



1.  
**THINK SILVER PLATTER,  
NOT KITCHEN SINK.**

*be focused  
be focused  
be focused  
be focused*

## I. THINK SILVER PLATTER, NOT KITCHEN SINK. (BE FOCUSED)

Focus. It's one of the most important ingredients of building a core brand story and yet, it's something most marketers continue to ignore. Instead of focusing on a single "silver platter offer" that customers want and can rally around, marketers choose to cram in everything they want to say which leads to a confusing and convoluted story. Instead of trying to say **all** the right things you believe customers want to hear, choose to boil down the elements of your story into a single-minded offer that you can stand for and build the rest of your story around.

There are many brands that have done this successfully. Among them is Pet360, an online pet brand that connects multiple services for pet owners—food, supplies, accessories, pet insurance—into a highly focused, unified and personal experience. Working with Pet360, we were able to focus on the core story of "pet parenting, simplified." This allowed us to create a highly integrated experience that helped pet owners navigate the responsibility of caring for a pet and share their experiences through content and stories with other pet owners. The result was a highly engaged community of pet owners that relied on Pet360 as a reliable, trusted guide and online hub for everything they need. As you build your core brand story, think of ways you can "boil down the brilliance" of what you're offering into a single, evocative theme that your brand can stand for. Being focused early makes life easier later.

## PET360

When you're a brand that delivers everything a pet owner would need to care for a pet, it's tempting to sell everything and the kitchen sink. What we found with Pet360 is that pet parents were overwhelmed enough and wanted a more simplified and personalized experience. So we shifted the story from selling stuff to creating an emotional connection that allowed the brand to forge a deeper and more meaningful relationship with pet parents.

The logo for Pet360, with "Pet" in orange and "360" in black, and a paw print icon for the zero.

## Pet Parenting, Simplified.

Pet360 is a trusted, all-in-one, online authority that informs, educates and rewards pet parents, helping them to become better pet owners and enhance the bond they share with their pet.

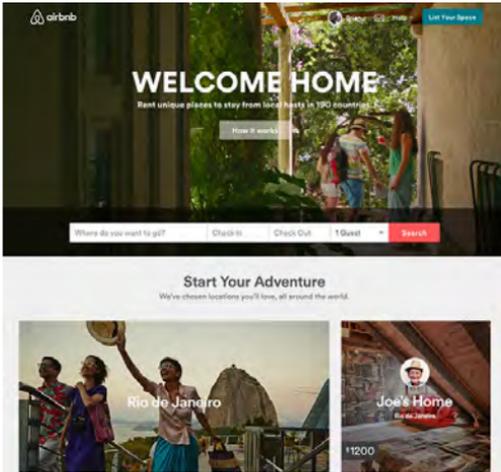


**Pet360.com has a strong sense of community.**

It's a place where members can connect with other pet parents just like them.

# AIRBNB: BELONG ANYWHERE

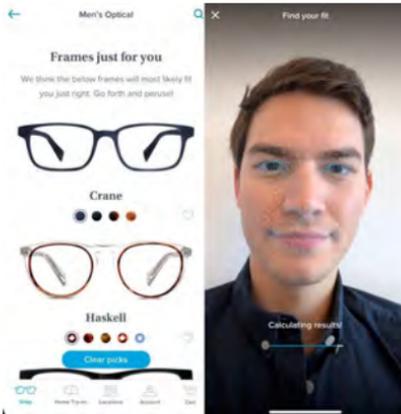
Rather than settle for the same old hotel story of enabling people to reserve rooms in a given destination, Airbnb shifted the focus to changing the way people experience the world. Rather than focusing on room rates and amenities, they shifted their focus and promoted a sense of "belonging." Travelers would never have to feel like strangers in a strange town again.



PART 1: 10 STRATEGIES FOR STORY-MAKING

# WARBY PARKER

Buying eyewear typically was an expensive and frustrating experience for those who wanted to look good but didn't want to spend a fortune. The industry was dominated by a few players and only 1% of eyewear was sold online. The eyewear story was ripe for disruption and Warby Parker came along with the perfect story shift: a brand that stands for fun, creativity, purpose and beautiful design.



## One less thing to think about

\$95 EYEWEAR  
INCLUDING PRESCRIPTION LENSES

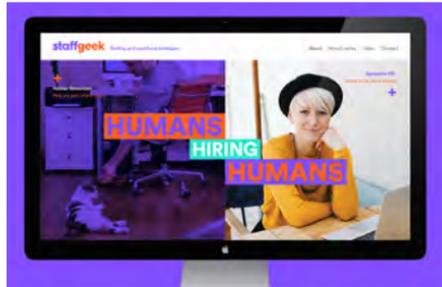
SHOP MEN > | SHOP WOMEN >

# STAFFGEEK

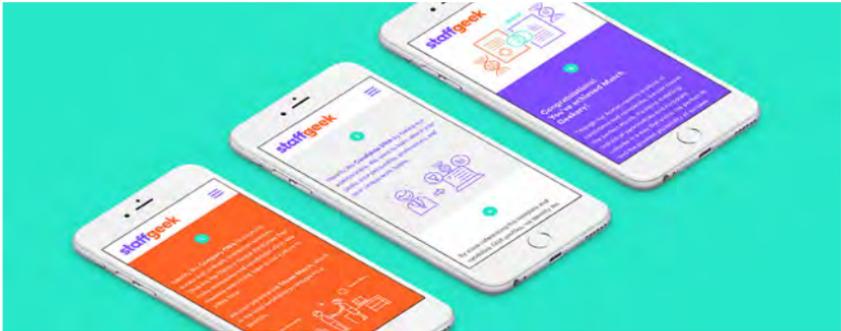
Most professional job search brands tout the same story and end up sounding the same: like cattle calls. Resumes. Impersonal experiences. Hit-or-miss hope for the best propositions. StaffGeek was a start-up that crafted a decidedly fresh and more human-centric story that incorporated its “humans hiring humans” perspective into every facet of the brand.



staffgeek



PART 1: 10 STRATEGIES FOR STORY-MAKING



# 2-MINUTE DRILL DOWN: BE FOCUSED

Consider the following mad lib:

We're not selling \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
we're selling \_\_\_\_\_ .

Take two minutes to write as many responses as possible. Consider the product or service you sell and write it to the left. Then think about what you're really selling and write it down to the right. For example, if you were Airbnb you might respond, "We're not selling home rentals, we're selling a sense of belonging." You get the idea.

Try this with a group and see how many options you can create in two minutes. Discuss your answers and decide as a group which of the options is your "silver platter offer" and how you might use it to build your core story. Have fun.

*be focused*