

# Marketing for Composers

## Defining Your Brand Worksheet

Your brand is what people say about you. It's your public image and how you are perceived.

Branding yourself is the process of creating and presenting messages about your composition business so you can exceed the expectations of your audience in order to leave a long-lasting positive images. The messages should be clear, unique, relevant, believable, and consistent.

Creating a strong brand for yourself and your composition business can help you:

- Demonstrate to your audience that your values and music are aligned with theirs.
- Win over passionate audience members who become raving fans (and ambassadors) of your music.
- Position yourself in the minds of the audience so that you are unique and unlike any other composer.

### 1. Choose a Brand Name

Often this will simply be your given name. However, if you lead an ensemble or want to make your name stand out you can choose a different name to brand yourself with. Two examples: 1) British composer Peter Warlock was the name (and the brand) that music critic Philip Heseltine wrote music under. Some believe he was trying to keep his two professional worlds separate, but there were clear expectations from the audience for both names. 2) Peter Schickele has composed quasi-comical/quasi-serious concert music under the name P.D.Q. Bach for several decades. When the audience sees the name P.D.Q. Bach they immediately know how to react and he has his own set of raving fans.

### 2. Describe Your Composition Business Name

Does the name you chose in the previous step have a meaning? What emotions does it convey? If you're using your given name you can consider any associations with people who might have the same name.

### 3. Describe The Personality of Your Composition Business

How will people perceive you? The brand of your business represents you and it doesn't matter how you see your audience, it matters how your audience sees you.

Don't try to be something you are not already. Focus on maximizing and emphasizing who you naturally are so you can become attractive to your audience.

In the book *Fascinate: How to Make Your Brand Impossible to Resist: Revised and Updated* Sally Hogshead has created what she calls the Fascinate System that looks at how you approach the world and the way you can present yourself and your business to your audience:

I believe that everyone should be able to create a great brand, without a big budget or extensive expertise. The purpose of the Fascinate System is to give you a simple, practical process for establishing the overall voice of your brand. By getting clear on how you describe yourself to your prospects and customers, you can streamline your creative

process. This will also help you and your team keep all messaging on track, so you can unify your efforts.<sup>1</sup>

Sally has identified seven languages of fascination and in her book provides five adjectives that describe each one. The seven languages are:

- Innovation: The language of creativity
- Passion: The language of relationship
- Power: The language of confidence
- Prestige: The language of excellence
- Trust: The language of stability
- Mystique: The language of listening
- Alert: The language of details

Furthermore, she discusses how each language interacts with the others. You can take her online test on Brand Fascination at <http://brandfascination.com/> to see what your primary and secondary fascination languages are. I highly encourage this. I have taken the test twice one year apart and got the exact same answer. Here's mine:

I am *The Gravitas*, which means my primary language of fascination is trust and my secondary language is power.

The five adjectives that best describe *The Gravitas* are dignified, stable, hardworking, seemingly invincible, and straight forward.

At my highest value I deliver “Deliberate Certainty.”

The “Highest and Best Value” of *The Gravitas* include:

- I cope well under pressure.
- In an entrepreneurial environment, I keep everyone grounded. My ability to think clearly in a hectic atmosphere is a distinct advantage.
- Others find my substantial but calm presence reassuring.<sup>2</sup>

Another step you should take is to email or text 5–10 of your closest friends. These need to be people who know you well and whom you trust. They should also be people who want to see you succeed and are in your corner. When you reach out to them ask them to provide five adjectives that describe you. When I took this action the responses were eerily consistent (even consistent with Sally's Brand Fascination report). This is how the world sees you. This will become the foundation of your brand.

P.S.—You may be expecting and hoping that your fascination language would be Innovation since that is the language of creativity. The way Sally is using the word creativity is not the same type of creativity needed for the writing of music. So don't let that hang you up if it doesn't come up for you.

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<sup>1</sup> Sally Hogshead, *Fascinate: How to Make Your Brand Impossible to Resist: Revised and Updated*, New York: Harper Business (2016), 69.

<sup>2</sup> No kidding! These words came straight from the report I received after taking Sally's Brand Fascination test. I'm not making this up.