

Ly's brand builder system

YOUR IN-HOUSE MARKETING TEAM. Built by you.

THE BRAND BUILDER PLAYBOOK

8 SCENES · ABOUT 60 MINUTES · FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND PERSONAL BRANDS

1 · YOU ARE HERE	2	3	★ THE MASTER STEP
Brand Builder Playbook	Content Strategy Playbook	Content Planning Playbook	Your in-house marketing team

YOUR NAME OR BRAND

Mai Coffee

DATE

Example playbook

A FREE BRAND SYSTEM BY LY VIET VU

REFINED OVER 20 YEARS · VANCOUVER · KYOTO · HO CHI MINH CITY

BEFORE YOU START

the film facts.

GENRE	Brand building, for small businesses and personal brands
RUNNING TIME	8 scenes, about 60 minutes. Stop and come back any time.
YOU LEAVE WITH	Why you exist, who you're for, how you sound, and why you're different
DIRECTED BY	Ly Viet Vu. 20 years building brands, former CEO of Wunderman Thompson Vietnam



THE 8 SCENES

01 **purpose**
Why you exist

02 **audience**
Who you're for

03 **character**
Your personality

04 **voice & tone**
How you sound

05 **more like / not like**
Your references

06 **positioning**
Why you're different

07 **point of view**
What you believe

08 **name & line**
How people remember you

A LETTER

Dear builder,

you don't need an agency or a big budget to build a brand. you need honest answers to a few simple questions.

Why do you exist? Who are you really for? How do you want people to feel? Answer those, and your logo, your posts and your website all get easier.

Ly

HOUSE RULES

- Stay with it
- Build on every answer
- Be honest
- Have fun
- Phone off
- Be daring
- Debate is good
- Messy is fine

Ask "why?" more than feels polite. The good answers are usually the third or fourth one.

THREE WAYS TO USE THIS PLAYBOOK

1
print it
Write by hand. Pencil is fine. Cross things out. Messy pages are good pages.

2
type into it
Open this PDF on your computer and click any box to type. Save it and come back later.

3
do it with me
Stuck on a scene? Email letstalk@lyvietvu.com or message @lyvietvu on Instagram.

SCENE 01 OF 08 · WHY YOU EXIST

purpose.

01

Define the opportunity, get everyone on the same page, and set what you believe.

OUTCOME A clear purpose, audience and values

LY'S NOTE

Ask "why?" three times on every answer. The first answer is usually the product. The third is usually the purpose.

Describe what you do in plain words

The way you would explain it to a friend.

We make strong Vietnamese coffee and cold brew in a tiny shop in District 3.

Why do you need to exist?

Personal brand: why do you do this work?

Because people need good coffee. Why? Because a good coffee breaks a hard day. Why? Because everyone deserves a

Who would be affected if you didn't exist?

Personal brand: who would miss you?

The night-shift nurses from the hospital next door.

Who are you trying to help?

Be specific.

Nurses, doctors and carers who look after everyone else, and the families waiting at the hospital next door.

THINKING ABOUT YOUR BRAND PROMISE

What business are you really in?

One level deeper than the product.

The business of small kind moments.

When would you not need to exist?

What would have to change?

When every carer gets a proper break, and someone looks after them for a change.

How do you change the lives of the people you serve?

We turn a 5-minute coffee stop into the one moment in their day that is just for them.

Values: 3 to 5 ways you behave

Kindness, Honesty, Fun

Vision: where are you in 3 to 5 years?

Three shops, and every nurse in the district knows our name.

Your purpose in one line

To [do what] for [whom]. Example: To build better futures and human connections for everyone through a healthy lifestyle.

To give a small, kind moment every day for people who look after everyone else.

SCENE 02 OF 08 · WHO YOU'RE FOR

audience.

02

Know exactly who you serve, in enough detail that you could pick them out of a crowd.

OUTCOME 2 to 3 audience profiles, each with a real insight

LY'S NOTE

Give each one a name people remember. "The Active Boss" beats "Segment B". Write the insight in their words, starting with "I am..."

PROFILE 1

Nickname

The Night-Shift Hero

Who they are (age, job, stage of life)

Nurse, 28 to 40

Lifestyle and interests

12-hour shifts, family first, little time for himself

What they spend on this

40,000 VND a day on coffee

Their motto

Just get me through today

Insight: "I am..."

I am always looking after other people, and nobody looks after me.

PROFILE 2

Nickname

The Waiting Family

Who they are (age, job, stage of life)

Son or daughter, 30 to 55, visiting a parent in hospital

Lifestyle and interests

Long days in waiting rooms, work calls in the corridor, worried but trying to stay calm

What they spend on this

60,000 VND a day, often buying for the whole family

Their motto

I have to stay strong for them

Insight: "I am..."

I am so busy being strong for my family that I forget I am tired too.

PROFILE 3 (OPTIONAL)

Nickname

The Home Carer

Who they are (age, job, stage of life)

Daughter or wife, 45 to 65, caring for a parent or partner at home

Lifestyle and interests

Stays close to home, small daily routines, knows every neighbour

What they spend on this

25,000 VND, three mornings a week

Their motto

One good hour out of the house

Insight: "I am..."

I love looking after my mother, but some days I need someone to ask how I am.

character.

03

Give your brand a personality people can relate to. Tick one main (M) and one supporting (S) character.

LY'S NOTE

These are the 12 characters behind most of the stories we love. Pick the one that sounds like you on your best day, not the one you think sounds impressive.

YEARNING FOR PARADISE

the innocent
Wants to be happy and do things right
Gift: optimism · Watch out: naive, plays it safe · e.g. Dove
☐ M ☐ S

the explorer
Wants freedom and to find out who they are
Gift: independence · Watch out: never settles · e.g. Patagonia
☐ M ☐ S

the sage
Wants to find the truth and understand the world
Gift: wisdom · Watch out: studies forever, never acts · e.g. TED
☐ M ☐ S

LEAVING A MARK ON THE WORLD

the hero
Wants to prove their worth through brave action
Gift: courage · Watch out: arrogant, must win · e.g. Nike
☐ M ☐ S

the outlaw
Wants to break what isn't working
Gift: radical freedom · Watch out: destructive · e.g. Harley-Davidson
☐ M ☐ S

the magician
Wants to make dreams come true
Gift: transformation · Watch out: manipulative · e.g. Disney
☐ M ☐ S

MAKING PEOPLE FEEL THEY BELONG

the everyday friend
Wants to belong and fit in
Gift: down to earth · Watch out: blends in · e.g. IKEA
☐ M ☐ S

the lover
Wants closeness with people, work and places
Gift: passion · Watch out: obsessive · e.g. Chanel
☐ M ☐ S

the jester
Wants to enjoy the moment and lighten the mood
Gift: joy · Watch out: not taken seriously · e.g. Old Spice
☐ M ☑ S

GIVING THE WORLD STRUCTURE

the caregiver
Wants to protect and help people
Gift: compassion · Watch out: gives too much · e.g. UNICEF
☑ M ☐ S

the creator
Wants to make something that lasts
Gift: imagination · Watch out: perfectionist · e.g. LEGO
☐ M ☐ S

the ruler
Wants order, success and control
Gift: leadership · Watch out: controlling · e.g. Rolex
☐ M ☐ S

How should people feel when they deal with you?

Pick up to 4 words.

Cared for, Happy, At home

Your character in one line

[Name] is a [personality] who [does what], with a [attitude] attitude.

Mai Coffee is a warm neighbour who looks after people who look after others, with a cheeky attitude

SCENE 04 OF 08 · HOW YOU SOUND

voice & tone.

04

Decide how you talk, so every post, email and caption sounds like the same person.

OUTCOME 6 voice rules: what you are, and what you are not

LY'S NOTE

The "but not" half does the real work. "We are confident, but not arrogant."

WE ARE / I AM	BUT WE ARE NOT / BUT I AM NOT
Warm	Sugary
Funny	Silly
Simple	Boring
Personal	Nosy
Short	Cold
Honest	Harsh

SCENE 05 OF 08 · YOUR REFERENCES

more like / not like.

05

LY'S NOTE

Mix people and brands from anywhere. It's about the feeling, not the industry. Always write why.

More like... and why	Definitely not like... and why
A favourite aunt's kitchen: you always leave fed and laughing.	A chain coffee shop: fast and forgettable.

SCENE 06 OF 08 · WHY YOU'RE DIFFERENT

positioning.

06

Find the space only you can own, so people stop comparing you on price.

LY'S NOTE

Most brands describe features. Few describe a mission. Move toward the mission end of the line and you stop competing on price.

Your offer: 2 to 4 things you deliver

Strong phin coffee	Cold brew	Local pastries	A quiet corner

Who else could people choose, and what do they promise?

Competitors, or simply doing nothing. One line each.

The hospital canteen: cheap and close, but nobody knows your name.
The chain café on the corner: fast, and the same everywhere.
The street vendor: quick and cheap, but nowhere to sit down.

Place them, and yourself, on the line

Write their names above the line where they belong.

Street vendor, chain café, hospital canteen (product and price) ... Mai Coffee (mission led)

Product and feature led — Mission and value led

Reasons to believe you

Experience, results, partners, culture, credentials.

Open from 5:30 a.m. for the shift change. We know your order by the second visit. Hospital staff get 10% off with their badge. Mai's mother was a nurse for 30 years.

What can you say that nobody else can?

Your unfair advantage.

We are the only coffee shop built around the hospital's shift times, started by a nurse's daughter.

SCENE 07 OF 08 · WHAT YOU BELIEVE

point of view.

07

Say what is wrong with how things are done today, and what you believe instead.

The old way

What is broken in your industry today?

Coffee shops are built for laptops and photos. The people who work the hardest get a paper cup and no seat.

The new truth

How should people see it instead?

Coffee is a small act of care. The people who look after everyone else should be looked after first.

Your point of view

We believe... / I believe...

We believe the people who look after everyone else deserve to be looked after too.

The invitation

"If you are tired of X, it is time to Y."

If you're tired of always looking after everyone else, it's time to sit down and let us look after you.

SCENE 08 OF 08 · HOW PEOPLE REMEMBER YOU

name & line.

08

LY'S NOTE

Don't start with names. Start with the feeling. Then write 20 options, even bad ones. Number 17 is often the winner.

What must your name or line make people feel?

3 to 5 words.

Welcome, safe and cared for, like someone saved you a seat.

Shortlist: names, taglines or bio lines

Star your favourite.

Mai Coffee. We saved you a seat.
Coffee for the carers
Your 5:30 a.m. friend

THE FINAL SCENE · YOUR OUTPUT

your blueprint.

Bring your best answers together on one page. Hand it to any designer, editor or team.

PURPOSE · WHY YOU EXIST

To give a small, kind moment every day for people who look after everyone else.

REASONS TO BELIEVE

Open at 5:30 a.m. for the shift change. We know your order by the second visit. Started by a nurse's daughter, right next to the hospital.

CHARACTER · HOW YOU SHOW UP

Mai Coffee is a warm neighbour who looks after people who look after others, with a cheeky attitude.

Main + supporting character

the caregiver + the jester

People should feel

Cared for, Happy, At home

Voice in three words

Warm, Funny, Simple

Next steps

What you build first: profile, content, visual identity, website.

1. Instagram profile with the line "We saved you a seat."
2. A sign at the door for the shift change: "Nurses first, from 5:30 a.m."
3. A loyalty card for hospital staff.
4. Logo and cup design: hand this blueprint to a designer.

NEXT: FILE 2 OF 3

Finished this playbook? Open the Content Strategy Playbook next, then the Content Planning Playbook. Both are free at lyvietvu.com/brandbuilder. With all three done, your in-house marketing team can run your content every day.
I can show you how: **letstalk@lyvietvu.com**

what's next.

Three playbooks, in this order. Together they are the brief your in-house marketing team works from.

1
Brand Builder Playbook
Who you are: the 8 steps.
YOU ARE HERE

2
Content Strategy Playbook
What you stand for and who you talk to.

3
Content Planning Playbook
What to post each week, and how to know it worked.

★
The master step: your in-house marketing team
Built from all three.

Playbooks 2 and 3 are free at **lyvietvu.com/brandbuilder**. Finish all three and you have the foundation for the strongest in-house marketing team you can build. You don't have to do it all yourself.

THE MASTER STEP: YOUR IN-HOUSE MARKETING TEAM



Brand strategist



Social media strategist



Copywriter



Art director



Creative director



Video editor



Social media manager



Community manager

YOU HAVE THE BLUEPRINT

want it built and running for you?



I build the implementation with you: your own in-house marketing team, a set of AI agents trained on your brand files, planning, writing and reporting your content every week. You make the calls.

1. **We talk first.** 15 minutes on your business or personal brand and where you are stuck.
2. **We set up your in-house marketing team.** Strategist, copywriter, art director, creative director, video editor and social media manager.
3. **You approve, it runs.** Your agents plan, write and report. You keep the final say.

One step: email **letstalk@lyvietvu.com** with the word **BUILD** and one line about your business.

EMAIL	INSTAGRAM	FACEBOOK	LINKEDIN
letstalk@lyvietvu.com	@lyvietvu	lyvietvu	Ly Viet Vu

BRANDS I BUILT WITH

Unilever · PEPSI · Nestlé · SAMSUNG · SONY · HSBC · Vietnam Airlines · Grab
L'ORÉAL · Ford · KFC · VINFAST · TECHCOMBANK · Shell · DIAGEO · vietjetAir.com
7up · AQUAFINA · KitKat · ABBOTT · Johnnie Walker · HOME CREDIT · FE CREDIT · HUGGIES

AND 117 MORE ACROSS 11 INDUSTRIES, AT SOFRESH, MIRUM, JWT AND WUNDERMAN THOMPSON

20
years building brands

150+
people in the agency I led

4 medals
in a row, Vietnam Digital Agency of the Year, Campaign Asia-Pacific

40 under 40
Campaign Asia. The first Vietnamese person ever named

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