



## Ray Edwards Show, Episode 306

### Donald Miller and StoryBrand

**Ray Edwards:** Ray Edwards Show episode 306. Donald Miller and StoryBrand.

**Announcer:** It's the Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

**Singer:** [singing] Let's change the world and watch your business grow. Welcome to the Ray Edwards Show.

[music]

**Ray Edwards:** There was a man who discovered a treasure. There was a man with a plan who discovered a treasure in a field. He went and sold everything he had to get that treasure by that field.

**Sean Edwards:** That was smart.

**Ray Edwards:** That's a story you may have heard. It's a couple thousand years old. It was told by Yahweh. Yeshua. Yeshua said he was Yahweh.

**Sean Edwards:** I am that I am.

**Ray Edwards:** Sidetrack. Some people say, "Jesus never said he was God."

**Sean Edwards:** He did.

**Ray Edwards:** He did. He absolutely did.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes. At one point, he calls himself, "I am." Grammatically incorrect.

**Ray Edwards:** That's why they killed.

**Sean Edwards:** That's why the Pharisees got really pissed at him because he called himself God.

**Ray Edwards:** I'm not saying that I've proved anything to you other than the fact that if you keep saying that Jesus never called himself God, you're just proving your own ignorance.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes, you don't understand the New Testament.

**Ray Edwards:** You need to argue your position better.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes. [laughing]



**Ray Edwards:** Off that subject now. Jesus taught in stories primarily. He didn't give any three-point sermons.

**Sean Edwards:** No. Not that were recorded. They presume that Matthew, being the tax collector, the sermon on the mount may have been --

**Ray Edwards:** Word-for-word transcription.

**Sean Edwards:** Or at least an outline, like you would take notes.

**Ray Edwards:** Thought-for-thought like the NIV, the Nearly Inspired Version.

**Sean Edwards:** When you take notes when you're listening to a lecture, the Gospel of Matthew's sermon on the mount that that at least might be that.

**Ray Edwards:** The way I heard it is because he was a tax collector, he had some form of short-hand that he was able to take stenography or something like that.

**Sean Edwards:** It makes sense. Whatever.

**Ray Edwards:** Stories. Jesus told stories. Didn't give three-point sermons. As good as those are, as clear as those are, he told stories. Those stories stuck. We still know about the man who built his house in his sand versus the one who built his house on the rock.

**Sean Edwards:** When thinking about the New Testament, the Gospels in general, the heart of the New Testament are the Gospels. We love the Epistles but when you think of the New Testament, you think of the Gospels. They're not theological treatises like the Epistles can be. They're stories.

**Ray Edwards:** Exactly. Now, in case you're having a fit right now, like, "Oh, hear they go again with all that Christian stuff. I wish they'd quit that." Why are you listening? B--

**Sean Edwards:** We do go to the other side.

**Ray Edwards:** We do. Ayn Rand is a philosopher is opposed to Christianity.

**Sean Edwards:** Absolutely. I heard a story that she tried to undo a marriage of one of her students because he was going to marry a Christian. She was so opposed to that that she actively tried to stop them from getting married.

**Ray Edwards:** She invented an entirely new philosophy that stands in the ranks with Aristotle, with all the great philosophers of history. I was going to name some but they all would make her angry. I don't want to promote their names.

**Sean Edwards:** Philosophy has fallen into two camps throughout history but we won't go into that.



**Ray Edwards:** No, not right now, anyway. Maybe on a new podcast. Anyway, she taught her philosophy. She spread her philosophy through the world in the form of stories. The reason that we tell stories is because this is how we best communicate. This is how we best distill ideas and make them stick.

**Sean Edwards:** Reminds me of that T&G episode.

**Ray Edwards:** Which one?

**Sean Edwards:** Darmok and Jalad at Tanagra.

**Ray Edwards:** Oh, my gosh. I saw a bumper sticker that said that.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes. I have, too. I watched that episode recently. It was on TV. It's so good.

**Ray Edwards:** Stories are the way to communicate ideas in a way that sticks over time. There's a book called *Made to Stick* by the Heath brothers, Dan and Chip Heath.

**Sean Edwards:** I was going to say, "Was it made by the duct tape company?"

**Ray Edwards:** No. That's a different guys. The Heath brothers wrote this book called *Made to Stick*. It's about why some stories stick and why some others don't. They talk about, at one point, urban myths. There's an urban myth about the guy who meets a beautiful woman in a bar and goes up to the room, wakes up the next morning in a bathtub full of ice. His right kidney has been removed. This has been told many times, it's even appeared in newspapers but it never happened.

**Sean Edwards:** Really?

**Ray Edwards:** Really. But it sticks. It's tenacious.

**Sean Edwards:** Just like the urban myth about the Halloween person who put razors or poison in the candy.

**Ray Edwards:** Never happened. That's also in this book.

**Sean Edwards:** Really?

**Ray Edwards:** Yes. That never happened either. The story about the woman who went to the grocery store and thought she'd been shot in the back of the head but it was really a can of biscuits that exploded in the heat?

**Sean Edwards:** I don't know that one.

**Ray Edwards:** That's a popular one as well.

**Sean Edwards:** Wait, I do know that one. Yes.

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**Ray Edwards:** She thought she reached back and felt the dough and thought it was her brains. These stories stick, and if you want to tell stories about, if you want to market your brand in a way that's meaningful to people so they remember you and they know what you do you tell a good story, and that's what Interviewer 2 talks about in his book *Story Brand* and he gives you a system for telling stories. Now, we'll get this in a moment, I want to come back to story telling how it fits into copywriting but let's move on to our next segment.

**Voice over:** Does anyone want to live a life that is long and prosperous? Spiritual foundation.

**Ray Edwards:** Spiritual foundation this week is this is going to be really basic and even if you're not a believer, and I had somebody call me on this he said, "Well I am a believer I just don't believe in what you believe in," okay fine you're not a Christian believer, this I think will work for you, Jesus said something that has been called the Golden Rule, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," This is the basis of business, this is the basis of capitalism.

**Sean Edwards:** This is the basis of a righteous government.

**Ray Edwards:** Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Now, unless you are psychologically crazy, you have some pathological problem with your thinking, you believe you're a bird or some other weird thing. As long as you're psychologically healthy.

**Sean Edwards:** Careful, someone might identify as a bird.

**Ray Edwards:** Do they get a separate restroom or just a perch?

**Sean Edwards:** I don't know.

**Ray Edwards:** Do unto others you'd have others do unto you is the rule of business and it is the rule of a righteous government. What is the role of government? Is it to supply education and to make sure we had jobs?

**Sean Edwards:** I think that's a question people should ask themselves far more often and actually try to answer it.

**Ray Edwards:** What is the role of government?

**Sean Edwards:** Yes, why does government exist, because most people can't answer that question succinctly.

**Ray Edwards:** Well, because they enforce the laws, they make the laws.

**Sean Edwards:** They serve the people.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, the Constitution that's why.



**Sean Edwards:** Yes, come on.

**Ray Edwards:** Because the founding father's.

**Sean Edwards:** And the good of society.

**Ray Edwards:** United we stand. The role of government I'll just tell you what it is, we'll give you the answer, it's to protect the citizens from violence.

**Sean Edwards:** Either from each other or from the government, that's it or other governments that's it.

**Ray Edwards:** Now, I will give a little bit of ground on this, I think that practically we need some organizational structure to help build infrastructures.

**Sean Edwards:** I think that this is a philosophic argument that there is some infrastructure that can be funded by the government.

**Ray Edwards:** Let's face it, if we didn't have the government to do that for us we would not have had the interstate highway system which has become crucial to our society.

**Sean Edwards:** Now, there are people who will argue, this is getting way off subject, there are people that will argue that if given a free enough society wealthy enough entrepreneurs might build. There are historical cases of rich people and corporations and conglomerations building highways and interstates and things like that.

**Ray Edwards:** Unless the wealthiest entrepreneurs believe we're all living in assimilation and it doesn't matter, that's a problem.

**Sean Edwards:** You don't want your wealthiest people thinking that or you don't want your wealthiest people in the world believing that all consciousness comes down to three boolean logic gates.

**Ray Edwards:** We've really gone off track.

**Sean Edwards:** Because if we're really afraid of AI that's what we're saying that human consciousness and creativity can be boiled down to three boolean logic gates.

**Ray Edwards:** The whole, I'm worried about AI taking over the world thing, just is ridiculous. People move on, let's talk about real problems.

**Sean Edwards:** Consciousness does not come down to ones and zeros.

**Ray Edwards:** No it just doesn't, how your brain works?

**Sean Edwards:** We don't know how the brain works but we know it doesn't work like that.

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**Ray Edwards:** As we were discussing the role of government

**Interviewer 2:** And there's spiritual foundations.

**Ray Edwards:** Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you, that includes the government. What's a proper spiritual government? It's one that enforces that rule, which means protect me from violence from other citizens and other countries.

**Sean Edwards:** Also what that means is, well, would you like your neighbor forcing you to pay for their groceries or healthcare or mortgage?

**Ray Edwards:** How would you feel if your neighbor came over and they had a gun and they pointed at you and said, "Buy me some groceries."

**Sean Edwards:** "Because I can't afford it."

**Ray Edwards:** That would be wrong.

**Sean Edwards:** That would be theft.

**Ray Edwards:** You would not like that, you'd be angry, you'd want justice.

**Sean Edwards:** That's not how you would treat other people.

**Ray Edwards:** That's how our tax system works.

**Sean Edwards:** But we're like, "We're okay with it if we write laws that do that, that's okay."

**Ray Edwards:** I think we've stirred up enough trouble now. Let's move on to the tip of the week.

**Sean Edwards:** Study philosophy? [laughs]

**Voice over:** Now, simple hacks that make life cheaper, easier and faster, Ray Edwards's tip of the week.

**Ray Edwards:** All right, here's the tip of the week, the greatest camera ever made.

**Sean Edwards:** I'm sure this has been on a tip of the week before and it will probably show up again.

**Ray Edwards:** No, it's never been on the tip of the week before.

**Sean Edwards:** It hasn't?

**Ray Edwards:** No.

**Sean Edwards:** I thought I talked about it a tip of the week.

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**Ray Edwards:** We've talked about the camera but never as the greatest camera ever made.

**Sean Edwards:** Okay.

**Ray Edwards:** The Panasonic Lumix GH5.

**Sean Edwards:** For video, I don't know how it stacks up for photos.

**Ray Edwards:** Pretty good. They're plenty of people who'd argue that's not the best camera for photos but for video-

**Sean Edwards:** Especially for like small to medium content creators.

**Ray Edwards:** Pro so yes. If you're creative for Youtube or you're a prosumer or you're a marketer and you make marketing videos that kind of thing.

**Sean Edwards:** Now, if you have a studio with like multiple huge cameras-

**Ray Edwards:** But there are filmmakers who are making films using this camera only.

**Sean Edwards:** Really?

**Ray Edwards:** Yes.

**Sean Edwards:** Wow, okay. It's a phenomenal camera.

**Ray Edwards:** The Lumix GH5 it is a crop sensor camera but it shoots in 4K.

**Sean Edwards:** What does that mean?

**Ray Edwards:** It means that the the sensor is not full frame. If you use a wide enough angle lens you'll see vignetting at the edges of the picture because the sensor is cropped.

**Sean Edwards:** Right, I do remember hearing that. That was one of the reasons that people thought professional photographers would never go fully digital.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, well they were wrong about that.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes they were.

**Ray Edwards:** Totally wrong.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes [laughs].

**Ray Edwards:** The GH5 shoots in 4K at--



**Sean Edwards:** 60 frames per second.

**Ray Edwards:** -It actually shoots in 6K and down samples to 4K.

**Sean Edwards:** Really?

**Ray Edwards:** Yes.

**Sean Edwards:** I did not know that.

**Ray Edwards:** I didn't know that till yesterday either.

**Sean Edwards:** That's crazy.

**Ray Edwards:** It's nuts, isn't it?

**Sean Edwards:** Here's the deal I watched videos and some of you may already be aware of this but down sampling from 4K to 1080P.

**Ray Edwards:** Which is what we do with our videos now.

**Interviewer 2:** It's spooky. Because it looks exactly the same but if you shot it in 1080P, it does not look the same.

**Ray Edwards:** We've experiment. We've tried it. We've shot in 1080P.

**Sean Edwards:** It is significantly different.

**Ray Edwards:** There's a big difference.

**Sean Edwards:** It's so I mean [chuckles] you showed me a video you shot like a week ago or so and what was my response?

**Ray Edwards:** You might want to move further away from the camera.

**Sean Edwards:** You might want to move further [laughs].

**Ray Edwards:** I can see too much.

**Sean Edwards:** [laughs].

**Ray Edwards:** You could see like every hair on my face.

**Sean Edwards:** Every little wrinkle. Every little [laughs].

**Ray Edwards** Yes, it's like okay. That's too real.

**Sean Edwards:** But the contrast the color and then to piggyback. I don't know what dark magic apple uses in final cut.





**Ray Edwards:** Oh my gosh.

**Sean Edwards:** But after using premier for years--

**Ray Edwards:** Which is good. We like premiere.

**Sean Edwards:** Honestly, I think premiere has more powerful and more diverse tools.

**Ray Edwards:** Agreed but there's one advantage that Final Cut Pro has over premiere that makes us now Final Cut Pro users.

**Sean Edwards:** I say two. The main one is is that you can actually edit 4K footage in it [laughs].

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, it doesn't-- theoretically you can do that with Premiere.

**Sean Edwards:** Yes, but even-- but you can watch videos of people who have work horse stations that still hate editing 4K. footage in premiere.

**Ray Edwards:** Because it chokes the computer.

**Sean Edwards:** It's so laggy.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes.

**Sean Edwards:** I don't know why Adobe is.

**Ray Edwards:** Well, they use proxy files which apparently puts another loop for things to go through. I don't know exactly why how that works but it just--

**Sean Edwards:** Like final cut it's like butter. It's smooth.

**Ray Edwards:** It's just like editing any other footage.

**Sean Edwards:** I don't understand how. I know that there's like something to do with background rendering that's occurring and because it's so tightly integrated with the OS it can be more efficient with how it uses the graphics card and stuff but still the performance increase seems ridiculous for that to be the only difference. Okay, and then the second thing is in other video editing and photo editing software it's always like they have like five different sharpening tools and they all do different things. I'm never quite sure which one I want for which scenario. Because I'm not a professional and I don't know the exact how all these work. On apple some people on Final Cut You might be like oh well this is just too simple. They have one it sharpened.

**Ray Edwards:** And boy does it ever sharpened.

**Sean Edwards:** It's magical.



**Ray Edwards:** Yes, if you--

**Sean Edwards:** It just works.

**Ray Edwards:** I found setting three works.

**Sean Edwards:** You don't need much.

**Ray Edwards:** No, if you use five it's too much. Trust me, I tried that.

**Sean Edwards:** It's-- you have 4K footage then you add just a hair sharpening and it's like holy crap and then you down sample to 1080P those videos at 60 frames per second look amazing.

**Ray Edwards:** Okay, let's talk about something else that happens in the video world that drives me crazy. I used to be in this camp until you asked me one day a simple question. The question you asked me was, why? Here's what I would usually try to tell you. You're saying we should shoot everything in 4K at 60 frames per second and I said well, but it looks too vivid. Too real.

**Sean Edwards:** It's too smooth.

**Ray Edwards:** It looks more cinematic if you shoot it at 24 frames per second and you said--

**Sean Edwards:** Why?

**Ray Edwards:** Because it's not what life looks like. I realized I've been so conditioned by how everything else looks on video and film that I think that's how video and film is supposed to look.

**Sean Edwards:** The 24 frames per second is the lowest frame rate. Where your eyes can still perceive motion and not still pictures. The reason I did that was to save money on film.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, I had nothing to do with this looks better. It was we can save money into it more cheaply.

**Sean Edwards:** It still looks like a movie but we don't have to use as many pieces of---

**Ray Edwards:** Here's a clue about why you don't need to do this anymore. We don't use film.

**Sean Edwards:** And I know initially even I initially when we first got a super high def TV, we hooked up a Blu Ray Edwards player to it, I remember being like this is weird I don't like this, because I was used to the "cinematic" but now that I have just forced myself to watch it, I way prefer it.



**Ray Edwards:** Well, I do too and especially when you want to do dramatic things like slow motion, it's better, it's way superior and this is where the world is going so you can either be a Luddite and "Like no twenty-four thirty frames per second all the way." It's like people who are still in the film cameras and I know it's a big thing you're probably upset with me right now if your film camera buff I have a Canon AE1 sitting over on a shelf. I don't use, it's just a momento.

**Sean Edwards:** And for artistic things, I think that can be cool and that can be fun.

**Ray Edwards:** But I tried it, I shot a little film.

**Sean Edwards:** It's so much harder.

**Ray Edwards:** It's harder and plus it's grainy, it's not sharp, it's like I don't know why we do this. If I want to follow my photos to look bad like I can use an Instagram filter. Look at this Instagram used to be eggs and ham.

**Sean Edwards:** GH5 for content creators shooting video and get their lenses.

**Ray Edwards:** Oh my gosh, that's one more thing, the lenses are made by Leica.

**Sean Edwards:** They are amazing, they are super clear, you would say that we're not crazy fanboys that we just drink the Kool-Aid on it. The autofocus can sometimes be a little---

**Ray Edwards:** The autofocus pretty much sucks.

**Sean Edwards:** We were not just blind to its weaknesses but.

**Ray Edwards:** Panasonic has an app you can put on your iPhone or your iPad, if you're doing like vlogging or shooting the footage yourself, you can control the focus through your device and you can start and stop. It's amazing. And Sham was like when I told him you're like, "did I lose my job?"

**Sean Edwards:** I was like, look technology taking my job.

**Ray Edwards:** I took your job.

**Sean Edwards:** Apple is against human rights because they took my job.

**Ray Edwards:** Speaking of Apple. We have to hurry up with this podcast because my eight-plus is waiting for me at the store. This is weird I just got a text message from them. One or more items in your order ready for pick up.

**Sean Edwards:** Are they going to give you two?

**Ray Edwards:** I hope so. I'm going to tell him this is one or more. So I'll take three, please.



**Sean Edwards:** For the original price.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, of course. GH5.

**Sean Edwards:** Does this episode have main content?

**Ray Edwards:** It does we're going to get to it next.

**Voice over:** And now our feature presentation.

[music]

**Ray Edwards:** Interviewer 2 has this phrase that I love that he says about marketing copy and he says "if you confuse him, you lose him" and that is what happens with most people's websites, with most people's copy they cannot articulate the singular idea about what they do and if you if you ask somebody to party, What do you do? What is your business do? you often get this response. "Well it's kind of complicated, we bla bla bla. Or I'm a doctor, I'm a dentist" That doesn't even answer the question, because what kind of doctor what kind of dentist.

Donald has this metaphor that I love about conveying the ideas about what you do and it is when people come to your website and they want to know what your website is about, what your product is about, your service, if you can hand them one central idea it's like you handed them a bowling ball. And that's OK because they can hold one bowling ball but what most websites do, what most sales pages do is they hand them one bowling ball after another. And when you load them up with enough bowling balls what do you do?

**Interviewer 2:** They drop them.

**Ray Edwards:** And they walk away because they probably dropped at your foot and they're mad at you.

**Interviewer 2:** It's kind of rude to just start.

**Ray Edwards:** load them up.

**Interviewer 2:** Handing people bowling balls.

**Ray Edwards:** Well it is I mean why? Why are you doing that, you're kind of strange?

**Interviewer 2:** I hate it when people just walk up to me and start giving me bowling balls.

**Ray Edwards:** It always catches me off guard. I'm not sure what to do in that moment. Are you asking me to go bowling? Not sure. Donald talks about something he calls the "grunt test" Can you squint at a website and just read the headline at the top of the website and then know what they do?

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**Interviewer 2:** Interesting, why is it called the grunt test?

**Ray Edwards:** Because if you can't tell what they do, you go.

**Interviewer 2:** That makes sense. You Tom Hardy.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes the Tom Hardy all rules.

**Interviewer 2:** I think he started doing that lawless.

**Ray Edwards:** I live in the dark.

**Interviewer 2:** I think he started doing that lawless.

**Ray Edwards:** That was a good movie.

**Interviewer 2:** Yes it was. Wasn't it?

**Ray Edwards:** Quite violent.

**Interviewer 2:** But you know for one of those movies it had a happy ending

**Ray Edwards:** It did.

**Interviewer 2:** Which most of them don't. I think it's one of the reasons why I liked it. Because it was one of those period pieces--

**Ray Edwards:** I can handle violent dark stories as long as they end on a note of hope. Because the world is often violent and dark but we're always looking for hope. If we don't have hope we can't construct the future.

**Interviewer 2:** That's right.

**Ray Edwards:** That leaves us feeling very bad about life.

**Interviewer 2:** Yes.

**Ray Edwards:** Stories [laughs] and selling. When I teach copyright--

**Interviewer 2:** Is that what we're talking about?

**Ray Edwards:** Yes. When I teach copyright, this is why I got so excited about story brand when I first found it. Well okay, the first reason is it was Interviewer 2 talking about marketing. Now I knew Interviewer 2 from Blue Like Jazz.

**Interviewer 2:** It's so funny that so many people in the business world only know him for the business stuff.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, because I'm like you--

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**Interviewer 2:** You don't know--

**Ray Edwards:** Who this guy is.

**Interviewer 2:** Who's super famous before he was a business person. Like in the Christian world famous.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes big time famous and not even--

**Interviewer 2:** Big time.

**Ray Edwards:** Not like an televangelist famous but like a philosopher theologians famous.

**Interviewer 2:** His book Blue Like Jazz. Touched a generation of young Christians. Spread across the country like wildfire.

**Ray Edwards:** It even touched middle-aged Christians like me at the time and then he had through Painted Desert.

**Interviewer 2:** Which was good. It was like a memoir of a road trip, right?

**Ray Edwards:** Yes and then there was the one I always get the title wrong.

**Interviewer 2:** But dragons?

**Ray Edwards:** No, thousand miles in a million years or something like that. A million miles and a thousand [unintelligible 00:21:29]. They're all good.

**Interviewer 2:** Yes.

**Ray Edwards:** Then this guy that I know from those books.

**Interviewer 2:** Yes, this kind of postmodern philosophic really trying to get to the heart of his faith kind of author.

**Ray Edwards:** Yes, very honest very open.

**Interviewer 2:** Right.

**Ray Edwards:** Michael Hyatt tells me we're having a workshop in our office and Interviewer 2 is teaching us marketing. I'm like what?

**Interviewer 2:** Hello Blue Like Jazz guy [laughs].

**Ray Edwards:** Donna's listening to this right now cringing as--

**Interviewer 2:** I know [crosstalk].



**Ray Edwards:** Stop talking about that.

**Interviewer 2:** I don't want people to know me.

**Ray Edwards:** I'm the marketing guy.

**Interviewer 2:** I'm the marketing guy now.

**Ray Edwards:** You hear that I'm an extra bowling ball. Why don't you just throw in the pins as well? I went to the story brainwork workshop in Nashville with a bunch of other marketing people like me and we were all kind of blown away. The thing that blew me away was in teaching copywriting I have a whole process. We have a framework we teach people how to write sales copy and it's like we have 15 steps. 15 segments of a sales letter when you break it all down into detail. One of the steps is I say and right here you tell your story. Then the next section we go on to the end. There's always this hanging point where people would say, "Well wait a minute, how do I tell the story?"

**Interviewer 2:** Wait a minute, what's my story?

**Ray Edwards:** Well, you need to go read some books about storytelling. Read Stephen King's own *Writing* and just know this. Then along comes Donald and he teaches it beautifully. Now I just when I get to that point I tell people, okay this comes from the book story brand. This is how we're going to tell the story. Knowing your story will help you clarify your language about what you do so that people can understand it. When they can understand it they may want to do business with you. Donald's got a new book out. It's called *building a story brand* and today's main content we do have some. It will make much more sense than the rest this podcast. We're going to talk with Interviewer 2. Don, how you feeling right now as your book launches?

**Donald Miller:** I feel terrific. We feel very prepared and at times a little bored. Which I think is a good thing. You're literally just watching e-mails go out that you wrote two months ago. I don't know, it shouldn't be more stressful than this?

**Ray Edwards:** Well, I think of it kind of like the way a pilot friend of mine describes flying. He says flying consists of long periods of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror.

**Donald Miller:** [laughs] I believe that actually. I actually started to get my pilot's license and that's exactly what I realized when I said okay, I think I trust somebody else to do this for me.

**Ray Edwards:** Some people may not know this story so I like to kind of back up and talk to the folks who only know Interviewer 2 as the guy who wrote the memoirs and how you came to write this book called *Story brand* and I want to get into what story brand is.



**Donald Miller:** Yes okay. Well, as I did-- let's see. Well, actually I was you probably don't know this right I was president of a publishing company before I ever wrote my first book.

**Ray Edwards:** I did not know that.

**Donald Miller:** Yes as a little bit publishing company and it was doing extremely well and I got the job accidentally. I started in the warehouse and four years later was the president of the company. It was that small of a company and it was a complete accidental. Somebody would retire and I'd take their jobs. Somebody got fired I would take their job for a minute and then I end up people get used to me in that job and then sooner or later I was president. I knew about one of the things I always wanted to be a writer when I was a kid but it all seemed like such a huge mystery to me. I'm so thankful that I worked in a publishing company. Because I realized these authors are very smart and hardworking but they're not like gods, right? They're just like you and me. They have insecurities and they think really hard and they research and they get some work done. That- maybe I could be a writer.

**Ray Edwards:** Wait you have insecurities?

**Donald Miller:** [laughs] I [unintelligible 00:25:24].

**Ray Edwards:** I'm so sorry Don.

**Donald Miller:** I had ridiculous insecurities. Why insecurities? Well, here's the truth. I had insecurities before I wrote my first book but when I saw that I actually could do it I had the opposite. I had way too much confidence writing my first memoir. I just thought I am the next Steinberg. I'm writing a masterpiece and I released it and I expected to have to put up security around my garage apartment that I was living in. My mother bought some books and nobody else did. Then that was the second lesson was that I probably could use some insecurity.

[laughs] I wrote the next book with no confidence whatsoever and that book did end up doing decently well and that was off to the races. That was that. Then in order to write books as you know and write stories I began to study formulas that storytellers used to create these stories. Best practices things like this. We wrote a screenplay an actual movie and I fell in love with these formulas and I thought I discovered not music but actual music composition. I discovered notes and structure and the tools of the trade to create great songs and move people's hearts and story was that for me.

I had no intention of ever using it as a marketing tool. I just wanted to use it to create art. It's amazing looking back. In fact, I dropped my friends off this morning. I was speaking at an artist conference and my friend who knew me from back in my memoir days said, "Don you would love this conference there. Everybody here is such an artist. They live in such a slow pace. You'll see people in the corners just reading a book rather than attending election stuff. That just sounds miserable. Like the old me sounds like a miserable person to be with.

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It's like I want to-- none of this is productivity. How are we making a profit? We have payroll to me[unintelligible 00:27:28]. That's life now and I feel like I've actually gotten to live two completely different lives. Almost as two completely different people and I'm somebody who's convinced that you're not one type of person that you can move into a new environment and succeed and Excel. There are giftings that you don't realize you have. I'm lucky enough to have experienced that twice. Anyway but the bridge between those two people or those two lives are these formulas for telling stories.

I used them in my old life to write books and movies. I use them in my new life as a filter to help non-artist business people who are very agenda driven. Who want to become a senator. Want to run for Senate or want to get a piece of legislation passed or want to take their company from 100 million to somewhere where it can go public. These very specific measurable goals. We use the elements of story to filter their message and business strategies, through these elements to discover whether human beings are actually going to buy in or be interested and that's the bridge between the two. I'm enjoying this as much if not more than I did my previous life writing memoirs.

**Interviewer 2:** How did you-- what was the inflection point where you realized you had something that was duplicable, repeatable, that it would work over and over again and not just for you but for other people. How did that happen?

**Donald Miller:** I think it's the same. I know you've had this experience and I bet a bunch of your listeners have where I've written a lot of-- I've started a lot of books that I just never got to the point where I thought this is going to be good. People are going to really read this and I've started some books that from the first paragraph I knew I'm going to finish this book and it's going to be a good book. I think it's the same when I was developing the framework for my own business. I developed it at first to just filter the message from my conference business through it.

I knew when I was doing that within the first couple days of working on it. I can take you to the exact cabin where it was all created in Asheville North Carolina. I knew it's going to be bigger than just filtering your own message through this thing. This is something that is going to be powerful for other business leaders too. I knew that and spent a good two weeks on it. Put it away. Wrote another book and came back to it and began to develop it in beta test it with other businesses. I had extreme confidence that was going to work great but once I saw all the results. Not only for my own company we quadrupled in revenue. I saw double triple Michael Hyatt was one of the early adopters of the program. I believe he doubled in revenue if not more in one specific product that he was releasing. Whitney English [unintelligible 00:30:18] designer quadrupled revenue in six months and it was all because human beings were finally able to understand why they should do business with them because they had filtered their message. I knew then this is probably going to be a good 10 year run for me. So far it's certainly proving to be that.



**Ray Edwards:** The title of the book is *Building a Story Brand* clarify your message so customers will listen. How do you explain to somebody? I mean that sounds pretty self-explanatory but you have a whole system-- explain how this would work for the average business person who owns a retail store or a professional practice or whatever business. Does it work for everybody?

**Donald Miller:** Yes it does. If you have to use words to sell things it works. That's pretty much everybody I haven't met a business yet that doesn't work from a billion-dollar brand.

**Ray Edwards:** Crack dealers.

**Donald Miller:** Probably they wouldn't need very many words they just need to stand on the right corner. It would not work for them. We don't get many crack dealers but we get everybody else. The real thing to understand especially in this day and age because the problem is getting more and more fierce every month that goes by and that's the amount of information that people are having thrown at them. Three to 5000 commercial messages a day goes into the average Americans eyeballs and brains right. It's just a ton of information and used to what worked was creativity.

It can be really creative and get your message across. You could stand out in the marketplace that is no longer true. It's not creativity that sells, it's clarity and if you can just get your customers to listen to you and to hear from you that you have a solution to their problem, they'll do business with you. Clarity is what sticks out in the marketplace today. What we use is a tool to help communicate very clearly. Now there are two things that this tool does and they correlate with the two things the human brain are trying to do. The human brain, your customer's brains are one. They're trying to survive and thrive. That's the dominant task of the human brain.

It's just trying to stay alive and after it stays alive it's trying to thrive and sustain that livelihood. We're talking about tribes, we're talking about relationships, we're talking about status, we're talking about saving time, making money avoiding hassles connecting with other people all sorts of things that we think of are things that people want in life. Well look at the broad strokes what people actually want in life are to survive and thrive. What this means is if you're not positioning your products as something that helps people survive and thrive you're positioning your products outside of their interests. When we walk into a room and say, "Well my grandfather started the company and we're trying to increase our great places to work metric and we're hoping to double our revenue."

None of that has anything to do with me surviving. It has everything to do with you and your story and people begin to ignore us, they begin to ignore us because of the second thing that the human brain is trying to do. The second thing the human brain is trying to do is conserve calories. It's literally trying to not process information that doesn't help me survive and thrive. It takes a lot of calories to think and to process information you actually physically burn calories with your brain. What this means for



us is what we communicate about our brand to our customer needs to one be about helping them survive and thrive. Two be so incredibly simple that they don't have to burn very many calories to understand it.

The reason Ray Edwards, you and I have talked about this so many times, the reason Donald Trump is president. There are many but one of them is he cast a vision that was so simple and had to do with our survival, we're going to make America great again. We're going to be number one, we're going to have status. We're going to have power. It's a survival message.

**Ray Edwards:** I just was talking with a group of about 40 people yesterday and they were asking about story brand and I was sharing with them. I said here's an example. Think about Donald Trump and try to put your politics aside just think about what was his message and the entire room was able to repeat that message back verbatim. At the same time, it was astonishing. I mean that is I think a really good piece of proof that it works.

**Donald Miller:** Yes it's repeatable it's understand and think about what a complicated product he was having to sell. He was having to sell himself as president which means you're going to have to make several hundred wise decisions a day about several 700 different categories of decisiveness here. The voter doesn't think that way, the voter just wants to know how are you going to help me survive. His opponent, her tagline, which is not memorable how long will remind everybody because probably nobody can even think of it was, I'm with her. Well if I'm with her, what does that have to do with my survival?

First of all, where she's going, can she protect me, can she make me more money, can she save me more time, can she explain information in such a way that I understand it? What is she doing to help me survive? He's making America great again. I know where that story's going, but I'm with her walking around in circles. I don't know what we're doing, that's not it. She didn't invite people into a narrative, nothing again, politics aside.

What you have is the clearest messenger won against all odds Ray Edwards, against all odds. The message beat arguably, the message beat any other candidate who would have been a better president for all the way back through 17 candidates in the Republican primary.

**Ray Edwards:** Hearing that, it should be obvious that this is a work for your business, how tough is it going to be for the average business owner who isn't a marketer or into that stuff, I mean. Their marketing probably consists of the yellow pages guy comes by and buy ad every year, how's this going to work for them? How long is it going to take them to get this up and running?

**Donald Miller:** I think it's fine. If the Yellow Pages guy comes by and sells you an ad every year and that's your marketing, that's fine. What I care about is what the ad says, because 99% of people who buy that ad and put some words in that ad, they



use the wrong words, they use words that people ignore. They use words like, “I’m with her”, that was a billion dollar ads spent “I’m with her” That’s a waste of money, it’s a waste of \$1 billion, so I care about the words that you’re using.

In my book building story **[unintelligible 00:36:56]** book there’s seven chapters, and each of these seven chapters will coach to create seven different taglines, messages in seven different categories, and it comes with a free piece of software, [mystorybrand.com](http://mystorybrand.com). You can actually log on, you create this--you create those seven messages on one page, so you’re actually looking at your entire business messaging strategy on one page. It makes it extremely simple, super easy anybody can do it and we like to say, we convert people into being marketing ninjas.

We love it when people say, I’m bad at marketing because we’re going to make you really good at it. Once you take those seven messages, you can apply them to your website, your e-mail plus, your elevator pitch, your keynote speeches, your yellow page ad, and you’ll be saying the right things. This is the book that makes marketing easy and you just need to go through these seven chapters, and I think you can probably do it in one long afternoon.

**Ray Edwards:** I totally agree. I think you can. The thing is all the fog you get from, forgive me advertising agency people, but the fog and the confusion that comes from talking about branding and all the mysterious things that they do, will be lifted when you read this book, it will clarify. Of course, I’m a copywriter, I agree with what you said, that it’s just a matter of using the right words in the right order.

**Donald Miller:** It is, it really is, Ray Edwards, and you’ve proved that year after year after year I mean. I would imagine your ad spend is what, two point five million, or how much are you spending on your ads?

**Ray Edwards:** Exactly.

**Donald Miller:** Probably nothing but you’re making millions because you’re using the right words. We spend very little on advertising if anything, I think we bought some Facebook ads and we weren’t exactly happy with the performance but- yeah

**Ray Edwards:** You were talking about the president’s opponent, I also asked the people in that room, so what was the slogan for that campaign? No, nobody could remember?

**Donald Miller:** Nobody knows.

**Ray Edwards:** I think 17 or 20, how much is the book?

**Donald Miller:** 17 bucks on Amazon.

**Ray Edwards:** 17 bucks, seems like a pretty good investment in changing your entire marketing message, clarifying it and then doubling, tripling or quadrupling your revenue in the fourth quarter of this year. That seems like a good deal.



**Donald Miller:** It is a good deal you also get if you forward your receipt if you buy it on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. I think on Barnes and Noble, I think it's 16 or 17 bucks too. Forward your receipt to [bonus@storybrand.com](mailto:bonus@storybrand.com), and I'll send you an audio of a lecture I gave, it's 50 minutes long in Orlando at the digital marketer summit.

People paid thousands of dollars to come and you get that for free, and then you get another lecture I gave called, the secrets to why customers really buy, and it's \$148 worth of value. If you throw your seat bonus@storybrand.com, and not only that but don't forget the book itself will lead you to the software that is just the most simple storytelling software anywhere.

You can use it super easy, narrows down your brand story or the story that you're inviting customers into down to one page. For 17 bucks you get a lot.

**Ray Edwards:** That's fantastic. We'll have links to all this in the show notes, you can click on the right link, go get your book, get your bonuses, get access to the software. Don't thank you so much for being on the show and thanks for writing this book.

**Donald Miller:** Well thanks for years of support and actually you know I believe I talk about in the book, if I don't I talk about you everywhere else and everything else we do so I'm just grateful for your years of friendship.

**Ray Edwards:** Well, I'm grateful for yours as well and you did mention me in the book, I did find my name, not that I was looking.

**Donald Miller:** That's the first thing I do when I ever get any book is I just look for my name, it's never there.

**Ray Edwards:** Good, I feel better now.

**Donald Miller:** Never there. All right Ray Edwards, thank you.

**Ray Edwards:** Main message, if you confuse them you'll lose them, so don't confuse them. Now, it's time for us to go get some more coffee at Revel 77 on 57th Avenue Spokane, Washington.

**Interviewer 2:** By the time this airs.

**Ray Edwards:** We will have had our open house.

**Interviewer 2:** It was great to see you.

**Ray Edwards:** We really enjoyed you being there, it was fun, we'll have to do that again sometime. We're Timelords.

**Interviewer 2:** I hope you signed up for the Revel coffee club.



**Ray Edwards:** For goodness sakes if you didn't you should. If we have a link for you we'll put it in the show notes.

**Interviewer 2:** This is great marketing, this is how professionals do it, pros.

**Ray Edwards:** Or are we simply seeming as if we're totally random to make it feel more approachable?

**Interviewer 2:** When you start using the word seem.

**Ray Edwards:** You're a little edgy?

**Interviewer 2:** I get a little Plato-ish.

**Ray Edwards:** It's just a platonic feeling you have?

**Interviewer 2:** Just platonic. If you found the show helpful.

**Ray Edwards:** Or interesting.

**Interviewer 2:** Or interesting.

**Ray Edwards:** Or puzzling.

**Interviewer 2:** Or puzzling, please give us a review in the Apple podcast directory, subscribe and then give us a review if you love reading notes. If you'd like to show note to transcript with possible links in it go to [RayEdwardsedwards.com/](http://RayEdwardsedwards.com/)

**Ray Edwards:** 306.

**Interviewer 2:** It will be there waiting for you.

**Ray Edwards:** I had a thought and now I can't remember what it was going to be so I won't share. Here's a quote worth note, it's one of my favorite quotes from business philosopher Jim Row, the miracle of the seed and the soil is not available by affirmation it is only available by labor. The greatest form of maturity is at harvest time, that is when we must learn to reap without complaints if the amounts are small and to reap without apology if the amounts are big. You must either get good at sowing in the spring or begging in the fall. The soil says, "Don't bring me your need, bring me your seed." Be well and until next time may you prosper in all things and may you enjoy long life.

**Speaker 3:** Thank you for listening to the Ray Edwards show.

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**Speaker 4:** Each week we bring you a message of prosperity with purpose and freedom remembering the true freedom is available to all through Jesus Christ.

**[00:43:28] [END OF AUDIO]**