The BIG Pitch

STORY: Background

Set in a 2,000-square-foot store located on Manhattan's 10th Avenue retail corridor, STORY is a retail concept that takes the point of view of a magazine, changes like a gallery and sells things like a store. That means every four to eight weeks, STORY completely reinvents itself — from the design to the merchandise — with the goal of bringing to light a new theme, trend or issue. STORY serves as a matchmaker between brands and consumers, integrating strategies of marketing, merchandising and business development. As part of its unique model, STORY uses merchandise as part of its editorial content, meaning each product and brand helps shape the editorial lens.

STORY launched in beta as a “Startup Store” in 2011, spotlighting emerging digital retailers, and has gone on to showcase concepts including Color, Making Things, Have Fun and Love, working with partners including American Express, Intel and Target. Constants of its ever-changing model: a view of retail that goes beyond the transaction and a permanent space where the experience is everything and collaboration tells a STORY.

THE SCENARIO:

Rachel Shechtman, the founder and CEO of STORY has asked for new STORY ideas, which will run for four weeks at any time of year. Choose two to four of the smartest, most creative people you know to collaborate on a 20-page pitch presentation, mock website and a 90-second pitch video to convince Rachel why and how your STORY should be produced. Your team must choose one of the following themes to focus on: Travel, Made in America or Sensory.

REQUIREMENTS:

Pitch presentation
Your pitch presentation must follow the template below. There is a 20-page limit, including appendices. The mock website should be submitted as a URL and a summary of the content should be included in the pitch presentation.

- Title page (STORY theme and team member names - this does not count toward the page count)
- Editorial Overview
  - What inspires you? Where do you draw your inspiration – words, colors? What is your vision for this STORY?
- Merchandise Overview
  - Look & Feel
    - Color scheme
- Display case/fixtures
- Store layout
- Bios/signage
  - 3-5 sections (how you would divide the store) + NYC and Pets (kids can be incorporated throughout other sections)
    - 5 vendors/brands per section (list with one sentence description); should be a mix of new/not seen in stores + trending
    - Target market assessment (consumer need, customer profile, demographics, market research)
    - Interactive component (doesn’t have to be for each section)
    - Sample bio for at least two of the vendors/products featured in the store
- Marketing + Content Plan
  - Mock website to include (submit as a URL):
    - Sample blog post for two of the vendors/products featured in the store
    - Sample tweet for at least two of the vendors/products featured in the store
    - Press release – please include any unique technologies and/or strategic partnerships involved in this STORY
  - Event plan (minimum two per week for four weeks; can include things such as a cooking class, kids craft class, panel discussion, book reading, etc. to complement the theme)
  - Marketing plan + timeline
    - Social media plan
- Define metrics of success (i.e. sales, media coverage, foot traffic, event attendance, new customer acquisition, etc.)
  - How would you measure success for these areas?
- Budget (include projected sales – 75% of products are on consignment)
  - Store Design – max $20K
  - Graphic Design + Printing – max $5K
  - Events – max $20K
- Letter from the Editor
- What’s next for STORY – include suggestions for what a STORY 2.0 would look like
- Conclusions and final recommendations
- Works cited (this does not count toward the page count)

**Pitch Video:**
The pitch video must be a maximum of no more than 90 seconds long, and submitted to your NRFSA Advisor in one of the following video formats: .AVI, .MOV, .MPEGPS, .MPEG4, .WMV, .FLV, .WebM or .3GPP. Your pitch video should bring your pitch presentation to life! Video submissions may be filmed with a handheld video camera, webcam, mobile device or other appropriate video equipment.

Video file size must be no larger than 2GB.
Resources:
Rachel Shechtman’s TEDx talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbnWY-swsK0
STORY website: http://thisisstory.com/
Interview with Rachel Shechtman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M_ZSg07_FBY
WWD article: http://wwd.com/retail-news/specialty-stores/story-pepsi-emoji-have-fun-10418953/
Huffington Post article: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/rachel-shechtman-story_us_571fc313e4b0b49df6a96366