

What You Need, Dear Brand, Is a Point of View

How to make better content decisions and start delighting people already — because a POV means creating market territory, not just capturing it.

A point of view is an opinion or set of opinions about the world. Your experience gives you authority — the pedigree — to talk about it, to have a point of view. What you say when you're talking about it is the view from which you point.

Brands Can Be Weirdly Bad at This

A brand was founded as an idea about itself, it sells products talking about itself, and it hosts conferences to tell you about its products. So brands tend to have an overdeveloped point of view about themselves, but a less developed point of view about anything else.

A brand has many tools for understanding what it thinks about itself — logos, brand values, tone and voice guidelines, brand guidelines. These tools are great for creating marketing decks and products and banner ads. But they aren't so great at helping the brand have a POV about topics out in the world.

A POV Is Not About You; It's About the World

A brand wants people to desire its product, but people don't desire products. People desire feelings that products give them. A POV is about having an opinion about things that are not your product. Your experience determines your view, but your view is not about yourself.

The utility of a POV is not to capture dollars by selling a thing. The utility is to capture attention by selling an idea adjacent to that thing. Having a POV doesn't mean capturing market territory — it means creating it.

How to Create Your POV

A point of view is really only an opinion about two things: (1) an opinion about the audience you want to speak with, and (2) an opinion about a topic that you and your audience have in common. The point of view is simply how you speak about the topic to the audience.

You need all three vertices to form a triangle: audience, topic, and POV. If you have an audience and a POV but no consistent topic, you'll fail with respect to curation. If you have a topic and POV but don't know your audience, you'll fail with respect to tone. And if you have a topic and an audience but no POV, you'll fail with respect to being interesting.