

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, which drove me to become a voracious reader 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. 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 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. Years later, 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. 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. This was 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, when I was recruited by my first agency. 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 led brand marketing for Memorex, Jewelry TV, Canon, Princess Cruises, ViewSonic and Sony.

Los Angeles was a difficult place, so I joined an agency in San Luis Obispo. We were 60 people, and when I left, we were 80,000. I ran 11 big 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 gaming and new technologies and ended up creating our own content management system, which was eventually adopted by HTC as the Sense operating system. These were good days. I was sent on the road to generate business 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 this accumulated experience to building brands and marketing technologies to save the world at another small agency. I work in medical technology, educational technology, non-profits and CSR departments of for-profits. My clients are the biggest charities and the most socially conscious enterprises. It is very rewarding work, but I continue to crave solving the most complex problems. I miss building things the world hasn't seen before. I want to inspire teams with vision – I find nothing more rewarding than gaining consensus and instilling my passion in creative teams, sales and marketing departments and executives. It's something I believe I am good at, am praised for by colleagues, and hope I get the chance to share with you.

Thank you for the opportunity. *Doug*