

# 11 questions to 'outline' your world

**Most people see their business in 3D.**

It's 'me' and the 'market', or 'me' and the 'clients'.

And this makes total sense. This is how we have to start.

I remember the month we opened up our gym. We needed twenty-eight clients to break even on the lease, and so every day was about finding these people and selling.

It's necessarily stressful, and part of the journey.

Part of the '3D' way of looking at things is to work on brand. You get a logo, and a website put together. You hire people to do each step.

This is tapping into your values, and what you're about as a business. But generally this is rushed as an 'add on', it's not fully internalised or spread across the whole entire business.

**World builders see their business in 5D.**

While the average business owner is looking at 'tactics', or trends - *should I do insta reels or not? What about email subject lines? What tips do I cover in a video et cetera.*

World builders are busy creating an immersive world where they develop their own tactics.

A world builder has a different perspective.

While they are business owners, in a sense, they are also 'engineers,' 'architects,' 'designers' and creators.

Almost like seeing 'through' the matrix, a business world builder is like a game designer, or an author writing a fantasy novel. They know that each of us 'lives' our life as a story. And that we seek out worlds and experiences that we find exciting, that also help us to live out that story, by 'building' worlds, in 5D.

*“Good marketing tells a story, great marketing is the story” - Bernadette Jiwa*

Now, this isn't a new concept.

World building has been around for decades.

It's instrumental in film, television, and games.

It's what propels Netflix epics such as "A Game of Thrones" into cult status or addiction mode.

It's the backbone of modern films such as Dune.

It's at the core of games like Dungeons and Dragons, and even Sonic the Hedgehog.

But the concepts of world building are rarely applied to small business *on purpose*.

### **Let's look at Apple for a second.**

I know, it's cliché to talk about Apple, or lululemon, or Microsoft as business examples. That's like every business book out there. BUT, Apple was one of the first big companies to do this world building stuff really well.

And the result is, even in a financial crisis, Apple stores have a line around the block of people waiting to get in and buy the latest phone.

So when Apple was coming up, Jobs made a really key decision. Rather than follow in the path of Microsoft, which supported 'inter-operability' with other companies, Jobs started to build a closed world.

At first, this made it hard for them to grow.

But as Apple gained status, people would literally beg them to support their program, or app. Artists like U2 came to Apple with promotional proposals. Not the other way around.

Apple had positioned the Mac at the centre of people's lives, with phones, iPods, iPads, cameras, and everything else stemming off of this. They embodied a blend

of counter-punching the status quo, and transforming the customers who entered the world into high-status design snobs.

Over time, Apple systematically built, and controlled all aspects of the computer and phone experience.

And this creates 'lock-in'. Something we have resistance to at the beginning, but that we learn to accept, and even love, down the line.

The Apple cult.

**OK, let's go back to world building.**

Each of us is looking to live into a story.

For some of us, that story is becoming the next James Bond. For others, they want to be like Jean Claude Van Damme.

Others still relate with a politician, musician, TV personality... Or maybe more commonly, we relate with a story that's kind of like our parents, but with a slight twist.

We visualise this fantasy, often subconsciously, then we read, study, learn, or buy our way into these stories, as our life shifts and evolves.

As we age, the story changes. The hero matures, or the culture shifts, and we find a new story that resonates.

**The world builder not only sees this, but creates entire closed worlds that *support* this.**

Meaning customers are not only buying what you do, but are buying who they become by leveling up in your world.

**This has a couple of big repercussions for your business**

1. Creating a 'walled garden' that people never want to leave (i.e. Apple, Disney)
2. Committing to experiences over transactions, and innovation in front of retention
3. Using offers as the gateway to (and core 'story' of) of the world
4. Heavy emphasis on character design (5D, or 'above ego')
5. Share specific details of the world through long form content or delivery

While world building itself takes time - both on the front end, and through your content, offers and experiences over months (or years), below we will cover eleven questions to help you 'outline' your world. You'll see they are divided into three sections, story, world, and character.

# 11 WORLD BUILDING OVERVIEW QUESTIONS

## Describe your story

Your story is what you are about. What's the story that you are creating as a business. Apple was creating a story of challenging the status quo, helping people become more 'design minded' and even now there's the whole status and fitting in aspect of the iPhone, air pods, et cetera.

### **Why does your world exist**

- What is the change you want to make?
- What happens if 10,000 people lived in your world?
- What is the 'fantasy' that you create (e.g. it takes a long time to get strong vs. we give you a simple plan for strength)

### **Who do people become by engaging in your world (offer)**

- How does someone change? How is this different to what they've tried before?
- What skills / knowledge do they get?
- How does their status change?

### **What does your world stand for, and what is it against?**

- What do you support? Who are your allies?
- What do you reject? Who are you against?
- What are your values?

\*Specific change, strong position

## **Describe your world**

Your 'world' has an overall feel to it. A tone. Most people are conditioned to say it's very friendly, community driven et cetera. But remember, this isn't always what someone is looking for. Sometimes they are looking for order, accountability, or motivation. This is an important step, and allows you to differentiate your world from everyone else around you.

### **What tone is your world? Dark, light, colourful? Big or small?**

- This is the mood
- Use fictional examples if you want (e.g. The Dark Knight), et cetera

### **What texture is your world? Earthy? Street? Metal?**

- Describe the environment and feeling
- Is it urban, or country?

### **What era is your world? New (techno), old, conservative, liberal, space age?**

- What 'time' is your world from?
- Is it old school, or modern (this changes everything)

### **What are the rules?**

- Strict, militant, or relaxed?
- What type of government? (democracy, dictatorship, monarchy etc)

### **What magic exists?**

- Describe your magic
- This can also be technology or science

\*Specific language

## **Describe your character**

Who you show up as in your world is not necessarily the 'everyday' you. Now, some people have a problem with this. They see it as kind of 'inauthentic'. But I always ask them - which is the more authentic you, Sunday morning when you get out of bed late, or Thursday afternoon in a meeting? Certainly you are dressed differently. And similarly, over time, our behaviour changes, as we do more, learn more, and embody different ways of being. Something is only inauthentic when it hasn't been practiced and internalised.

### **Is your character a triangle (villain), square (stable hero, friend), or circle (happy-guy)**

- The Joker is 'triangular', The Rock and Sponge-bob squarepants are square, Winnie the Pooh round.
- Different shapes create different emotions

### **What are your strengths? What are your flaws?**

- Flaws are very important
- No compelling character is perfect

### **What does your character wear? How do they speak? What are their mannerisms?**

- Exaggeration is key
- What words do they 'over-use'?
- Clothing will highlight the type of character

\*Specific details

## Conclusion

If you are brand-spanky new in business, world building isn't something you need to spend tons of time on. The first step is you want to prove that there's uptake for your offer. That people like your stuff. But if you're building a longer term business, then this is really valuable stuff.

I've kind of run the risk here of giving too much value... Those are some powerful questions, and if you get through them, you'll have a lot of insight.

Having said that, world building takes time. When we do this with a particular business, we go much deeper, and then look at the implementation side as well - rolling this stuff out through your offers, content, and delivery.