are the experts and know what will make a project successful, and even though I've watched movies & read books, that doesn't entitle me to the experience & expertise that they have.

There's so much potential for Voyage in connecting people with amazing stories that need to be told with the right producers. There's no one out there doing what Voyage is doing.

Rebecca Crowover

Dallas TX

Author of **MY DADDY IS IN HEAVEN**, now a motion picture produced by Voyage and Nasser Entertainment, and distributed by Cinedigm.



Voyage has really solved the problem of trying to get noticed and accepted by agents, producers and publishers, which can be very difficult if you don't already have a name. Voyage provides everything you need to find a producer that matches your needs and pitch your project.

It's a very simple and effective process.

”

Jon Bebo

Hudson MA

Congratulations!

If you've read this guide, you already have different perspectives to begin working with, and it's our hope that you see a new path forward and one that has you excited and optimistic.

CLICK HERE
TO START APPLICATION PROCESS



WHAT'S NEXT:

I will be emailing you some additional tips over the next few days, including another instructional guide:

THE 4 ENTERTAINMENT MARKETS FOR ORIGINAL STORIES

**And How Targeting The Wrong Market
Will Stop Every Project In Its Tracks**

Remember to whitelist the email storytoscreen@voyagemedia.com email so the info makes it to you.

***Together we can do
great things!***



voyage