

COVER STORY (BECAUSE COVER LETTERS ARE SO DRY)

Dear Friends,

What my résumé won't tell you is how passionate I am about what I do, and what the source of that passion is. I believe this is best communicated through a series of vignettes from my past experiences.

When I was growing up, I got tonsillitis a lot as a child, which drove me to read a lot during the many weeks I spent at home. I read the Bible three times, as well as all of the world's mythologies. I was entranced by the Chronicles of Narnia. And I fell in love with anything written by Stephen King or Ray Bradbury. This is important for later.

School was easy for me, and I had many opportunities upon graduating high school. I could have been an Olympic archer, a music composer (I got a scholarship to Princeton) or an Aerospace Engineer. I pursued that last one. But in the middle of my senior year when I was interviewing for jobs, the only ones available were building bombs and missile guidance systems. I had a real crisis, so left that program and completed a degree in English Literature and Composition, along with a Teaching Credential. This combination of technical and creative got me recruited by Walt Disney Imagineering. And one of my team members on the Tomorrowland 2055 project was Ray Bradbury, who became a family friend. I like telling people I went from building bombs to building theme parks.

Science fiction taught me curiosity. And when the internet became a thing, I was curious about what made it work. I spent lunches and after hours at Disney developing multimedia that connected to the internet through Unix prompts (before the web), and when I invented the first multimedia internet-connected manual for engineers at Disney, I was one of two people invited to present personally to Michael Eisner. I consider this the beginning of my innovation career.

I moved into marketing management and fell in love with my agency partners. I thoroughly adopted the data-based rationale for creative decisions, and soon won awards for advertising. I was teaching code and search engine optimization at UCLA, and was recruited by my agency where I learned real branding from a Creative Director who came from Interbrand. The agency made me a partner and had me start the digital half of their offerings for their big clients. I built a team and serviced brands like Memorex, Jewelry TV, Canon, Princess Cruises, Viewsonic and Sony.

Poseidon led me to my dream home at an agency in San Luis Obispo. We were 60 people, and when I left, we were 80,000. In that time I ran 11 accounts simultaneously, built a Strategy department, won Employee of the Year, and was promoted to be part of the Executive Management Team. We created labs to experiment with new technologies, I ran a strategic gamer's group, we developed HTC technology, Apple.com and augmented reality for HP. These were good days. I was sent on the road to generate business for the agency (and my department) and built the first Cisco Newsroom, innovative marketing and media programs for Levi's, Apple, Quiksilver, Samsung and countless others. I spoke at innovation and SEO conferences, hosted Silicon Valley roundtables, and consulted with high tech and telecommunication brands, figuring out how to disrupt their businesses. I published a lot at that time and made friends with top industry analysts. We grew so well, and so quickly, that we were bought by Rosetta, who was bought by Razorfish, who was bought by Publicis. But the work transitioned from being for our clients to being for our shareholders. It lost its purpose. So I, along with other passionate management, moved on.

Today I apply all of this accumulated experience to building brands and marketing technologies to save the world. I work with startups, medical technology, educational technology, social good non-profits and CSR departments of for-profit companies. My clients are Muscular Dystrophy Association, the United Nations and Teach.org (as well as a dozen others). It is very rewarding work and let's me throw myself into solving the world's biggest societal challenges. To have effect at a global scale. I get to inspire teams with vision, but I also do the work so I know what I'm talking about – I find nothing more rewarding than gaining consensus and instilling my passion with leaders. It's something I believe I am good at, am praised for by peers, and hope to share with you.

Reach out and let's chat.

Doug