

Tom Sharman

The Content Operators Playbook

All seven playbooks. 49 principles.

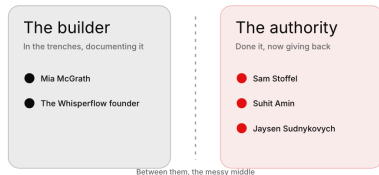
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1. Positioning

PLAYBOOK • POSITIONING

Builder or authority

Pick a side. The builder documents the journey while it happens.



- 01 Ask whether they have already done the thing their audience wants to do.
02 If yes, they are the authority: lead with the result and teach from it.
03 If they are doing it now, they are the builder: document every step in public.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARMAN

Positioning, 1 of 3

Builder or authority

Two places a personal brand works: in the trenches documenting it, or having done it and giving back.

There are two places a personal brand works. The builder, in the trenches, documenting the journey as it happens. Or the authority, someone who has done it and is now giving back. Sam Stoffel made his money, sold the business, and now teaches. So which one are you right now? Pick the one that is true, and we build everything from there.

How do I use it?

1. Ask whether they have already done the thing their audience wants to do.
2. If yes, they are the authority: lead with the result and teach from it.
3. If they are doing it now, they are the builder: document every step in public.
4. Write the line down and test every video against it before it goes out.

Questions

What does "Builder or authority" mean? Pick a side. The builder documents the journey while it happens. The authority has done it and teaches from it.

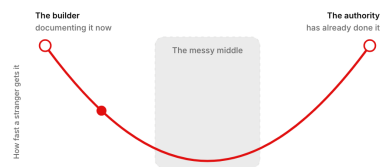
How do I put "Builder or authority" into practice? Ask whether they have already done the thing their audience wants to do. If yes, they are the authority: lead with the result and teach from it. If they are doing it now, they are the builder: document every step in public.

Why does "Builder or authority" matter? There are two places a personal brand works. The builder, in the trenches, documenting the journey as it happens.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/positioning/builder-or-authority/

Avoid the messy middle

The middle ground between builder and authority is where a brand stalls. Sit one side or the other.



The shape, drawn to explain it. Not measured.

01 Read their last 30 posts and mark each one builder or authority.

02 If the split is anywhere near even, they are in the middle.

03 Pick the side that is true today and cut the content that argues for the other one.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARMAN

Positioning, 2 of 3

Avoid the messy middle

Half builder, half authority reads as neither. Sit one side or the other.

When I look at a personal brand, the thing to avoid is the messy middle. You're either the builder documenting it, or the authority who has done it. Sit in between and nobody can tell what you stand for in the first three seconds. Let's pick a side today and cut what argues for the other one.

How do I use it?

1. Read their last 30 posts and mark each one builder or authority.
2. If the split is anywhere near even, they are in the middle.
3. Pick the side that is true today and cut the content that argues for the other one.
4. Keep the other side as story inside the content. It stops being the positioning.

Questions

What does "Avoid the messy middle" mean? The middle ground between builder and authority is where a brand stalls. Sit one side or the other.

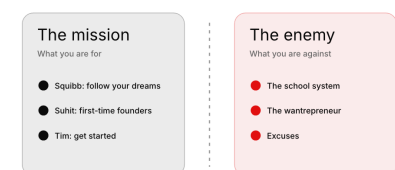
How do I put "Avoid the messy middle" into practice? Read their last 30 posts and mark each one builder or authority. If the split is anywhere near even, they are in the middle. Pick the side that is true today and cut the content that argues for the other one.

Why does "Avoid the messy middle" matter? When I look at a personal brand, the thing to avoid is the messy middle. You're either the builder documenting it, or the authority who has done it.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/positioning/avoid-the-messy-middle/

A mission and an enemy

A brand compounds when it has a mission, and the shortcut to a mission is an enemy. Call out the wrong audience on purpose.



01 Write the mission as one sentence about what the audience gets.

02 Name the enemy: a belief, a habit or a type of person the audience already resents.

03 Call out the wrong audience in the hooks, so the right one feels picked.

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Positioning, 3 of 3

A mission and an enemy

Name what you are against. The right people rally and the wrong ones bring them in.

The brands that compound have a mission, and the fastest way to a mission is an enemy. Squibb's is the school system, and anyone who tells you that you can't. So who are you against? Name them in the hooks. Some people will get wound up, and that's fine, because the wrong audience commenting is what brings the right one in.

How do I use it?

1. Write the mission as one sentence about what the audience gets.
2. Name the enemy: a belief, a habit or a type of person the audience already resents.
3. Call out the wrong audience in the hooks, so the right one feels picked.
4. Expect some people to be wound up. Their comments carry it to the people you want.

In his words

The biggest difference is essentially around mission and purpose, and often the shortcut to that is by creating an enemy.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "A mission and an enemy" mean? A brand compounds when it has a mission, and the shortcut to a mission is an enemy. Call out the wrong audience on purpose.

How do I put "A mission and an enemy" into practice? Write the mission as one sentence about what the audience gets. Name the enemy: a belief, a habit or a type of person the audience already resents. Call out the wrong audience in the hooks, so the right one feels picked.

Why does "A mission and an enemy" matter? The brands that compound have a mission, and the fastest way to a mission is an

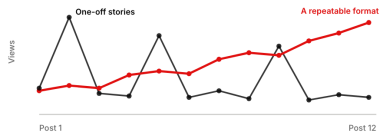
enemy. Squibb's is the school system, and anyone who tells you that you can't.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/positioning/a-mission-and-an-enemy/

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

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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

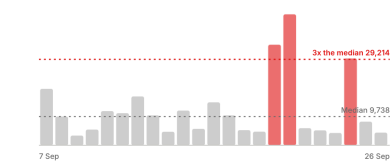
What does "The same eight things" mean? Pick six to eight things and say them over and over, from a hundred angles, until people know what you stand for.

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.

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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.

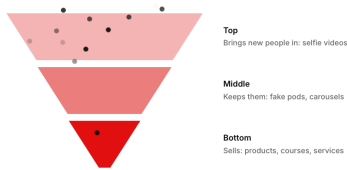
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tomsharman.com/playbooks/content/the-outlier-is-the-brief/

3. Funnel

Top, middle, bottom

Every format has a job in the funnel. The top brings people in, the middle keeps them, and the bottom sells to them directly.



Most people stop at the top, some stay for the middle, a few reach the bottom.

- 01 Give every format one stage and write it next to the format's name.
- 02 Judge the top on reach and follows, the middle on return viewers, the bottom on sales.
- 03 Keep the middle going even when its numbers look small. It was never built for big numbers.

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Funnel, 1 of 3

Top, middle, bottom

The top brings people in, the middle keeps them, the bottom sells.

I see every format as having a job. Top of funnel brings new people in, that's the selfie video. Middle of funnel keeps them, the fake pods and carousels, and it's never designed to do crazy numbers. Bottom of funnel sells: products, courses, services. So for each thing you make, which job is it doing?

How do I use it?

1. Give every format one stage and write it next to the format's name.
2. Judge the top on reach and follows, the middle on return viewers, the bottom on sales.
3. Keep the middle going even when its numbers look small. It was never built for big numbers.
4. Check each week that all three stages got something.

In his words

I very much see formats designed around top of funnel, middle of funnel, bottom of funnel.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Top, middle, bottom" mean? Every format has a job in the funnel. The top brings people in, the middle keeps them, and the bottom sells to them directly.

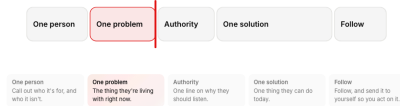
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Why does "Top, middle, bottom" matter? I see every format as having a job. Top of funnel brings new people in, that's the selfie video.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/funnel/top-middle-bottom/

One person, one problem

One person, one problem, your authority, one solution, then follow and send it to yourself. Every top of funnel video, every time.



The shape, drawn to explain it. Not measured.

- 01 Script the hook: who is it for, and what is their problem, in one breath.
- 02 Add one line of authority. A number from their own story beats a CV.
- 03 Give one solution they could act on today. Two solutions are two videos.

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Funnel, 2 of 3

One person, one problem

Top of funnel in five beats: one person, one problem, authority, one solution, follow.

Every top of funnel video is five beats. One person: call out exactly who it's for. One problem they're living with. One line on why you're the person to listen to. One solution they can do today. Then follow, and send it to yourself so you actually act on it. Script the hook, talk the rest.

How do I use it?

1. Script the hook: who is it for, and what is their problem, in one breath.
2. Add one line of authority. A number from their own story beats a CV.
3. Give one solution they could act on today. Two solutions are two videos.
4. End on follow, and send it to yourself so you actually act on it.
5. Keep the rest as talking points. Only the hook is scripted.

In his words

I think before you get into the solution, it's like credibility.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "One person, one problem" mean? One person, one problem, your authority, one solution, then follow and send it to yourself. Every top of funnel video, every time.

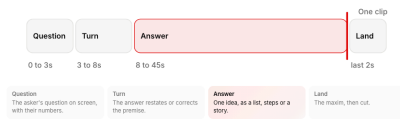
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Why does "One person, one problem" matter? Every top of funnel video is five beats. One person: call out exactly who it's for.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/funnel/one-person-one-problem/

Fake pods and hotlines

A fake pod is a format: real answers to questions written in advance, recorded in one sitting. An hour in the studio is two months of daily clips.



The Q&A cutdown from Clip anatomy, the shape every fake pod and hotline answer is cut to. The times are from the page; the widths are not to scale.

- 01 Write 50 to 60 questions from the DMs, the comments and what people ask competitors.
- 02 Record them in one sitting. The host is only there to ask.
- 03 Answer through the eight things, then land on a story.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARMAN

Funnel, 3 of 3

Fake pods and hotlines

Questions you wrote, answered on camera in bulk. The middle of the funnel, a clip a day.

The best way to do the middle of the funnel is fake pods. You write the questions, someone asks them, you answer on camera. I did an hour in the studio for Creator Hotline and got 59 clips out of it, two months of posting every day. It's a format, so it repeats, and every answer comes back to your eight things.

How do I use it?

1. Write 50 to 60 questions from the DMs, the comments and what people ask competitors.
2. Record them in one sitting. The host is only there to ask.
3. Answer through the eight things, then land on a story.
4. Cut each answer to one idea and post one a day as middle of funnel.

In his words

But the best way to do it is just fake pods.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Fake pods and hotlines" mean? A fake pod is a format: real answers to questions written in advance, recorded in one sitting. An hour in the studio is two months of daily clips.

How do I put "Fake pods and hotlines" into practice? Write 50 to 60 questions from the DMs, the comments and what people ask competitors. Record them in one sitting. The host is only there to ask. Answer through the eight things, then land on a story.

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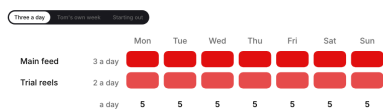
tomsharman.com/playbooks/funnel/fake-pods-and-hotlines/

4. Distribution

PLAYBOOK • DISTRIBUTION

Three a day

Post three times a day, with trial reels on top. At that volume every video is a lesson, and the momentum does the rest.



35 a week. What Tom set for Ben Knight on 2 October: three on the feed and two trial reels a day.

A week, heat mapped. Pick whose week to see.

- 01 Start at one a day, every day, and add the second once it feels easy.
- 02 Build to three on the main feed, from one batch shoot a week.
- 03 Run two trial reels a day to test hooks, and move the winners to the feed.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARMAN

Distribution, 1 of 4

Three a day

Three posts a day on the main feed, trial reels on top. Every post is a chance to learn.

Posting three times a day is really important. At that volume every video is a chance to learn. If you're posting three a day on Instagram, you should be doing trial reels on top, two a day. If three feels a lot, start at one a day, minimum, and add the second when it's easy.

How do I use it?

1. Start at one a day, every day, and add the second once it feels easy.
2. Build to three on the main feed, from one batch shoot a week.
3. Run two trial reels a day to test hooks, and move the winners to the feed.
4. Keep two formats daily and never up for testing, so a bad week still ships.

Questions

What does "Three a day" mean? Post three times a day, with trial reels on top. At that volume every video is a lesson, and the momentum does the rest.

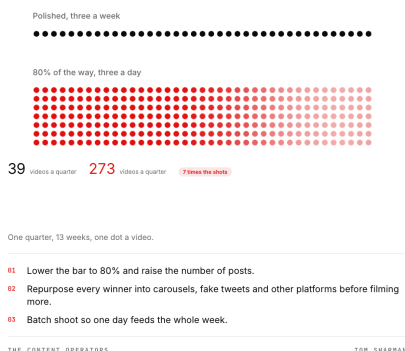
How do I put "Three a day" into practice? Start at one a day, every day, and add the second once it feels easy. Build to three on the main feed, from one batch shoot a week. Run two trial reels a day to test hooks, and move the winners to the feed.

Why does "Three a day" matter? Posting three times a day is really important. At that volume every video is a chance to learn.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/distribution/three-a-day/

Overwhelm the algorithm

Overwhelm the algorithm. Every post is a shot on goal, and 80% of the way five times a day will always out-learn 100% three times a week.



Distribution, 2 of 4

Overwhelm the algorithm

Volume first, refine second. 80% of the way five times a day over 100% three times a week.

My whole strategy is overwhelming the algorithm. Shots on goal. I'd rather you hit 80% of the way five times a day than be stuck on 100% three times a week. Over a quarter, three a week is 39 videos. Three a day is 273. That's how Sam Stoffel went from 0 to 500,000 followers in 10 months.

How do I use it?

1. Lower the bar to 80% and raise the number of posts.
2. Repurpose every winner into carousels, fake tweets and other platforms before filming more.
3. Batch shoot so one day feeds the whole week.
4. Refine once the volume is steady and the signals show what to keep.

In his words

To gain momentum on social media, you need to overwhelm the algorithm.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Overwhelm the algorithm" mean? Overwhelm the algorithm. Every post is a shot on goal, and 80% of the way five times a day will always out-learn 100% three times a week.

How do I put "Overwhelm the algorithm" into practice? Lower the bar to 80% and raise the number of posts. Repurpose every winner into carousels, fake tweets and other platforms before filming more. Batch shoot so one day feeds the whole week.

Why does "Overwhelm the algorithm" matter? My whole strategy is overwhelming the algorithm. Shots on goal.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/distribution/overwhelm-the-algorithm/

Signals before numbers

A follow is the biggest signal there is, short of a sale. Watch the signals for three months; the numbers arrive around month four.



The first three are signals; from month four the numbers should show.

- 01 Track views divided by follows for every post. Lower is better.
- 02 Watch the average and the median rise, and ignore the single spike.
- 03 Count the DMs, the regular viewers and the named people watching the stories.

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TOM SHARMAN

Distribution, 3 of 4

Signals before numbers

Watch views per follow and average views. The numbers come around month four.

A follow is the biggest signal you can get online, short of someone buying. So the metric I use most is views divided by follows, every post. For the first three months we watch the signals: average views rising, outliers, DMs. The numbers come at month four.

How do I use it?

1. Track views divided by follows for every post. Lower is better.
2. Watch the average and the median rise, and ignore the single spike.
3. Count the DMs, the regular viewers and the named people watching the stories.
4. Agree with the client up front that numbers come at month four.

In his words

That's the biggest signal you can get online, other than someone actually buying from you, that they're going to buy from you is to follow.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Signals before numbers" mean? A follow is the biggest signal there is, short of a sale. Watch the signals for three months; the numbers arrive around month four.

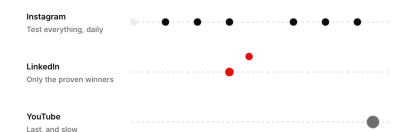
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tomsharman.com/playbooks/distribution/signals-before-numbers/

Instagram first

Instagram first, because that is where you learn fastest. LinkedIn gets the proven winners, because it holds the buyers.



Everything runs through Instagram. A winner moves down to LinkedIn.

- 01 Put every format on Instagram first and read the result within days.
- 02 Rewrite only the winners for LinkedIn, with the depth written underneath.
- 03 Cross-post to TikTok and Shorts when it costs nothing.

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Distribution, 4 of 4

Instagram first

Instagram is the test bed. LinkedIn gets the proven winners. YouTube comes last.

Right now you need to be Instagram first. It's where you learn fastest, so it's where we test. LinkedIn only gets the proven winners, because that's where the buyers are. YouTube is where the depth is long term, but it's the hardest platform to grow on right now, so it comes last.

How do I use it?

1. Put every format on Instagram first and read the result within days.
2. Rewrite only the winners for LinkedIn, with the depth written underneath.
3. Cross-post to TikTok and Shorts when it costs nothing.
4. Keep YouTube cheap until the positioning is proven.

In his words

Right now, you need to be Instagram first from a short form strategy.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Instagram first" mean? Instagram first, because that is where you learn fastest. LinkedIn gets the proven winners, because it holds the buyers. YouTube comes last, because it is the hardest place to grow.

How do I put "Instagram first" into practice? Put every format on Instagram first and read the result within days. Rewrite only the winners for LinkedIn, with the depth written underneath. Cross-post to TikTok and Shorts when it costs nothing.

Why does "Instagram first" matter? Right now you need to be Instagram first. It's where you learn fastest, so it's where we test.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/distribution/instagram-first/

5. How I work

Retainer kickoff

A retainer starts with one goal for 90 days, a baseline for every number and a name against every step.



01 Read the proposal, the deal page and the signing call before writing a word.

02 Write the 90-day goal in one sentence, with a table of how you will know on the last day.

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How I work, 1 of 27

Retainer kickoff

The night a client signs, a dated 90-day plan with one goal, baselines, named owners and the first two weeks.

The day a client signs, I write the plan that night. One goal for 90 days, one job per platform, and every checkpoint on a Thursday so it lands in the midweek meeting. Then I ask for access to everything and I just get involved.

How do I use it?

1. Write the 90-day goal in one sentence, with a table of how you will know on the last day.
2. Give each platform one job, one KPI and one named owner.
3. Log a baseline for every KPI from the month before the start, and leave targets blank until there is data.
4. Date the 30, 60 and 90 checkpoints on the midweek meeting day, and pull the final review forward if day 90 lands in a holiday.
5. Write the first two weeks as a table of when, what and who, ending with the first test live by the end of week two.
6. Ask for access to everything on day one: the chat tool, Drive, Instagram Insights and YouTube Studio.
7. Send the invoice on day one.
8. Map the team by name, with your own role in it, and write "to hire" with a target date for every gap.

In his words

I just need to be involved, be chatting to people, be having the conversations, be present in the meetings, and like be chipping away at delivering on these.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Retainer kickoff" mean? A retainer starts with one goal for 90 days, a baseline for every number and a name against every step.

How do I put "Retainer kickoff" into practice? Write the 90-day goal in one sentence, with a table of how you will know on the last day. Give each platform one job, one KPI and one named owner. Log a baseline for every KPI from the month before the start, and leave targets blank until there is data.

Why does "Retainer kickoff" matter? The day a client signs, I write the plan that night. One goal for 90 days, one job per platform, and every checkpoint on a Thursday so it lands in the midweek meeting.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/retainer-kickoff/

The creator audit

Every piece of work starts from what the content already shows. Scrape the last 30 posts, count everything, find what is three to four times the median, and only then say what to make.



Scrape
The last 30 posts

Count
Total, median and mean views

Outliers
Three to four times the median

Formats
A median for each bucket

What next
A diary, and a stop-posting list

01 Write down the handle, the platforms, the purpose and who will read the audit.

02 Check the vault and earlier artifacts for anything already scraped on them.

03 Take follower counts and bios from the browser, and spend Apify credits only on what the browser cannot read.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARRAN

How I work, 2 of 27

The creator audit

Scrape the last 30, find the median, the ratio and the outliers, bucket the formats, then say what to make next.

Before I say anything about someone's content, I scrape their last 30 and look at what's actually in front of me. I work out the median, then the median against their followers, then anything at three to four times that median, because that's an outlier worth studying. Then every post goes into a format. The number I care about most is views per follower gained, and that one needs their Insights.

How do I use it?

1. Write down the handle, the platforms, the purpose and who will read the audit.
2. Scrape the last 30 posts with a capped run, and record the date and scope.
3. Leave old pinned posts and anything under 24 hours old out of every median, and call out any boosted post.
4. Work out total, median and mean views, and median views as a share of followers.
5. Mark every post at three to four times the median, with its multiple and its share of all views.
6. Bucket every post by format and by how it is shot, and give each bucket its median.
7. Write what is working and what is not, each point with a number and a link.

Questions

What does "The creator audit" mean? Every piece of work starts from what the content already shows. Scrape the last 30 posts, count everything, find what is three to four times the median, and only then say what to make.

How do I put "The creator audit" into practice? Write down the handle, the platforms, the purpose and who will read the audit. Scrape the last 30 posts with a capped run, and record the date and scope. Leave old pinned posts and anything under 24 hours old out of every median, and call out any boosted post.

Why does "The creator audit" matter? Before I say anything about someone's content, I scrape their last 30 and look at what's

actually in front of me. I work out the median, then the median against their followers, then anything at three to four times that median, because that's an outlier worth studying.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-creator-audit/

Recording day

One booked studio, one person asking and a bank of questions written in advance. The first fake pod gave 34 usable clips in an hour, because the writing was done before anyone sat down.



- 01 Put every question skipped or never reached last time at the top of the new bank.
- 02 Write new questions from the calls, packets and concept pages that have arrived since the last recording.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARRAN

How I work, 3 of 27

Recording day

Write the bank, set the room, record in one batch, then turn the tape into clips and tickets.

Recording day is the cheapest way I know to post every day. I book a studio, someone reads out questions I've written, and I answer them. The podcast is there for the clips. The first fake pod gave me 34 usable clips in an hour, and the hotline got through 60 callers in one sitting. I still refuse to buy cameras. The writing is the work. Anything we never reach goes to the top of the next bank, and every answer becomes a ticket for the editors.

How do I use it?

1. Put every question skipped or never reached last time at the top of the new bank.
2. Write new questions from the calls, packets and concept pages that have arrived since the last recording.
3. Name the specifics in each question: the brand, the person, the number.
4. Write a spine for each question: lead with, reach for, land on, every number checked against Numbers.
5. Build the call sheet: call times, the spaces, cameras, sound, light and the clips you plan to cut.
6. Book the studio and a person to ask, and run both mics for the whole session.
7. Film extra short-form questions in the same session while everyone is fresh.
8. Map the tape against the bank: answered with its timestamp, skipped, abandoned or never reached.
9. Write one ticket per answer for the editors, with what Tom landed on.
10. Carry the never-reached questions into the next bank as its running order.

In his words

The reason it's not real is because we're focusing on clips and we're trying to get daily clips every single day.

Questions

What does "Recording day" mean? One booked studio, one person asking and a bank of questions written in advance. The first fake pod gave 34 usable clips in an hour, because the writing was done before anyone sat down.

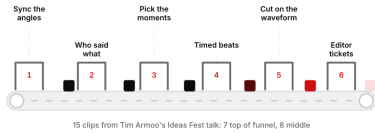
How do I put "Recording day" into practice? Put every question skipped or never reached last time at the top of the new bank. Write new questions from the calls, packets and concept pages that have arrived since the last recording. Name the specifics in each question: the brand, the person, the number.

Why does "Recording day" matter? Recording day is the cheapest way I know to post every day. I book a studio, someone reads out questions I've written, and I answer them.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/recording-day/

The clip bank

Watch the whole talk, map who said what, then cut one idea per clip at 40 to 75 seconds. Every beat carries its timecodes on every angle, so the editor knows exactly what goes in and in what order.



01 Read the client's plan or deal page first, so every clip gets a funnel job.

02 Sync the camera angles on their audio and pick the master: the one that starts earliest, runs to the end and carries the questions clearly.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARRAN

How I work, 4 of 27

The clip bank

One long recording turned into a bank of short clips, each mapped beat by beat and handed to an editor as a ticket.

When I get a talk back, I watch the whole thing and map who said what before I pick anything. Every clip is one idea, 40 to 75 seconds. The sign of a weak editor is the inability to trim down. So I build each clip as beats with timecodes on both angles, hook first, and each one becomes a ticket titled after the question being asked.

How do I use it?

1. Sync the camera angles on their audio and pick the master: the one that starts earliest, runs to the end and carries the questions clearly.
2. Write the source page with every speaker and timestamp before choosing a single clip.
3. Keep only moments that stand alone, carry one of Hormozi's seven and are clip shaped: a contrarian take, a number, tactical advice, a candid admission or a real question.
4. Hold every clip to one idea and 40 to 75 seconds; two ideas become two clips.
5. Give each clip a 3 to 5 word hook with a number or a name in it, and put the hook first even if it was said later.
6. List the beats in the order they play, with in and out points on every angle.
7. Cut on the waveform, then re-cut every boundary on a second pass and check no clip starts on a clipped word.
8. Flag swearing, personal details and caption corrections that need sign-off before anything posts.
9. Make one ticket per clip, titled from the question asked, with the timestamps, the words and the footage linked.

Questions

What does "The clip bank" mean? Watch the whole talk, map who said what, then cut one idea per clip at 40 to 75 seconds. Every beat carries its timecodes on every angle, so the editor knows exactly what goes in and in what order.

How do I put "The clip bank" into practice? Sync the camera angles on their audio and pick the master: the one that starts

earliest, runs to the end and carries the questions clearly. Write the source page with every speaker and timestamp before choosing a single clip. Keep only moments that stand alone, carry one of Hormozi's seven and are clip shaped: a contrarian take, a number, tactical advice, a candid admission or a real question.

Why does "The clip bank" matter? When I get a talk back, I watch the whole thing and map who said what before I pick anything. Every clip is one idea, 40 to 75 seconds.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-clip-bank/

The consulting session

Every session is researched before it starts, run to a timed agenda on a page the client can see, and recorded. The recording becomes the breakdown: a roadmap, the transcript, and the next step priced as a three-month sprint.



- 01 Research their profiles before the call: median, outliers at 3 times the median or more, and every claim they make.
- 02 Build the run of show as timed blocks, each with its question and a done when line.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARMAN

How I work, 5 of 27

The consulting session

Research before the call, a clock during it, and a written breakdown with a proposal after it.

Before the call I've read everything you've posted. I find your median and your outlier, and that's the first thing we look at. The session runs to a clock and opens on why now. With positioning you want to avoid that messy middle, so you're either the builder or the authority. I record it, and within 48 hours you get the breakdown: the roadmap, the transcript and what we each do this week. Then, if it's right, we move in two-week sprints.

How do I use it?

1. Research their profiles before the call: median, outliers at 3 times the median or more, and every claim they make.
2. Write the prep doc with three lines to land and Tom's lean on the next step.
3. Build the run of show as timed blocks, each with its question and a done when line.
4. Build the on-screen session page and share it during the call.
5. Open with why now and what success looks like in 12 months, and let them answer first.
6. Settle the side: the builder or the authority, out of the messy middle.
7. Record the call and send the breakdown within 48 hours: roadmap, transcription and action points for both sides.
8. Make a team edition without pricing when they want to share it with their team.
9. Close on the next step: stop here, a three-month sprint of fortnightly sessions, or an interim head of content role.

In his words

And maybe, so when I look at personal brand, you want to avoid that messy middle, right?

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "The consulting session" mean? Every session is researched before it starts, run to a timed agenda on a page the client can see, and recorded. The recording becomes the breakdown: a roadmap, the transcript, and the next step priced as a three-month sprint.

How do I put "The consulting session" into practice? Research their profiles before the call: median, outliers at 3 times the median or more, and every claim they make. Write the prep doc with three lines to land and Tom's lean on the next step. Build the run of show as timed blocks, each with its question and a done when line.

Why does "The consulting session" matter? Before the call I've read everything you've posted. I find your median and your outlier, and that's the first thing we look at.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-consulting-session/

Soft DM outreach

The one-hour call only comes up once they reply.



The route the Sam Stoffel DM leads took on 1 October 2026, from screenshots to 37 drafted messages.

- 01 Collect the DMs where someone asked for 1:1 help, and get the account owner's approval first if the inbox is someone else's.
- 02 Pull each person's followers, bio, offer and last 5 posts before writing anything.
- 03 Order each tier by viral potential and the most interesting story.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARRAN

How I work, 6 of 27

Soft DM outreach

How Tom opens a consulting conversation: who he is, one useful tip, and a friendly sign-off.

When someone's asked for help, the first message is soft. Your content came up on my feed, I think I remember your profile engaging with Sam Stoffel, I used to be his head of content. Then one tip that fits their niche, something they can do today, and hope you're well, keep going. That's it. It's conversational, and it says who I am and why they should listen. If they reply, that's when I mention the one-hour strategy call.

How do I use it?

1. Collect the DMs where someone asked for 1:1 help, and get the account owner's approval first if the inbox is someone else's.
2. Pull each person's followers, bio, offer and last 5 posts before writing anything.
3. Tier them: strong if they named a problem and wanted help, medium if they gave no goal, not a lead with a reason Tom can overrule.
4. Order each tier by viral potential and the most interesting story.
5. Match a service, with the one-hour call as the entry point for every strong and medium lead.
6. Write the DM in three beats: your content came up on my feed, I used to be Sam Stoffel's head of content, one tip they can use today.
7. Sign off with hope you're well, keep going, and leave out any pitch, price or link.
8. Send every DM by hand.
9. If they reply, offer a one-hour strategy call for a proper look at their page.

Questions

What does "Soft DM outreach" mean? The first message is soft: who Tom is, one tip they can use today, then go. The one-hour call only comes up once they reply.

How do I put "Soft DM outreach" into practice? Collect the DMs where someone asked for 1:1 help, and get the account owner's approval first if the inbox is someone else's. Pull each person's followers, bio, offer and last 5 posts before writing

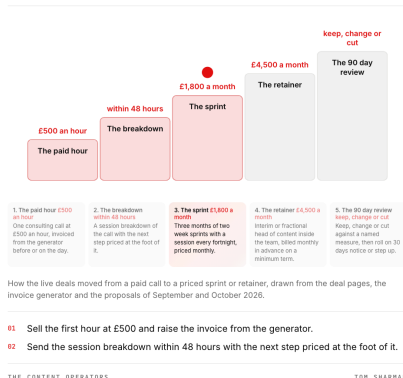
anything. Tier them: strong if they named a problem and wanted help, medium if they gave no goal, not a lead with a reason Tom can overrule.

Why does "Soft DM outreach" matter? When someone's asked for help, the first message is soft. Your content came up on my feed, I think I remember your profile engaging with Sam Stoffel, I used to be his head of content.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/soft-dm-outreach/

Pricing and the offer ladder

Every client so far has come in through a paid hour and been offered the next step in writing within days. The price of each step sits on a deal page, so the next quote starts from a real number.



How I work, 7 of 27

Pricing and the offer ladder

A paid hour, then a three month sprint, then a monthly retainer, each priced from what has already been sold.

Every client I have right now started with one paid hour. I send a breakdown within a couple of days with the next step priced at the bottom. Usually that is a three month sprint: we map where you are today and where we are getting to, then we work in two week blocks. If you have a team I need to be inside every week, that becomes a retainer. Editing is always its own line, and I step people up when something changes, like a hire or a raise.

How do I use it?

1. Send the session breakdown within 48 hours with the next step priced at the foot of it.
2. Offer three options at most, recommend one, and credit the smallest against the biggest.
3. Use the sprint when there is a team to align: six two week sprints and a session every fortnight.
4. Bill a retainer monthly in advance on a three month initial term, then rolling on 30 days notice.
5. Cap the days a week in writing and keep editing outside the core fee as its own line.
6. Name the measure for the 90 day review in the proposal itself.
7. Step a client up when something changes for them: a hire, a raise or a launch.

Questions

What does "Pricing and the offer ladder" mean? Every client so far has come in through a paid hour and been offered the next step in writing within days.

How do I put "Pricing and the offer ladder" into practice?

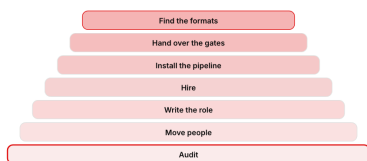
Send the session breakdown within 48 hours with the next step priced at the foot of it. Offer three options at most, recommend one, and credit the smallest against the biggest. Use the sprint when there is a team to align: six two week sprints and a session every fortnight.

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tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/pricing-and-the-offer-ladder/

Building a content team from zero

The order is the same each time: audit, move people, hire, install the system, hand the gates over.



01 Spend week one on the audit: the people, the costs, the tools, the output and what has been tried.

02 Move people into the job their skill fits before you open a new role.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOM SHARMAN

How I work, 8 of 27

Building a content team from zero

Audit the people you have, move them first, hire for both jobs, then install the pipeline and the gates.

At a certain level people hire me to build the group of people who make the content. Week one is an audit: who is here, what it costs, what has been tried. Then I move the people I have before I hire anyone. When I do hire, I want someone who shoots and edits. Then the boards go in, every approval gets a name, and by day thirty my gate has a successor.

How do I use it?

1. Spend week one on the audit: the people, the costs, the tools, the output and what has been tried.
2. Move people into the job their skill fits before you open a new role.
3. Write the ad with the pay range and a bar for month 1, month 3 and month 6.
4. Hire someone who shoots and edits for a small team, and keep short form off the first hire.
5. Ask for a full video over a cut down, and three written answers of under 150 words each.
6. Put a one week notice period on a junior role.
7. Name who approves what, hold the editorial gate yourself, and name a successor by day thirty.
8. Brief editors with their best videos and competitor work they love, and replace an editor whose quality still drops.
9. Send the founders five numbers every Friday.

In his words

Often when I come in, it's about building systems and processes, and quite often teams.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Building a content team from zero" mean? Tom has built a content function from zero five times, and at a certain level that is the job people hire him for. The order is the same each

time: audit, move people, hire, install the system, hand the gates over.

How do I put "Building a content team from zero" into practice? Spend week one on the audit: the people, the costs, the tools, the output and what has been tried. Move people into the job their skill fits before you open a new role. Write the ad with the pay range and a bar for month 1, month 3 and month 6.

Why does "Building a content team from zero" matter? At a certain level people hire me to build the group of people who make the content. Week one is an audit: who is here, what it costs, what has been tried.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/building-a-content-team-from-zero/

Carousels and the middle of the funnel

Nothing becomes a carousel until the video behind it has already won.



Post the video
Selfie video or clip, first

Pick the winner
Beats the 30 day median

Re-cut as slides
One idea per slide

Instagram and LinkedIn
Twice a week

Read the saves
Saves decide the run

Feed the offer
Founders and brands

01 Make a carousel only from a video that beat the trailing 30 day median.

02 Put the hook on slide one in bold, aimed at one person.

03 Use slide two for the credential line that says why you get to say it.

THE CONTENT OPERATORS

TOR SHARRAN

How I work, 9 of 27

Carousels and the middle of the funnel

Carousels are winning videos re-cut as slides, made to keep an audience and to reach the buyers on LinkedIn.

Top of the funnel brings people in. The middle keeps them, and that is carousels and fake pods. I never make a carousel from an idea that has not been tested. The selfie video goes out first, and if it beats the median it gets re-cut as slides: the hook, why I get to say it, one idea per slide, then save this. It goes on LinkedIn too, where the buyers are. And it has to link back to the positioning, or it is just a nice graphic.

How do I use it?

1. Make a carousel only from a video that beat the trailing 30 day median.
2. Put the hook on slide one in bold, aimed at one person.
3. Use slide two for the credential line that says why you get to say it.
4. Give each middle slide one idea, with exact numbers where the record has them.
5. End on a save or send instruction tied to an action, and close the caption on save.
6. Tie every carousel back to the positioning, so the graphic builds the brand.
7. Mine old interviews, courses and call tapes for stories to turn into slides.
8. Name an owner and build the template before the first one is scheduled.
9. Post to Instagram and LinkedIn, and read saves and profile visits at week four.

In his words

No, middle of funnel content is content that sustains and keeps an audience, so often that's things like carousels, that's things like fake podcasts, etc.

Questions

What does "Carousels and the middle of the funnel" mean?

The middle of the funnel keeps an audience, and carousels and fake pods are how Tom fills it. Nothing becomes a carousel until the video behind it has already won.

How do I put "Carousels and the middle of the funnel" into practice? Make a carousel only from a video that beat the trailing 30 day median. Put the hook on slide one in bold, aimed at one person. Use slide two for the credential line that says why you get to say it.

Why does "Carousels and the middle of the funnel" matter?

Top of the funnel brings people in. The middle keeps them, and that is carousels and fake pods.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/carousels-and-the-middle-of-the-funnel/



Monthly ideation

Scrape the creator, find the outliers, generate double what you need, then shortlist to 4 long-form titles and 30 short-form ideas.

To land on thirty good ones I need fifty to sixty, so I generate double and cut. It starts with data: I scraped her long form and her last five or six months of short form, bucketed every post and looked at what actually works. Then outliers from her niche and the ones next to it. The outlier is the brief. Eighty percent proven formats, twenty percent testing.

How do I use it?

1. Scrape all of the creator's long form and the last five to six months of short form, with every metric and a transcript per post.
2. Summarise each post from its transcript and put it into a format bucket with that bucket's median views.
3. Search her niche and the adjacent niches for outliers and save the ones worth adapting into the monthly ideas tab.
4. Write the core six to eight messages she repeats and check every idea carries one of them.
5. Generate 6 to 8 long-form titles with talking points beneath each, and 50 to 60 short-form ideas.
6. Blend repeatable serialised formats with one-offs, keeping roughly 80% proven and 20% experimental.
7. Shortlist to 4 long-form titles and 30 short-form ideas, then generate more from the favourites and save which ones they were.
8. Point every idea at the format it belongs in, the way The topic bank does for Tom's own channel.
9. Walk the creator through it on a call and leave her the numbers and personal details to fill in.

In his words

So, to be able to reach 30 concrete ideas, we definitely need 50 to 60 short-form ideas.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Monthly ideation" mean? Getting there takes 6 to 8 titles and 50 to 60 ideas, built from her own winners and the outliers in her niche and the niches next to it.

How do I put "Monthly ideation" into practice? Scrape all of the creator's long form and the last five to six months of short form, with every metric and a transcript per post. Summarise each post from its transcript and put it into a format bucket with that bucket's median views. Search her niche and the adjacent niches for outliers and save the ones worth adapting into the monthly ideas tab.

Why does "Monthly ideation" matter? To land on thirty good ones I need fifty to sixty, so I generate double and cut. It starts with data: I scraped her long form and her last five or six months of short form, bucketed every post and looked at what actually works.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/monthly-ideation/



Pitching a show format

A one-line promise, a mechanic in numbers, a signature device, a season of topics and a budget at three scales.

Every show I pitch starts with one line you could say in a lift. Then the rules of an episode in numbers, and one device that comes back every week until it becomes the brand. Then I map the season and price it three ways, with Base as the recommendation, so the client picks a shape.

How do I use it?

1. Write down the client's brief, the constraints and what they asked for on the first call, word for word where you can.
2. Write the one-line promise in about ten words and three to five working titles under it.
3. Set the mechanic in numbers: topics per episode, people per episode, runtime and clips per episode.
4. Pick one signature device that repeats every episode, such as the knock at the door or the whispered Tube announcement.
5. Group the topics into named categories, or map a season of dated moments with recurring segments and one sport never used twice in a row.
6. Name the talent rules and the guardrails, including compliance for regulated categories and a line that named talent has not been approached.
7. Price the run at Lean, Base and Ambitious, list what the client provides in kind, and put contingency only on the lines a contract does not fix.
8. Record actionable questions first in the shoot, then flip the order in the edit so the story hooks.
9. Build a call sheet per episode with the spaces, the question bank, the clips and a guest brief.

Questions

What does "Pitching a show format" mean? A format pitch sells a show that repeats. Tom writes the promise, the rules of an episode and the device that comes back every week, then backs it with a season plan, a call sheet and a budget the client can sign.

How do I put "Pitching a show format" into practice? Write down the client's brief, the constraints and what they asked for on

the first call, word for word where you can. Write the one-line promise in about ten words and three to five working titles under it. Set the mechanic in numbers: topics per episode, people per episode, runtime and clips per episode.

Why does "Pitching a show format" matter? Every show I pitch starts with one line you could say in a lift. Then the rules of an episode in numbers, and one device that comes back every week until it becomes the brand.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/pitching-a-show-format/



Brand partnerships and talent

Build something talent wants to turn up to, let them play first, then ask, and put the brand somewhere nobody has put it before.

Mason Mount played three Combat Gaming events before I asked him anything, and he became the first ambassador. Same with brands. Duracell went on a football shirt that only existed inside FIFA, a hundred year old format put somewhere new. The lesson I give creators now: brands pay when they understand exactly how to work with you. Own a format and they keep sponsoring it. And keep your own evidence, because my name is in none of the coverage.

How do I use it?

1. Build or run something talent wants to be part of: an event series, a team or a format the creator owns.
2. Invite the talent to take part before any commercial ask.
3. Make the ambassador ask after they have enjoyed the thing.
4. Work out exactly how a brand can work with the talent before you pitch either side.
5. Look for a familiar commercial format and move it into a space nobody has used.
6. Run the four lanes of a talent event yourself: booking, format, live production and the publisher or partner relationships.
7. Write the brand brief as a script table: Hook, then Setup, Tension and Payoff per segment, then the CTA.
8. Check exclusivity contracts and brand naming with the talent's agency before the brief goes out.
9. Keep your own record of who did what, because the coverage will quote someone else.

Questions

What does "Brand partnerships and talent" mean? Tom co-led the first in-game shirt sponsorship in FIFA history and signed Mason Mount as Combat Gaming's first ambassador. Both came from the same habit: give the talent or the brand the experience first, then make the ask.

How do I put "Brand partnerships and talent" into practice?

Build or run something talent wants to be part of: an event series,

a team or a format the creator owns. Invite the talent to take part before any commercial ask. Make the ambassador ask after they have enjoyed the thing.

Why does "Brand partnerships and talent" matter? Mason Mount played three Combat Gaming events before I asked him anything, and he became the first ambassador. Same with brands.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/brand-partnerships-and-talent/



Making a viral YouTube video

Idea to shoot to edit to publish, the way the biggest videos in the catalogue were made.

Our biggest video, the KKK one, took 90 minutes of planning because Niko rang me mid trip and said he had convinced the leader of the KKK he was from the BBC. Most of the others took weeks. What they had in common was story. We spent 30 to 50 grand on an idea and asked if it could do 10 million. And the ideas never came in the planning session itself. They came two or three days later. Then the first hour decides everything.

How do I use it?

1. Book a regular planning session with the creator and arrive having watched what is performing in the niche and the genres next to it.
2. Give each topic a fixed slot in the session and expect the answers to arrive in the days after it.
3. Pick the idea that has a single moment the whole video hangs on, and write down what you will do if that moment never comes.
4. Price it honestly against the outcome: ask whether this idea can do 10 million before you spend on it.
5. Do the casting, the build and the logistics yourself, and give the creator the final say on anything creative.
6. Keep secret shoots small, because the creator space is small and everyone talks.
7. Edit for the story first, with a turn partway through that gives the audience a reason to care.
8. Treat the first hour after upload as the test, and if it dies, take it down and re-upload with a different angle.

Questions

What does "Making a viral YouTube video" mean? The biggest videos Tom produced won on story and on planning that survived chaos. Ideas come out of a planning session days later, the shoot is built around one moment, and the first hour after upload decides the rest.

How do I put "Making a viral YouTube video" into practice?

Book a regular planning session with the creator and arrive having

watched what is performing in the niche and the genres next to it. Give each topic a fixed slot in the session and expect the answers to arrive in the days after it. Pick the idea that has a single moment the whole video hangs on, and write down what you will do if that moment never comes.

Why does "Making a viral YouTube video" matter? Our biggest video, the KKK one, took 90 minutes of planning because Niko rang me mid trip and said he had convinced the leader of the KKK he was from the BBC. Most of the others took weeks.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/making-a-viral-youtube-video/



Packaging, titles and thumbnails

Write the title first, test titles and thumbnails one variable at a time, and never let packaging carry a weak story.

A good title and a good thumbnail can be the difference between 100,000 views and a million. So I go in with a title first, because it tells me what the video is for, and I refine it after the edit. Then test. We used to run 30 to 40 titles and thumbnails on Meta ads before an episode went out. On YouTube, keep the thumbnail fixed and test three titles. And for the record, the KKK thumbnail took me five minutes.

How do I use it?

1. Write a working title before you film so the shoot knows what outcome it is serving.
2. Write the hook first too, then swap it if the shoot gives you a better spontaneous moment.
3. After the edit, refine the title against what the video actually delivers.
4. Pre-test 30 to 40 title and thumbnail variants as Meta ads that point at the subscribe button, and wait three or four days for the click-through ranking.
5. On YouTube's A-B test hold the thumbnail fixed and run three titles, then test thumbnails once the title is settled.
6. Make thumbnails look like YouTube by studying how creators in the niche package their videos.
7. Put the brand or format name in the title whenever it is relevant so you own the term.
8. Use freelance thumbnail designers who work across several channels, so their insight comes from more than one world.

In his words

So we used to take 30 to 40 different titles and thumbnails, and we used to run them on meta-ads.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Packaging, titles and thumbnails" mean? A good title and thumbnail can be the difference between 100,000 views and a million. Tom's method is to go in with a title, pre-test the variants, isolate what you change, and own a name in every title.

How do I put "Packaging, titles and thumbnails" into practice? Write a working title before you film so the shoot knows what outcome it is serving. Write the hook first too, then swap it if the shoot gives you a better spontaneous moment. After the edit, refine the title against what the video actually delivers.

Why does "Packaging, titles and thumbnails" matter? A good title and a good thumbnail can be the difference between 100,000 views and a million. So I go in with a title first, because it tells me what the video is for, and I refine it after the edit.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/packaging-titles-and-thumbnails/



Long form to short form

One prepped hour in a studio, or one talk, turned into weeks of clips, carousels and posts.

I had 60 minutes in a podcast studio for Creator Hotline and came out with two months of content, posting every day. That only happened because it was prepped. I knew the questions and roughly what my answers would be, so it was ask, deliver, 40 seconds, next one. One piece of video, a lot of leverage.

How do I use it?

1. Write the question bank and your answer spines before the studio day, drawn from the problems your audience already has.
2. Film the session as a run of standalone answers, one question and one idea each.
3. Pick moments that stand alone with a sentence of setup at most, and that carry conflict, a number, tactical advice or a candid admission.
4. Cut each moment to the selfie or Q&A shape, with the hook on screen in 3 to 5 words and nothing after the payoff.
5. Where the long form has a retention spike, cut there.
6. Transcribe the whole session and pull the best lines into carousels and text cards.
7. Plan some bespoke short form on the same shoot day, with the same cast and set, alongside the cut downs.
8. Post one a day and promote anything that beats the trailing 30 day median to LinkedIn.

Questions

What does "Long form to short form" mean? Prep the questions, film the hour, cut one idea per clip, then repackage the winners as carousels and text posts. One Creator Hotline hour gave Tom two months of daily content.

How do I put "Long form to short form" into practice? Write the question bank and your answer spines before the studio day, drawn from the problems your audience already has. Film the session as a run of standalone answers, one question and one idea each. Pick moments that stand alone with a sentence of

setup at most, and that carry conflict, a number, tactical advice or a candid admission.

Why does "Long form to short form" matter? I had 60 minutes in a podcast studio for Creator Hotline and came out with two months of content, posting every day. That only happened because it was prepped.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/long-form-to-short-form/



Proposals that win

The shape Tom's proposals settled into: their numbers first, his proof second, the price last.

When I come off a call I build the proposal that night, while what they said is still fresh. It opens on their numbers and their words, then their channels as they are today, then what I have done for people with the same problem. The price comes last. I work in two-week sprints, every two weeks we hit targets as a team, and my job is to set them and move them forward. I give three options at most and say which one I would pick.

How do I use it?

1. Audit their channels from a fresh scrape and link every video you cite with the date it was pulled.
2. Open with an at a glance table of where they are, and keep the price out of it.
3. Choose the three to six past clients closest to their problem and check every figure against Numbers.
4. Break their goal into lines with a low end and a top end, and say on the page that none of it is a forecast.
5. Lay out two-week sprints dated from the start, each with what you are looking for.
6. List what could slow you down and what you would do about each one.
7. Put the fee last, exactly as Tom priced it, with at most three options and one highlighted.
8. Say what you need from them: time, analytics access and introductions, and what stays with them.
9. When they ask for the commercials, send the one page version: services, counted deliverables, fee, review date and what sits outside the fee.

Questions

What does "Proposals that win" mean? Every proposal starts with where the client is and what they said on the call, in their own words. The fee comes at the end, as at most three options with one highlighted.

How do I put "Proposals that win" into practice? Audit their channels from a fresh scrape and link every video you cite with

the date it was pulled. Open with an at a glance table of where they are, and keep the price out of it. Choose the three to six past clients closest to their problem and check every figure against Numbers.

Why does "Proposals that win" matter? When I come off a call I build the proposal that night, while what they said is still fresh. It opens on their numbers and their words, then their channels as they are today, then what I have done for people with the same problem.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/proposals-that-win/



The founder's personal brand

Content for founders and CEOs: one position, a short list of messages, and formats the team can run without them.

A founder's audience cares about what it gets from the founder's experience. So I start with the last 30 posts and find what is already working, which is usually opinion said to camera. Then we agree one line: who you are, who you are for and who you are against. We write seven or eight messages and you say them every day on a selfie video. The biggest lever early on is one winning top of funnel format.

How do I use it?

1. Scrape the founder's last 30 posts and group them by format with the median views for each.
2. List every offer the content has to sell, and note the gap between them.
3. Write one line on who the founder is, who they are for and what they are against, and get it agreed in writing.
4. Write seven or eight messages the founder will repeat, each one person, one problem, one solution.
5. Start daily selfie videos from day one, low production and the same messages every day.
6. Lead every title with what the audience gains, and keep the founder's story as the proof behind it.
7. Give each platform one job, with a KPI and an owner for each.
8. Test two angles head to head through trial reels and lock the one that lifts average views.
9. Hire the team, write the checklists and hold checkpoint reviews at day 30, 60 and 90.

In his words

Whereas I think what a lot of people do wrong in their titling for entrepreneurship content is they make it like about the founder, led from the founder.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "The founder's personal brand" mean? A founder brand is sold on what the audience gets from the founder's experience. Pick one position with an enemy, repeat a handful of messages daily, and build the team that runs it.

How do I put "The founder's personal brand" into practice? Scrape the founder's last 30 posts and group them by format with the median views for each. List every offer the content has to sell, and note the gap between them. Write one line on who the founder is, who they are for and what they are against, and get it agreed in writing.

Why does "The founder's personal brand" matter? A founder's audience cares about what it gets from the founder's experience. So I start with the last 30 posts and find what is already working, which is usually opinion said to camera.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-founders-personal-brand/



The Venture Room Asana operating system

Seven Asana boards, named gates and a fixed handoff so a shoot becomes a film and a stack of cuts without the founders routing it.

A small content team runs on one board. Every idea, every edit and every bit of feedback lives on a card, and every card has an owner and a column. When a card lands in your column and you're tagged on it, that's your job. The founders see the near-final film once. My recommendation is always the same: let me build it, then we tune it with real numbers after a month.

How do I use it?

1. Name the four questions the team cannot answer today: what is out this week, where the month goes, what a shoot yielded, what is waiting on me.
2. Open one Planning ticket per shoot, set its Format and make the shoot date the due date before Plan sign-off.
3. Harvest within two days: log selects from the transcript, create one child cut per select and set the parent's Cuts field to the yield.
4. Let routine cuts from an approved shoot clear at Review, and send only films, new formats and branded work to the founders.
5. On Monday spend fifteen minutes on flagged tickets, and on Friday send the founders films published, cuts published, shoots filmed, average yield and anything stuck over a week.
6. After a month of tickets replace the proposed stuck-day limits with the real distribution and hand Tom's gates to the editor.

Questions

What does "The Venture Room Asana operating system" mean? Everyone owns a column, every crossing between boards is a named handoff, and the founders see the near-final film.

How do I put "The Venture Room Asana operating system" into practice? Name the four questions the team cannot answer today: what is out this week, where the month goes, what a shoot yielded, what is waiting on me. Open one Planning ticket per shoot, set its Format and make the shoot date the due date before

Plan sign-off. Harvest within two days: log selects from the transcript, create one child cut per select and set the parent's Cuts field to the yield.

Why does "The Venture Room Asana operating system" matter? A small content team runs on one board. Every idea, every edit and every bit of feedback lives on a card, and every card has an owner and a column.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-venture-room-asana-operating-system/



AI in the content workflow

The tools Tom built sit on the team's own stack, Asana, Slack and Shade, and take the shortcuts out of the pipeline.

With Sam Stoffel and Ben Heath we built really great systems that used AI to find the shortcuts. Then the tools join it up. Ideas from Slack become tickets, filmed shoots move to editing in one click, published posts match back to their tickets.

How do I use it?

1. Write the brief before any code, then build the tool as the implementation of that brief.
2. Turn the ideas channel into tickets automatically, once each, with the author credited.
3. Give editors one working surface over the editing board so review and verdicts happen in one place.
4. Match published posts back to their tickets so the numbers land where the work was planned.
5. Put a gate wherever a model's output ships, so nothing embellished goes out.
6. Hand the system over with an SOP and a walkthrough video so the team runs it without you.

Questions

What does "AI in the content workflow" mean? Tom builds AI into the places a content team already works.

How do I put "AI in the content workflow" into practice? Write the brief before any code, then build the tool as the implementation of that brief. Turn the ideas channel into tickets automatically, once each, with the author credited. Give editors one working surface over the editing board so review and verdicts happen in one place.

Why does "AI in the content workflow" matter? With Sam Stoffel and Ben Heath we built really great systems that used AI to find the shortcuts. Then the tools join it up.



Owned audience

The newsletter and Creator Therapy are tier 0: free, weekly, and the list every paid tier launches to.

Short form is the loud bit, the newsletter is the bit I own. I'll push people from the website into a weekly email, and that list is where every paid thing launches. But you have to be really intentional about who you're building. Decide who it's for, then talk to them every single day.

How do I use it?

1. Decide who the audience is before you build it, and call those people out in the free content every day.
2. Make the newsletter signup the main event on the website, and point every profile at it.
3. Send one email a week: the week's argument written down, plus what performed and what that says.
4. Write it in Tom's 2016 voice, scene first, blunt and specific.
5. Run Creator Therapy weekly on YouTube: the problem in their words, the diagnosis, the format fix, what to do on Monday.
6. Cut 3 to 4 short pieces from every episode so the long form feeds the daily count.
7. Shape Creator Therapy Light and Pro from what the first six episodes turn out to be about.
8. Launch every paid tier to the list first, and track new subscribers and open rate weekly.

In his words

I'll then do a weekly newsletter which will go out obviously once a week. I want to be able to push people from the website into that.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "Owned audience" mean? Short form earns attention and the newsletter keeps it. It is the only audience Tom owns outright, and every offer on the ladder launches to it.

How do I put "Owned audience" into practice? Decide who the audience is before you build it, and call those people out in the free content every day. Make the newsletter signup the main event on the website, and point every profile at it. Send one email a week: the week's argument written down, plus what performed and what that says.

Why does "Owned audience" matter? Short form is the loud bit, the newsletter is the bit I own. I'll push people from the website into a weekly email, and that list is where every paid thing launches.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/owned-audience/



The paid community

What Tom has said and planned for a paid community: the course inside it, him in every thread, two live hours a week, and a door up to the retainer.

Courses feel oversaturated right now. Too many bad ones. So I'd wrap the course in a paid community. People come in because of you, the authority, and they stay because of the people in the room. I'm going to build one for my own brand: two live hours a week, and the people who need more become retainer clients.

How do I use it?

1. Name the one audience the community is for and talk only to them in your content.
2. Put the course inside the community and set modules to unlock by months subscribed, spread over two or three months.
3. Give it a simple name that says what it does, with you as the authority behind it.
4. Invite people you already work with in first so the feed is alive on day one.
5. Post something useful every day from what you already say to clients and on social.
6. Reply to every post and every question as part of your working day.
7. Fix the live hours, an hour on Tuesday and an hour on Thursday, and keep them fixed as it grows.
8. Reward members who genuinely help each other with a leaderboard, and take spam down.
9. Set the launch price knowing it can go up later and never down.
10. Point members who need more at consulting and the retainer.

In his words

I'm going to build a paid community, and I'd recommend you do the same.

Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "The paid community" mean? Tom has not launched his own paid community yet.

How do I put "The paid community" into practice? Name the one audience the community is for and talk only to them in your content. Put the course inside the community and set modules to unlock by months subscribed, spread over two or three months. Give it a simple name that says what it does, with you as the authority behind it.

Why does "The paid community" matter? Courses feel oversaturated right now. Too many bad ones.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-paid-community/



Outlier mining and the idea funnel

Farm outliers from the right channels, mine them four ways, cut a hundred ideas to a handful, and pitch each with a take and a prediction.

Every strategist I rate starts ideas the same way. Find videos that did three or four times their own channel's average, and study channels between 10,000 and 250,000, because on a huge channel fame carries the hit. Seb Losardo collects a hundred of them. Paddy Galloway takes a hundred ideas and cuts them to three or four. Kallaway pitches twice a week, and if he has nothing contrarian to say, the idea dies. Your ideas are your cap, so this is where the time goes.

How do I use it?

1. Search the niche on YouTube with Shorts filtered out, sort by most viewed, and note what established channels typically get.
2. List the channels of 10,000 to 250,000 in the niche, starting from one you know is good and its nearest neighbours.
3. Pull their videos from the last two months (7 or 14 days in a news niche), drop anything under 2% engagement, and sort by outlier score.
4. Collect about 100 outliers at three or four times their channel's average, and for each write what made the idea and the packaging work beside a similar video that did not.
5. Write ideas as they come: the next version of your own outliers, translations from nearby niches, and crossovers of two outliers.
6. Cut for core, casual and new fit, then feasibility, then any idea you cannot title and sketch a thumbnail for now, then anything the creator is not excited by.
7. Write a one page pitch for each survivor: rough thumbnail, rough title, one to three reasons it will work, a log line and a views prediction.
8. Pitch them on a fixed call. Kill any idea without a contrarian take, and make the one with the highest prediction.
9. Back one idea in five on gut with no outlier behind it.
10. Grade every posted piece as a multiple of your 90 day median and put your own outliers back at the top of the list.

Whose method is this?

Built from the published talks and podcasts of Paddy Galloway, Seb Losardo, Kallaway, Jenny Hoyos, Caleb Ralston, written as steps to run.

Questions

What does "Outlier mining and the idea funnel" mean? Five strategists who between them claim billions of views describe the same front end: ideas come from videos that beat their own channel's average, read side by side with the ones that did not, then cut hard. Galloway cuts a hundred ideas to three or four, Hoyos keeps one in a hundred, and Kallaway kills any idea without a contrarian take.

How do I put "Outlier mining and the idea funnel" into practice? Search the niche on YouTube with Shorts filtered out, sort by most viewed, and note what established channels typically get. List the channels of 10,000 to 250,000 in the niche, starting from one you know is good and its nearest neighbours. Pull their videos from the last two months (7 or 14 days in a news niche), drop anything under 2% engagement, and sort by outlier score.

Why does "Outlier mining and the idea funnel" matter? Every strategist I rate starts ideas the same way. Find videos that did three or four times their own channel's average, and study channels between 10,000 and 250,000, because on a huge channel fame carries the hit.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/outlier-mining-and-the-idea-funnel/



Packaging and the first ten seconds

Write the title and thumbnail before the video, open a gap only the click closes, test it, then make the first shot prove it.

Kallaway says YouTube is a packaging platform, and he proved it: the same video went from 1,700 views to 1.2 million with a new thumbnail. Seb Losardo puts 40% of the effort into the title and thumbnail and 30% into the intro. Keep the thumbnail to three things and five words, make the title say something different from the text, and squint at it. Then the first shot has to prove the thumbnail. No welcome back. Proof, promise, plan, the way Hormozi opens every video.

How do I use it?

1. Before the shoot, write the title and mock the thumbnail; if the package does not clear the bar for the channel, change the idea.
2. Write down what the viewer already knows and what they want to know, and rewrite until the gap between them can only be closed by clicking.
3. Keep the thumbnail to three elements at most and three to five words, simple and slightly exaggerated.
4. Make the thumbnail text and the title say two different things.
5. Run the glance test (the thumbnail between two white slides) and the squint test (the channel page from across the room).
6. Read it as a stranger: would someone who does not know the creator click, and why?
7. Give the packaging decision an hour or two, then commit, and A B test thumbnails on watch time share after release.
8. Open on the shot the thumbnail promised, with no welcome back, so the first 10 seconds confirm the package on mute.
9. Follow with proof, promise and plan, leading with whichever matters most, and frame the rest as an ordered list.

Whose method is this?

Built from the published talks and podcasts of Paddy Galloway, Seb Losardo, Kallaway, Colin and Samir, Alex Hormozi, Michael Lim, written as steps to run.

Questions

What does "Packaging and the first ten seconds" mean?

Galloway, Losardo, Kallaway, Colin and Samir, Hormozi and Lim agree that the package and the opening decide a long form video. Losardo puts 40% of the effort into packaging and 30% into the intro. The thumbnail carries three things at most and three to five words, the title fires a different idea from the thumbnail, and the first ten seconds confirm both on mute.

How do I put "Packaging and the first ten seconds" into

practice? Before the shoot, write the title and mock the thumbnail; if the package does not clear the bar for the channel, change the idea. Write down what the viewer already knows and what they want to know, and rewrite until the gap between them can only be closed by clicking. Keep the thumbnail to three elements at most and three to five words, simple and slightly exaggerated.

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tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/packaging-and-the-first-ten-seconds/



The Shorts story formula

The hook is the idea, VIRAL is the story, the answer is the last word, and retention below 95% means it will probably not travel.

Jenny Hoyos says the hook is the idea, and if the hook is weak she does not make the video. Her framework is VIRAL. Visual shock in the first frame. Immediately start, already in the action. Rising action: what is the problem and why should we care. Anticipation: show how close the end is, a timer or a checklist. Lasting payoff: the answer is the last word, so any call to action goes before it. Her retention floor is 95%. Below that, she says, it will probably not blow up.

How do I use it?

1. Gather at least 100 ideas from outliers, your own day and other media, and keep the one whose hook is strongest.
2. Make the first frame a visual you understand on mute, with the action already started.
3. Open on a question, then say why it matters, so the viewer knows what they get by the end.
4. Raise the stakes, and put a progress marker on screen (a timer, a list being ticked off) so they can see how close the end is.
5. End on the answer as the last word. If there is a call to action, put it before the answer.
6. Pace it fast for the first 15 seconds, medium to 30, then slow and full of suspense before the reveal.
7. Keep every Short on the channel about the same length.
8. Hold the format and test one part at a time: the hook, the line after it, the payoff, then the ending.
9. Read the retention graph for where people leave. Under 30 seconds aim over 100%; never go below 95%.
10. Once the formula holds, repeat it and cut analytics to minutes a day.

Whose method is this?

Built from the published talks and podcasts of Jenny Hoyos, Kallaway, written as steps to run.

Questions

What does "The Shorts story formula" mean? Jenny Hoyos built 8 million subscribers in three years on Shorts and says her framework has worked in every video since she wrote it: visual shock, immediately start, rising action, anticipation, lasting payoff. Around it sit her hook criteria, a pacing curve, retention floors, Shorts of one length, and a testing loop that changes one thing at a time.

How do I put "The Shorts story formula" into practice? Gather at least 100 ideas from outliers, your own day and other media, and keep the one whose hook is strongest. Make the first frame a visual you understand on mute, with the action already started. Open on a question, then say why it matters, so the viewer knows what they get by the end.

Why does "The Shorts story formula" matter? Jenny Hoyos says the hook is the idea, and if the hook is weak she does not make the video. Her framework is VIRAL.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-shorts-story-formula/



A podcast built to repeat

Three yeses for every guest, outlier guests booked from the package, sections with no gaps, and a panel before release.

Diary of a CEO books a guest only on three yeses: Steven is interested, the guest is the expert, the audience wants it. Two is a no. They also hunt outlier guests, people who outperform every other interview on the channels they visit. Seb Losardo adds the bit most podcasts skip: write the title and thumbnail first and let that pick the guest. Then cut the episode into sections that each pay off, because people leave in the gaps between them. And test it before it goes out.

How do I use it?

1. Score every guest idea on three questions: is the host interested, is the guest the expert who speaks well, does the audience want it. Book only on three yeses.
2. Search for outlier guests, people whose interviews outperform on other channels, and check timing and exclusivity.
3. Write the title and thumbnail before booking, and let the package decide the guest.
4. Research each guest for the emotional story worth drawing out.
5. On the day, arrive an hour early, check every camera, light and microphone, and set the room so the guest is comfortable.
6. Flag moments live with a timecode and a note, and turn them into a list for the editors at the end.
7. Cut the episode as sections, each with tension, journey and payoff, and close the gaps between them.
8. Before release, show it to a test panel and keep the sections that give the interesting ones their context.
9. Open with no preamble: confirm the promise, qualify the guest by what they have done, and put the chapters on screen.
10. Read the retention curve for drops at the section joins, and fix one 1% thing on the next shoot.

Whose method is this?

Built from the published talks and podcasts of Jack Sylvester, Seb Losardo, Michael Lim, written as steps to run.

Questions

What does "A podcast built to repeat" mean? Between them: book guests who pass three tests and outperform on other channels, let the package pick the guest, make the guest comfortable before anything else, build the episode as sections that pay off, and test it before release.

How do I put "A podcast built to repeat" into practice? Score every guest idea on three questions: is the host interested, is the guest the expert who speaks well, does the audience want it. Book only on three yeses. Search for outlier guests, people whose interviews outperform on other channels, and check timing and exclusivity. Write the title and thumbnail before booking, and let the package decide the guest.

Why does "A podcast built to repeat" matter? Diary of a CEO books a guest only on three yeses: Steven is interested, the guest is the expert, the audience wants it. Two is a no.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/a-podcast-built-to-repeat/



A personal brand that converts

Start from the outcome, stand against something, narrow to the buyer, and measure what pays ahead of views.

Caleb Ralston says you can have millions of followers and make no money. So start with the outcome. Write what your industry says that you disagree with, test those takes, and the one people DM about becomes your enemy. Narrow to one buyer. Hormozi did that and his views per video fell while his revenue per view went up 68%. Kallaway says 10 to 20,000 views a post on Instagram is plenty. Then measure emails and followers per piece, and ask every new client which piece brought them in.

How do I use it?

1. Answer the four brand journey questions, backwards from the outcome you want.
2. Write two things to be known for and two to be known against.
3. Fill two columns: what your industry says that you disagree with, and what you believe instead. Test each take in content and keep the one that gets DMs.
4. Pick one buyer and one pond you can win now, and cut every topic that is for someone else.
5. List three to five painful problems you have solved for that buyer, add your solution to each, and break each into angles.
6. Make every piece for a stranger: introduce yourself, say why they should listen, explain every reference.
7. Split output 70% proven, 20% tweaks, 10% new; promote any 10% that hits.
8. Put a lead magnet and an email signup on every piece.
9. Each week rank pieces by emails collected, then followers gained, then views.
10. Ask every lead which piece of content made them reach out, and report it first.

Whose method is this?

Built from the published talks and podcasts of Caleb Ralston, Kallaway, Alex Hormozi, Michael Lim, written as steps to run.

Questions

What does "A personal brand that converts" mean? Ralston, Kallaway, Hormozi and Lim build personal brands for people who sell something, and they agree on the order: decide the outcome, find the contrarian belief, narrow to the buyer, turn their painful problems into ideas, make every piece for a stranger, and grade on emails, followers and who reaches out. When Hormozi narrowed, his views per video fell and his revenue per thousand views rose 68%.

How do I put "A personal brand that converts" into practice? Answer the four brand journey questions, backwards from the outcome you want. Write two things to be known for and two to be known against. Fill two columns: what your industry says that you disagree with, and what you believe instead. Test each take in content and keep the one that gets DMs.

Why does "A personal brand that converts" matter? Caleb Ralston says you can have millions of followers and make no money. So start with the outcome.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/a-personal-brand-that-converts/



The event as a studio content day

Treat every workshop, graduation and stage slot as a booked studio: plan the stations, follow the talent, film the room, then cut it into a month of posts and ads.

I treat every event as a studio day. The talent is there, the audience is there, the proof is there, and someone else has paid for the room. So I plan it content first. A videographer follows the talent from the moment they arrive. We film the queue, the keynote, a whiteboard wall where the whole room writes one number, a hot seat that reads like a pod, and a testimonial room where we walk people through the Epiphany Bridge. Then the clips become carousels, fake tweets and LinkedIn posts, the keynote goes out as a long form, and the best of it runs as ads. Done well, three days can give you a year of content, and in person still closes better than anything online.

How do I use it?

1. A week out, write the station list for the event: queue, stage, whiteboard wall, hot seat, testimonial room, with the format each one feeds.
2. Book a videographer to follow the talent all day, D-Rock style, with licence to stop them and say: say that again to camera.
3. Kit the stage with one or two static cameras and one roaming for faces and hands, and put a second mic on the talent.
4. Put white paper and a permanent marker on every seat, and write the one question the room will answer with a number.
5. At the doors, film the queue: what brought you here, what do you want to leave with.
6. Film the keynote whole, take a selfie video from the stage, and ask the room questions from the stage.
7. Run the whiteboard exercise: everyone writes their number, then line them up low to high and film down the line.
8. On a multi day event, move the stage questions to a hot seat on day two: one guest opposite, cameras tight, so it reads as a pod.
9. In the breaks, pull people out one at a time and take them through the Epiphany Bridge: where they were, how it felt, what changed, where they are now.

10. Collect every testimonial even when it can never run as an ad, and put them on a proof page and in the monthly email.
11. After the event, cut clips first, then turn the winners into carousels, fake tweets and LinkedIn posts.
12. Package the keynote like a YouTube video, title and thumbnail first, and post it as the long form for that month.
13. Approve the partnership ad requests from everyone who tagged the event, and give the room footage to whoever runs the ads.
14. Score the event on the room as well as the reels: 20% of the room on a booked call is the bar.

In his words

| You're getting paid to film content.

| Tom Sharman, 2026

Questions

What does "The event as a studio content day" mean? An event puts the talent, the audience and the proof in one room for a day, and someone else has paid for the room. Plan it content first, run four or five stations that each give one repeatable format, and the footage feeds short form, carousels, email and ads for weeks.

How do I put "The event as a studio content day" into practice? A week out, write the station list for the event: queue, stage, whiteboard wall, hot seat, testimonial room, with the format each one feeds. Book a videographer to follow the talent all day, D-Rock style, with licence to stop them and say: say that again to camera. Kit the stage with one or two static cameras and one roaming for faces and hands, and put a second mic on the talent.

Why does "The event as a studio content day" matter? I treat every event as a studio day. The talent is there, the audience is there, the proof is there, and someone else has paid for the room.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/how-i-work/the-event-as-a-studio-content-day/

6. Formats



Selfie and yap videos

Phone, front camera, one argument. The spine of the content engine, five a week.

The spine of the whole thing. Phone, front camera, whatever is in my head that day. Strategy, a read on the industry, an event, a piece of news, or a topic I am properly annoyed about. This is the format that is allowed to have a temperature.

Five a week, on Instagram and TikTok, turned around the next day.

What goes in it?

The arguments creators are already having with themselves. The algorithm. Whether to find a niche. Why the views dropped. Whether to go full time. And the one I care about most: a personal brand is only worth building if it turns into a media business.

What are the rules?

1. Say what the viewer gets in the first four seconds, because people online are selfish.
2. One argument per video.
3. Land on a hard line.
4. No intro.

What does it feed?

The winners become carousels. The best arguments become Creator Therapy episodes.

Questions

What is a selfie and yap video? Phone, front camera, whatever is in your head that day: strategy, a read on the industry, an event, a piece of news or a topic you are properly annoyed about.

What are the rules? Say what the viewer gets in the first four seconds. One argument per video. Land on a hard line. No intro.

Why does it never stop? It needs no studio, no editor availability and no second person. When a week falls apart this is the format still standing.



Reaction and story time

A screenshot or a video plays behind, you talk over it from the corner. React only to what you have standing to react to.

A screenshot or a video plays behind me, and I am in the corner talking over it. Work I have actually done, something I agree with, or something I think is wrong.

The first one is my own record, which sets the standard: react to things you have standing to react to.

Two a week, on Instagram and TikTok.

Where do the backgrounds come from?

My own catalogue of 720 videos, campaigns I ran, other people's videos I have a real opinion on, and news in the creator economy. One example is Niko Omilana's [I Pranked America's Most Racist Man](#), at 47,563,094 views.

What are the rules?

1. The claim goes in the first three seconds.
2. The screen behind has to be readable at thumbnail size.
3. Disagreement is fine. The personal attack is not.

Why does it matter commercially?

It sells nothing directly and does the most commercial work. It is where the record gets shown.

Questions

What is a reaction and story time video? A screenshot or a video plays behind, and you are in the corner talking over it: work you have actually done, something you agree with, or something you think is wrong.

What are the rules? The claim goes in the first three seconds. The screen behind has to be readable at thumbnail size. Disagreement is fine, the personal attack is not.

Why only two a week? It shares the daily slot with the selfie video, and the selfie video is easier to make. Two a week is the honest number for a format that needs a background asset found and cleared.



Podcast clips, the fake pods

A booked studio, a guest who asks, a question list written in advance. A podcast built for the clip, seven a week.

A booked studio, a rotating guest opposite, and a question list I have prepped in advance. The guest is there to ask. I am there to answer. It is a podcast built for the clip.

Seven a week, on Instagram and TikTok, edited in a batch.

How is it made?

1. Write the question bank before the studio day, drawn from the topic bank.
2. Book one studio day.
3. Film fourteen answers. That banks two weeks.
4. Refresh the guests. The guest is not the draw. The guest is the reason the question gets asked out loud.

Why is it worth the money?

It is the only format where the quality signal does the work. A well lit two camera set makes an ordinary answer read as authority. And seven a week means one studio day pays for itself across the whole week.

Questions

What is a fake pod? A booked studio, a rotating guest opposite, and a question list prepped in advance. The guest is there to ask, Tom is there to answer. It is a podcast in every way except that it is built for the clip.

How many clips does one studio day give? Fourteen answers filmed in one studio day, which banks two weeks at seven a week.

Why is it worth the studio money? It is the only format where the quality signal does the work. A well lit two camera set makes an ordinary answer read as authority, and seven a week means the studio day pays for itself across the whole week.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/formats/podcast-clips-the-fake-pods/



Creator hotline

A creator sends a voice note with a question. Tom answers it properly, in a studio, on proper cameras.

A creator sends a voice note with a question. I answer it properly. Studio, lit, proper cameras, because the format's whole claim is that this is a real service.

Four to five a week, on Instagram and TikTok, filmed on the same studio day as the fake pods.

How does it start?

The first questions are written by me and recorded as voice notes by friends, so the format is proven before it is opened up. Then real creators dial in with real questions. At that point the format is also the top of the funnel for a paid tier.

What are the rules?

1. Answer the question that was asked.
2. Give one thing they can do this week.
3. Name the tradeoff.

Questions

What is the Creator Hotline? A creator sends a voice note with a question and Tom answers it properly, lit and filmed on proper cameras, because the format's whole claim is that this is a real service.

How does it start before anyone calls in? The first questions are written by Tom and recorded as voice notes by friends, so the format is proven before it is opened up to real callers.

What are the rules for an answer? Answer the question that was asked. Give one thing they can do this week. Name the tradeoff.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/formats/creator-hotline/



Carousels

Swipeable slides made only from selfie videos that already won. The format that works on LinkedIn, where the buyers are.

Image based, text based, swipeable. Made from the selfie videos that already won, so every carousel starts from an argument that has already been tested.

Two a week, on Instagram and LinkedIn.

What is the selection rule?

A selfie video is eligible for a carousel when it beats the trailing 30 day median. Nothing gets made from an untested script.

Why do they matter more than they look?

They are the only format that works properly on LinkedIn, and LinkedIn is where the buyers are. This is the format that turns an audience into a pipeline.

Questions

When does a video become a carousel? When it beats the trailing 30 day median. Nothing gets made from an untested script.

Where do carousels go? Instagram and LinkedIn, two a week.

Why do they matter more than they look? They are the only format that works properly on LinkedIn, and LinkedIn is where the buyers are. This is the format that turns audience into pipeline.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/formats/carousels/



Creator therapy

A real creator brings a real problem and it gets taken apart properly. The hero piece, one long form a week.

The hero piece. A real creator brings a real problem and it gets taken apart properly. Closer to a diagnosis than a chat show: what is actually broken, why, and what the fix is.

One long form a week on YouTube, plus three to four short cuts.

What is the reference?

Colin and Samir's second channel, where the creator focused episodes went deep on creative problems. That depth is the thing to copy.

What is the spine of an episode?

1. The problem, in their words.
2. The diagnosis.
3. The thing they are actually optimising for by accident.
4. The format fix.
5. What to do on Monday.

Why is it the hero?

Every other format is me asserting. This one is me being right in front of a witness, which is a different kind of proof. It is also the only format a brand buyer will watch to the end. The three to four short cuts add to the weekly count without adding a filming day.

Questions

What is Creator Therapy? A real creator brings a real problem and it gets taken apart properly. Closer to a diagnosis than a chat show: what is actually broken, why, and what the fix is.

What is the format spine? The problem in their words. The diagnosis. The thing they are actually optimising for by accident. The format fix. What to do on Monday.

Why is it the hero piece? Every other format is Tom asserting. This one is Tom being right in front of a witness, which is a different kind of proof. It is also the only format a brand buyer will watch to the end.



The newsletter

One a week, written by Tom. The only audience he owns outright, and the list every paid tier launches to.

One a week, by email. I write it.

The week's argument, written down, plus what actually performed and what that says.

Why does it exist?

It is the only audience I own outright, and it is the list every paid tier launches to. The website's job is to push people into it, so the signup is the main event on the page.

[Sign up to the newsletter.](#)

Questions

What goes in the newsletter? The week's argument, written down, plus what actually performed and what that says.

Why does it exist? It is the only audience Tom owns outright, and it is the list every paid tier launches to.

Where do people sign up? On the website. The site's job is to push people into it, so the signup is the main event on the page.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/formats/the-newsletter/

7. Clip anatomy



Shape one, the selfie clip

Person, problem, turn, who, solution, land. Six beats, the first one inside two seconds.

Six beats. The scripts in the one person, one problem, one solution packet are built on the first four already.

BEAT	TIME	WHAT IT DOES	TEST
Person	0 to 2s	Calls out one person by situation. A size, a niche, a number.	Would the right viewer say "that's me"?
Problem	same breath	One problem, in their words.	Is there a number in it?
Turn	2 to 6s	What they believe, then the but.	Does the second line contradict the first?
Who	one line	Why listen to this person.	Could a stranger tell who is talking?
Solution	the middle	One move, as a list, steps or a story. One piece of proof.	Could they do it today?
Land	last 2s	A hard line. Then cut.	Is anything after the payoff? Cut it.

What does one look like?

- **Person and problem.** "If you have got forty videos filmed and six of them posted,"
- **Turn.** "you do not have a content problem. You are scared,"
- **Who.** Left out, because it runs on Tom's own channel. A client's early videos add one line here.
- **Solution.** Post all 34 this week.
- **Land.** "A bad video that gets no views costs you nothing. Thirty four unposted ones cost you four months."

What gets checked before it goes out?

1. One person, one problem, one solution. Two problems means two clips.

2. The first frame shows the premise: face, words on screen, simple and bright.
3. It makes sense on mute.
4. On-screen hook text is 3 to 5 words, with a number or a name in it.
5. There is a but inside the first six seconds.
6. Nothing after the payoff. No recap, no sign off.
7. Captions burned in, large and high contrast.
8. Someone would send it to a friend.

Questions

What are the beats of a selfie clip? Person, problem, turn, who, solution, land. Call out one person by situation, name one problem in their words, turn what they believe, say why to listen, give one move, and land on a hard line.

What is the turn? Between two and six seconds: what they believe, then the but. The test is whether the second line contradicts the first.

How should a clip end? A hard line in the last two seconds, then cut. If anything comes after the payoff, cut it.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/clip-anatomy/shape-one-the-selfie-clip/



Shape two, the Q&A cutdown

Question, turn, answer, land. For the hotline, the fake pod, workshops and any podcast where someone asks.

For the Creator Hotline, the fake pod, workshops, live Q&A and any podcast where someone asks a question. The shape Alex Hormozi runs from his workshops.

BEAT	TIME	WHAT IT DOES	TEST
Question	0 to 3s	The asker's question, burned on screen as text, with their numbers.	Is the question specific? If it is vague, open on the answer's best line and keep the question as text.
Turn	3 to 8s	The answer restates or corrects the premise.	Does the asker turn out to have the wrong problem?
Answer	8 to 45s	One idea, as a list, steps or a story.	One idea only. Two ideas are two clips.
Land	last 2s	The maxim.	Cut straight after it.

How do you pick the moment from long form?

Run every candidate through three filters, in this order.

1. **It stands alone.** If it needs more than a sentence of setup, it is a segment.
2. **It has one of Hormozi's seven.** Recency, relevancy, celebrity, proximity, conflict, unusual, ongoing. Conflict and unusual clip best, because they carry the turn.
3. **It is clip shaped.** A contrarian take, a specific number, tactical advice, a candid admission, or a real person's question and the answer to it.

Then use the data. Cut where the long form retention graph spikes. Clip events the same night and post the next day.

What numbers are worth aiming at?

MEASURE	AIM	FROM
Viewed versus swiped, Shorts	70% to 90%. Under 60% rarely works.	Paddy Galloway, 5,400 Shorts, 3.3 billion views
Retention, under 60 seconds	90% or more	Jenny Hoyos
Retention after the first 3 seconds	70% or more is a banger. Below 50% is a huge problem.	Kallaway
Outlier	3 to 4x the channel average is worth studying	Paddy Galloway
Thumbnail text	3 to 5 words, capped at five	Seb Losardo

Retention figures are guides. Hoyos had a Short at 70% retention reach 10 million views off returning viewers.

Questions

What are the beats of a Q&A cutdown? Question, turn, answer, land. The asker's question on screen with their numbers, the answer correcting the premise, one idea, then the maxim.

Does the asker have to be real? The proximity and the social proof come from a real person asking. Written callers are fine for rehearsal, and are framed so nobody mistakes them for real people.

How do you pick the moment from long form? It has to stand alone with a sentence of setup at most, carry one of Hormozi's seven (recency, relevancy, celebrity, proximity, conflict, unusual, ongoing), and be clip shaped: a contrarian take, a number, tactical advice, a candid admission or a real question and its answer.

tomsharman.com/playbooks/clip-anatomy/shape-two-the-q-and-a-cutdown/