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## How to Tell a Story

Authority Alchemy. The show for positioning yourself as the Number 1 authority in your industry. Quickly turn your prospects into clients and clients into raving fans. Here are your hosts: Brian Horn and Jack Mize.

Jack Mize: All right. Here is Authority Alchemy and I think you can see, if you're watching this on video, that we've just proven that we probably have absolutely no dance moves, right?

Brian Horn: Absolutely not and in case you forgot again, we have our names on there and the name of the show so if the people beforehand didn't let you know and Jack didn't let you know then you can read it on here also.

Jack Mize: That's it. I think there's no mistaking. If you miss it on a test well you have problems. This is actually the first time we are recording this both audio and video so if you're listening on audio, if you will give us a little leeway in our mention of video that has absolutely nothing to do with your experience. It's just because it's new to us and it's shiny. You know everybody likes shiny objects and we're doing our best not to look at ourselves in the camera.

Brian Horn: We went through great, considerable efforts to do this right.

Jack Mize: We did. Studio built out. Just one thing every notice when you're watching hangouts, I've been watching a lot more hangouts here recently and almost everybody looks like they're looking down a well, right?

Brian Horn: Even me on the one we did last week everybody is on their laptop or their iMac. My iMac I got the big mambo jambo so it's up like that so it's always...

Jack Mize: Yeah, I think that's the only thing so --

Brian Horn: Makes you look thinner though.

Jack Mize: Oh, well maybe we'll do that.

Brian Horn: We're going to have ours on the ceiling next time.

Jack Mize: Just looking straight up, right? Hey, brings out my neck?

Brian Horn: Absolutely.

Jack Mize: Anyway so this is our fore way into getting it on video, playing with the Google hangouts. We've participated in hangouts and I'm always one that's not a big adapter to new stuff but I think it's taken on.

Brian Horn: Yeah, this Google thing might stick around for a little bit.

Jack Mize: It might. If I had to put money on it it might. Although, I'm the guy that's still waiting for CV radios to come down in price just a little bit.

Brian Horn: I was unrelated to hangouts also. I'm still not, I still don't know what my final opinion is going to be but we do talk about re-purposing contents, putting it out in different formats so I think definitely getting some video out there. We're here anyways so just stick a camera up and record ourselves doing the show and maybe some people will like it better that way.

Jack Mize: That's it and this is actually the first time that I actually had to consider what I look like before we started the podcast. Some days I can show up in shorts and a t-shirt but today I actually had to put some thought into it. That's fine. Makes me --

Brian Horn: We'll get more casual as Texas gets a little warmer. We'll be out by the pool floating in inner tubes in another month or so.

Jack Mize: We'll figure out how to make it easier. What's today? Today's story is -- I mean today's show is about stories, right?

Brian Horn: When you talk about how to tell a story.

Jack Mize: That's it when you first told me that, obviously I remember growing up in Texas, I don't know if it's anywhere else but story was a little white lie. You telling a story and how to tell stories? What's he talking about? But then I realized storytelling is a really big part of what we do content-wise and a lot of people don't realize stories are what makes up good blog post, makes up good when you're speaking from the stage, it makes up good any kind of content.

Brian Horn: Even if it's a sales pitch. If you think about some of the best sales pitches you've heard it's the stories within it that you remember.

Jack Mize: They all laughed at me when I said I was going to be able to play the piano and whatever, right? It's a story so there's a story behind it and the one thing that people a lot of times don't realize is stories have to have a point, right?

Brian Horn: It's best if they have a point for sure.

Jack Mize: You've seen some of the people they'll start in and then they'll interrupt themselves. Was I talking? You know, there's a story.

Brian Horn: Has to end somewhere I swear.

Jack Mize: Give you some examples when you're thinking about a story as far as because I know we've actually worked with people in developing their story as we work through their persona and their avatar, the four faces of authority that we talk about. What are some of the elements of the stories that and reasons why a lot of people don't tell stories in their content or anywhere.

Brian Horn: Right, the reason people don't talk much is just because they don't think about it. They don't plan ahead to actually have it or they're worried they're just going to ramble on and like you said not have a point. Those are some of the key ones that I hear the most or people that just don't think that they're interesting enough or that they can't tell what would be interesting to a person they're talking to.

Jack Mize: It's just like when people talk about they think about their authority or their knowledge when I say you know more than you think you now. Almost everybody underestimates how much they know or the value of what they know and just like with the stories people underestimate their ability to tell the story, or oh people wouldn't be interested in that. I know when I speak at events I tell people almost every one of you probably has a story that I'd be very happy to switch places with you and listen to that story. It's one thing not to underestimate.

Let's think about this, the people thinking about stories tending to ramble well guess what, people ramble. We ramble all the time.

Brian Horn: No. Rambling on right now.

Jack Mize: It's true.

Brian Horn: Absolutely. Rambling's okay. You get back on track, you get back to the point. One thing is people I don't know what to call it. They get sidetracked or disrupted because while they're telling the story they're trying to gauge interest in people and a lot of times people look on a face or look on a watch they amplify that out if they're doing it in person but it's tough. You tell stories, especially if you're doing it digitally, or in magazines, or on podcasts, or on blogs.

Jack Mize: Without human interaction right away.

Brian Horn: Yeah, so that's the thing you got to go out there sometimes without a net and just put that that's what testing's for but in this day and age the digital age guess what? Doesn't cost much.

Jack Mize: Easy to test.

Brian Horn: With people, we live in a microwave society. People, you've seen people put out some pretty big no-no's like on Facebook posts and things that they think would just ruin their lives because they went off on some crazy tangent and when they look back. What I usually tell people when they think about what have I done? I just ruined my reputation, my career. I'm like this is Facebook. This is a microwave society. Just chill out, go underground for 72 hours, it's all done.

Jack Mize: People don't care about you as much as you think they do.

Brian Horn: Right.

Jack Mize: Of course they'll forgive and forget that stuff fast.

Brian Horn: Then there's the one about the detail. People don't know how much detail to put in their stories. That's the one thing that I think we need to probably talk about is there is such a thing as too much detail.

Jack Mize: Yes. You can go on and on about stuff that doesn't matter. The thing I like to do with the detail is have those specific points where it can add color to it and it can be a reference point for other people. They can see themselves either in that position where it's something very specific. Like when I talk I use the story about my son, not when he was born but when he almost died when he was a couple days old. When I tell that story I use very specific things about lights flashing, about what my mother said with the doctor looked, and the doctor running past me in the hospital, even remembering the perfume the nurse was wearing. Very specific things like that so it helps build the -- you can actually imagine yourself there.

Brian Horn: You put yourself there.

Jack Mize: Yeah.

Brian Horn: Yeah, but you don't necessarily go into the details on the little tangents that aren't necessarily there. By the way, that gift shop had a really good sale on, you know? Those are the things that you can go off on. I've seen people kind of get diverted. I'm guilty as well at times. Then the one thing that is really amazes me is people think that I don't have a good story to tell. Everybody has a good story to tell.

Jack Mize: Everybody has one and it's going to be. Usually it's when people want to tell things to make themselves look awesome and that is usually not the good story. The good story is something where you're going to be relatable to other people because would you rather hear a story about what I just mentioned about my son almost passing away and finding out that he has down syndrome or would you rather hear about me flying in a private jet out to the Grammy Awards? One makes me look like a real person that's had real issues and has come through that you can relate to and feel for. The other one makes me look like a bragger.

Brian Horn: Yeah, and that's what goes back to they try to hard.

Jack Mize: Yeah, you got to suck it up and just tell your story of something that really affected you.

Brian Horn: People have a story they should tell a story and probably think why should I tell a story? What is the value of the story? What is the benefit of telling stories? Why should people tell stories?

Jack Mize: For retention purposes is the main thing because I have a little stack right here on my Mac screen, standard research studies show that statistics alone have a retention rate of 5 to 10 percent but when coupled with stories the retention rate rise from 65 to 70 percent. That is a world of difference from 5 percent to 70 percent retention people remember what you said.

Brian Horn: I have a really good example of that. When I was in fifth, sixth grade I was all into the bands. I was consumed with all the rock and math was the last thing that I had any interest in. I remember all of a sudden, one lesson that we had was about a band and how they get paid and how the percentages get divided up and how much their manager gets. That story just drew me in to wow isn't that tricking someone into learning. And when you can do that think about this, there's been some great storytellers in this world it always has a lesson or a moral to it. You can think about, what was the guy Will Rogers, was that him? Will Rogers always had the great stories. Yeah, and also where's my brain?

Jack Mize: What about Roy Rogers?

Brian Horn: No, no. Will Rogers he used to get the rope and then you had Mark Twain and those like that. Those are some good stories. When you tell a story when you're trying to get a point across, rather than just say, so you just brought out some statistics studies show that this, if you'd weave a story into that about how that works then people would be a lot more interested because one thing that I can't stand when I listen to stories or I watch speakers when they start bringing out bulletins and statistics and things because then it starts getting all right, I

can't focus this much on it. That's why you should tell a story. Obviously, it's engaging, it gets people in. How many of you have read an email? Somebody sends out a email and then I'm sure if you've accidentally opted into some of the Internet marketing world's list you get these emails that are just "Hey, look here. Buy this." Then you got guys that are doing really good stories like Andre Shapron has some really good story stuff. Ben Suttle has some really good stuff that he puts in his emails. People that can engage. There's a lot of debate on whether short, long emails for the purposes but for the purposes of making a sale during that email there may be some different metrics but for someone engaging and people wanting to follow you and wanting to continue and open your emails and continue to be interested in what you're saying there's always a story involved, right?

Let's give them some tips to telling a story if they're having problems coming up with that.

Jack Mize: Yeah, first of all keep a log of story content. We do this. We use Google docs. We just have a whole folder, one separate document that we keep new show ideas and ideas for blog posts and future content just whenever a story idea pops up like that we'll put it in there.

Brian Horn: Yeah, Google docs is almost that I used to always keep a notepad by my bed and now Google docs is just so easy to pop up and create something. It's always there, don't have to remember well you do have to remember where it is.

Jack Mize: But it's collaborative also. We both share the same one. We can access it from our iPads, our laptops, our desktops, our phones, everything is in there so it's a cool way to keep that in there.

Brian Horn: Now, it's the perfection, right? People they write these stories and just like a lot of people with everything else it has to be perfect before they're ready to unleash it on the world, right? Here's the thing folks, you're not writing a screenplay, right?

This isn't something you're turning in for a Hollywood movie, it's not something you're turning in for a book, you're just simply putting it out there to engage folks and you know the grammar Nazis that are out there?

Jack Mize: Yeah, I'm completely over it. I don't even -- the video ones also. You put out a video like this one, put out good video with lots of content and they'll go why is that desk behind you? That desk irritated me the whole time. That speaker jack back there, that's not a very good speaker. You should be using this kind of speaker.

Brian Horn: Thanks for bringing that up. Now you're making me self-conscious about this.

Jack Mize: That's the kind, say like the grammar police. You just have to completely wipe that out and realize there's going to be people out there that have nothing better to do than critique.

Brian Horn: What do we do about avoiding that perfection monster?

Jack Mize: You just put it out.

Brian Horn: Just put it out?

Jack Mize: Just put it out there. Just put it out there.

Brian Horn: What are you talking about just put it out there?

Jack Mize: Because what's the worst that's going to happen?

Brian Horn: Somebody's going to critique your speaker on the table behind you.

Jack Mize: Yeah, people might like it huh?

Brian Horn: They might.

Jack Mize: That's really, we could go into detail there but don't try to be perfect. Don't try to be perfect, is there any other way to say that?

Brian Horn: No, just put it out there because it's you're really putting out your idea. On videos you can have your ums and ahs in there. Just put it out there. You can have errors in your spelling and grammar, something you get out there and it's really bad then you go back and fix it. It's not the end of the world.

Jack Mize: I'm the king of ums and ahs. I almost hate when they're taken out sometimes. I used to be really bad about it but I'm over it. What can you do?

Brian Horn: Now, here's the one thing. We say don't try to be perfect but what's the one thing that they do want to be at least a little bit aware of and if you're going to get close to perfection at all, which you're never going to hit, if there's one thing that you probably should spend a little extra time on is what? Is the story structure.

Jack Mize: Yes because stories have a point. There's a structure to it. A lot of people don't realize that all the way back to Shakespeare and even back to Aristotle, any of the old Eastof Fables or anything like that there's always some structure.

Brian Horn: Even back to Jesus there's the same structure in his stories that they use in motion pictures today.

Jack Mize: There's a structure. There has to be a beginning, there has to be an end, there has to be something happening in the middle. What are some of the elements they say of dramatics? They say you have to have a conflict and a protagonist like with the Grammy. People expect a conflict.

Brian Horn: They want a bad guy and --

Jack Mize: They expect a climax and they expect something to happen and you can do that. They don't have to be so dramatic but if you're talking about going to the Grammys and say I have this really good story. Yeah, I got invited to the Grammys and all these stars are going to be there and I was going to get to meet da da da. Then on the day of the event everything worked out and I went, and it was great.

Brian Horn: It's like good story.

Jack Mize: And?

Brian Horn: It was awesome.

Jack Mize: Yeah so just like I was saying like when you watch the news. Nobody's going to say "Hey, it's an okay day today."

Brian Horn: "Back to you, Bob."

Jack Mize: Yeah, it doesn't work out that well. What are some of the things that people can identify in a story that they want to make sure as they go through and look at it?

Brian Horn: Well, first there has to be a purpose to the story. First thing, you have to have a clear moral or a purpose to the story of why you're telling. It can't just be you're telling the story just for to hear yourself talk.

Jack Mize: I think that's a lot of reasons why people sometimes tell stories.

Brian Horn: Probably so. Then you got to have a little personal connection to it. Actually how you're going to connect with the person you're telling it to or relates to them.

Jack Mize: Now this is where it gets really important as it relates to business and putting together content, especially for authority. Here's some simple, simple elements that you can identify. If you break your story out, let's say you're going to have a story. Before you even start writing your story you can just write it down on a piece of paper and you can use this whether you're doing a talk or someone says hey I want you to come do a talk, a 45 minute talk, I want you to write a blog post, I want you to come and talk on the radio or anything. A story is you put these things out and really it's about as it relates to your business so you can tie in your business because isn't that kind of what we're talking about for storytelling.

Brian Horn: Yeah, we're not talking about telling your kids a bedtime stories here.

Jack Mize: Right so you want to tie in that business and bring them in they want to know more about you is if you simply talk about how you, the expert, helps your customers, your clients, your prospects achieve the desired outcome that they want that you provide them for. Here, remember we talked about the conflict and then you have to have that conflict even if, and then bring in the common obstacle that they have of why they can't achieve that or think they can't achieve it. Or if there's a common problem that they think, or perceived problem you can

change that too without, by avoiding this common problem by and then whatever it is your product or service does to provide that solution. Think about that. We'll put this I'm sure on the Authorityalchemy.com website because it's really simple. If you just go through these lines and think okay does my story have how I, does it include the people that I help is, does it include what the outcome is that I helped them achieve, does it include common obstacles and does it include how it is on at least a very basic level how I helped them accomplish this? Then you can weave your story around that.

Brian Horn: That's a good way just to get the base structure set up for sure.

Jack Mize: Yeah and I think that's one of the things that a lot of people miss out is they don't understand that they have to have those elements in there for it to engage people and keep them in otherwise it gets into well where is this going?

Brian Horn: It has to relate back to them somehow and them overcoming what they perceive as a common problem they have or a pain that they're going through.

Jack Mize: Right so then the next thing is we talk about bring in characters and imagery in there.

Brian Horn: That's an important part. That just helps make it an interesting story. It's just a bland story if it's just you talking about helping them overcoming a problem and don't get in there and tell specifics and use some good imagery. It's a good point just think about the stories and the stories you liked hearing as a kid had that good imagery in it.

Jack Mize: Yeah, yeah maybe I don't want to feel like an old guy but you think kids these days they got it all right there on the screen for them. They don't have to think about what it is. I hate to date myself this much but you know when I was younger we didn't have any MTV.

Brian Horn: They didn't have MTV, huh?

Jack Mize: MTV. Not that they have any bands on there now but your favorite bands you listen to them, you never actually saw them

move unless you went to a concert. You would just have to, and the same thing, if any of you have ever if you listen to audio books, that's the same. That's good storytelling when they just have small little diversions that explain a character or give a little bit a sense of a character. Don't get too overly consumed with this. We're not trying to be a streetcar name's desire or things like this.

Brian Horn: Just little things. Just add a little color to it like the example I gave before just about the -- because it puts you in that situation. The example I gave before about my son so like the nurse running by to go work on him but I remembered the perfume she was wearing. That's something that just brings in another sense and it's just a very specific thing. You can see the person remembering in that situation. It works for business stories also.

Jack Mize: And then pacing.

Brian Horn: Yes.

Jack Mize: What is pacing? It really means getting to the point and even sub points at different points during the story.

Brian Horn: Getting to the point of some point at some point. How many of you watched a movie that went through all these climaxes and at the end there's like, that's it? It's over? That's how they end it? That's how it's happening? It's like what about all the --?

Jack Mize: I saw a lot of people that were disappointed in the -- Did you see the Jobs movie? The Steve Jobs movie with Ashton Kutcher? Kind of ended in a midpoint of life or later in his life it didn't go into a lot of the later years and I think people were a little bit disappointed in where it ended but the pacing. But you kind of knew because hey we're two hours into this, this is going to wrap up pretty soon, right?

Brian Horn: Any minute now.

Jack Mize: Give some ideas because it's not just beginning and end there's also where you do where you may loop back around to something you talked about before so how does that work?

Brian Horn: How do you loop back around to something?

Jack Mize: Yeah segway back into it.

Brian Horn: How is it planned beforehand so you know when you're going back into it you can lay even some foreshadow into it. Drop a couple little hints to it.

Jack Mize: Foreshadow.

Brian Horn: That's from my high school English teacher.

Jack Mize: Google that 'foreshadow'. That is where you set something up.

Brian Horn: Kind of drop a couple little hints. Hold on I saw what were we watching the other day? I can't remember which one it was. There was -- actually show us how evolved I am, it was Anchorman 2 and there was a foreshadowing, I can't remember what it was but there was something in that. I was watching it with my wife a few days ago and I said "That didn't come back. That makes no sense." She goes "Well, why the hell they talking about that?" I said "They're probably going to bring that back up in some ridiculous thing."

Jack Mize: That's right. Clearly this is going to come back into play.

Brian Horn: Yeah this is going to make a highly intellectual movie as well was Wayne's World. The point in that one there those guys that are carrying the

Jack Mize: I think you should stop now, Brian. You need to stop.

Brian Horn: Carrying the glass back and forth going who are those guys? Why are you carrying the glass back and forth across? I don't know this is our job to carry it across the street and then an hour later they plow a car through it.

Jack Mize: I think you had them in about how to tell a story and now all your references are Wayne's World and Anchorman.

Brian Horn: I'm so intellectual and evolved. I'm very evolved.

Jack Mize: That just proves that you don't have to go deep into literature to be able to do this.

Brian Horn: It's actually better if you don't. Just go ask what the common person likes which are those types of things. Keep stuff simple. That's actually a good point right now. Keep them simple

because most people are not going to want to go deep into a movie or catch a really hear reference. Keep it simple and punchy.

Jack Mize: Well, I'll give you an example. This is a story that I've told for a lot of years and I never have got it right because people always seem very disappointed and let down. Now I shouldn't have even said that I should've just told the story.

Brian Horn: You're building it up now.

Jack Mize: Well, I was in Las Vegas one time for an event. I'm not a big gambler, I don't go and play the slot machines or the other grandmother put all the guilt on me. She used to call the gum machine slot machines, true story you know. Pop all your money in the slot machines. I'm not a big gambler but I got a text from my wife that said go put I forgot five dollars or whatever, on number 3 or 13 it was, on roulette. I thought that's weird. Why would she want me to do that? I look around this casino. This is one of those Vegas Vacation kind of casinos, you know rock, paper scissors? It was pretty low rent casino. I was looking around for a roulette table and saw one and they were in mid-spin so I thought well, I'll just wait for the next one. I went up, when I saw that they were done with that previous round and I went up to the guy, whatever he is, the dealer and I put the money down and I said put it on number 3 and everyone at the table looked at me. The dealer guy said, "You sure you want to do that?" I said, "Yeah, why?" "Well, because that's the one that just hit."

Brian Horn: Oh, no.

Jack Mize: I tell that story and people they're expecting me to go over there and say that I just won a bunch of money because my wife told me. I end up being a moron. Yeah, I'll just wait til the next one. Looks like they have a shrimp cocktail I think I'll have one of those first. It's free, not to mention, but right there the story I just told had elements and it's simple, wasn't a lot of things but there's elements of explaining. So what did I do? If we dissect

that short, little story I just told it had elements of imagery, it said how I'm talking about how low rent the casino was, about Vegas Vacation and all that. I had a climax.

Brian Horn: Reference to a really good movie showing how evolved we are. Vegas Vacation, Wayne's World, Anchorman 2 we are some smart guys.

Jack Mize: It would just be a shame if someone saw my Netflix history list.

Brian Horn: One thing about storytelling, that would be one that you could use to this about not taking action right away and by waiting and sitting back. A simple story like that is a perfect example of one and how that's you could apply it to a business. If you're sitting down talking with a prospect and actually sitting across the table trying to sell someone they're pushing off or I'm going to wait a little bit. You can maybe do it next week. Just gradually ween it back into a story and the big right way to weave back in and actually push them to make a decision now.

Jack Mize: That's it. Hey looking at it, we almost had a beginning and a middle and an end to this podcast. We did on how to tie it up into your business, right? One thing, if you're listening to this on iTunes that's fantastic. I don't know what -- we may figure out a way to put the video on iTunes, I don't know. If you're listening to this and you think "Hey, there's a video that goes along with this," there is. You can go check it out. Well, we'll have it on Authorityalchemy.com and I'm sure it'll be floating around YouTube somewhere as wherever hangouts live.

Brian Horn: As one of the most popular videos ever on YouTube.

Jack Mize: It is. It is. Give us some feedback if you liked the hangout. If you liked the video, if you don't like it whatever. If you don't like the desk behind me or the type of speakers that are there.

Brian Horn: If you want to see some of those cool little hangout effects and put mustaches and hats and sunglasses on ourselves while we talk this we could be entertaining.

Jack Mize: No, we won't do that. Yeah, I think we'll put it. I seen it. My kids might like it.

Brian Horn: Maybe we'll play dress up next time.

Jack Mize: All right well very good. Any last words for them?

Brian Horn: No, I think we're good just throw your stories in there. You cannot tell enough stories when you're talking don't think you just have to have one or two and the rest is a bunch of list of facts, just make everything a story.

Jack Mize: Everybody has a story and our story is we'll see you next time.

Brian Horn: See you.

Jack Mize: Thanks for watching we can say finally.

Brian Horn: Finally.

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Jack Mize: I know it's over. I just got to find the button to hit stop.

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