

Tom Sharman

The Content Operators Playbook

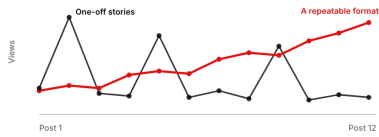
Content. 3 principles.

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2. Content

Formats over ideas

Video ideas are dead. Build a format the audience can predict, then rinse and repeat it until it becomes a show.



The shape, drawn to explain it. Not measured.

- 01 Name the format before the topic: the set, the structure and the length.
- 02 Run two formats that are never up for testing, every day.
- 03 Spend 80% of the output on formats that work and 20% testing new ones.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARMAN

Content, 1 of 3

Formats over ideas

A repeatable format beats a one-off story, because the audience can guess what comes next.

I think video ideas are dead. What works now is formats, because people want to guess what your next video looks like. Pick one format, rinse and repeat it every day until it's a show. Then 80% of the time you're nailing the formats that work and 20% you're testing new ones.

How do I use it?

1. Name the format before the topic: the set, the structure and the length.
2. Run two formats that are never up for testing, every day.
3. Spend 80% of the output on formats that work and 20% testing new ones.
4. Judge a format over weeks. One video tells you very little.

In his words

I actually think that video ideas are dead now and that you should focus on formats.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Formats over ideas" mean? Video ideas are dead. Build a format the audience can predict, then rinse and repeat it until it becomes a show.

How do I put "Formats over ideas" into practice? Name the format before the topic: the set, the structure and the length. Run two formats that are never up for testing, every day. Spend 80% of the output on formats that work and 20% testing new ones.

Why does "Formats over ideas" matter? I think video ideas are dead. What works now is formats, because people want to guess what your next video looks like.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/content/formats-over-ideas/

The same eight things

Pick six to eight things and say them over and over, from a hundred angles, until people know what you stand for.



- 1 Every business breaks in the same places: people, systems and sales.
- 2 Pick the right business at the start and you won't need to fail first.
- 3 Fewer, bigger clients will always beat lots of small ones.
- 4 Get yourself out of delivery before you try to scale.
- 5 Build it as if you'll sell it, even if you never do.
- 6 Hiring is the same problem in every business, and it decides how far you get.
- 7 Show the work. Results beat theory every time.
- 8 Nobody is coming to start it for you.

Every video comes back to one of them from a different door.

- 01 Write six to eight sentences the person would happily say every day for a year.
- 02 Take each one from their own posts, calls and story, so it already sounds like them.
- 03 Tag every idea in the bank with the message it carries. No message, no video.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARMAN

Content, 2 of 3

The same eight things

Pick six to eight messages and say them over and over, a hundred different ways.

Sam says the same six to eight things over and over, and that's exactly why people know what he stands for. So let's write yours: eight sentences you'd happily say every day for a year. Then the job is a hundred different ways of saying each one.

How do I use it?

1. Write six to eight sentences the person would happily say every day for a year.
2. Take each one from their own posts, calls and story, so it already sounds like them.
3. Tag every idea in the bank with the message it carries. No message, no video.
4. Change the door, keep the message: a new story, a new question, a new format.

In his words

We pick eight things, we just say it over and over.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

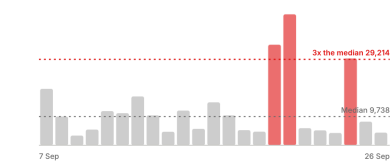
What does "The same eight things" mean? Pick six to eight things and say them over and over, from a hundred angles, until people know what you stand for.

How do I put "The same eight things" into practice? Write six to eight sentences the person would happily say every day for a year. Take each one from their own posts, calls and story, so it already sounds like them. Tag every idea in the bank with the message it carries. No message, no video.

Why does "The same eight things" matter? Sam says the same six to eight things over and over, and that's exactly why people know what he stands for. So let's write yours: eight sentences you'd happily say every day for a year.

The outlier is the brief

The outlier is the brief. Find the post that broke out, here or in an adjacent niche, and rebuild it around your own message.



3 of 23 reels cleared 29,214 plays. Two option reels and a collab, all three over the line.

01 Work out the median views of the last 30 posts. That is the baseline.

02 Mark anything past three times the median as an outlier.

03 Look past the niche: track outliers in two or three adjacent ones too.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

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The outlier is the brief

Find what broke out, often in a niche next door, and bring it back to your message.

The outlier is the brief. Where most people go wrong is only looking in their exact niche. Look next door too, find the post that broke out, and bring it back to your message. And measure your own against your median: anything past three times it is a winner.

How do I use it?

1. Work out the median views of the last 30 posts. That is the baseline.
2. Mark anything past three times the median as an outlier.
3. Look past the niche: track outliers in two or three adjacent ones too.
4. Rebuild the outlier's format or angle around one of your eight things, then post it.

In his words

Look for outliers in adjacent niches and apply that to your own.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "The outlier is the brief" mean? The outlier is the brief. Find the post that broke out, here or in an adjacent niche, and rebuild it around your own message.

How do I put "The outlier is the brief" into practice? Work out the median views of the last 30 posts. That is the baseline. Mark anything past three times the median as an outlier. Look past the niche: track outliers in two or three adjacent ones too.

Why does "The outlier is the brief" matter? The outlier is the brief. Where most people go wrong is only looking in their exact niche.

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