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Make Your Mark: The Creative's Guide To Building A Business With Impact, The 99U Book Series, Book 3



Synopsis

Finally, a business book for makers, not managers. Are you ready to "make a dent in the universe"? As a creative, you no longer have to take a backseat. In fact, stepping up and embracing entrepreneurship is the fastest route to impact. But where do you start? And what sets the businesses that succeed apart? To find out, we asked the bright minds behind companies like Google X, Warby Parker, Facebook, O'Reilly Media, and more to share their startup wisdom. Featuring hard-won wisdom from 20 leading entrepreneurs and designers, 99U's *Make Your Mark* will arm you with practical insights for launching a purpose-driven business, refining your product, delighting your customers, inspiring your team - and ultimately - making something that matters. *Make Your Mark* features contributions from: Will Allen, Rich Armstrong, Warren Berger, Sean Blanda, Neil Blumenthal, Craig Dalton, Jane ni Dhuilchaoingtigh, Aaron Dignan, Andy Dunn, Joel Gascoigne, Seth Godin, Chris Guillebeau, Emily Heyward, John Maeda, David Marquet, Tim O'Reilly, Shane Snow, Sebastian Thrun, Keith Yamashita, and Julie Zhuo. Plus, a foreword from Behance founder Scott Belsky.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As an entrepreneur who works in various sectors in various ways, I just love this book.'*Make Your Mark*' aims to serve individuals and teams that are seeking to make the jump from a brilliant notion to real-time value-creation. It's not a how-to book, exactly. It's a why-to book, if anything. It's filled with

questions and insights that others have found valuable. The format is very easy-to-digest, well-presented quotations and brief essays (e.g. two-five pages) on a range of issues from the ethereal ("Finding Your Purpose and Living it") to the most down-to-earth ("Solving a Real Problem"). If you're looking for actionable inspiration in transforming a project from the "creative" phase to the "maker" phase, you'll find value in this interesting read. In the nature of the offering, it's likely that people will find value in different parts of the book, at different times and places. That said, if a single idea in the book has traction for you--or if an insight or question in the book prompts something unexpected in your own mind--then it's well worth the purchase price....

This book sold me in the foreword which states, "Art, without distribution and discovery moves nobody.... Thought, if not written down and shared with others, changes nothing...Creation must be made accessible for consumption. This is your real job." (p.17-18, written by Scott Belsky) Wow. Ponder that for awhile if you've been keeping your ideas or projects in your head for too long. I am in the process of developing several new projects at work, and I admit to a tendency to think too long before taking action. I also sometimes over-complicate things. What I really liked about this book is that it focuses on both the mindsets needed and the actions which must be taken to move a project or idea forward. While the premise of the book is that you're creating a business, I found the concepts just as helpful for projects. Some of the concepts I particularly liked were the notion that you need to build leaders not followers on your team, that you need to start before you feel ready (because you'll never feel like you're ready), the importance of storytelling, keeping the design of your idea/program as simple as possible, and know why you're doing what you're doing. I think this would be a great book for anyone who has to design and carry out programs or initiatives at their workplace or in their personal life. This book is a great companion and reminds creative types to develop the necessary business-related skills to make their product known to the world. Very motivating and inspiring.

Make Your Mark: The Creative's Guide to Building a Business With Impact is a slickly designed, if ultimately self-congratulating text on how to become more than just a "creative," but, rather, a businessman. Pulling stories from prominent innovators in diverse industries, Make Your Mark comes off as more "self-help" book than legitimate resource. Perhaps the earliest, most glaring instance of this is when the author of the section references "Richard Leider, one of the world's foremost experts on purpose." Seriously? That's a job title? An expertise? It honestly feels like an Emperor's New Clothes scenario, and begs the question, how is Mr. Leider producing that volume

of Kool Aid, and then successfully convincing people to drink it? Calling this a "guide" stretches the word to its breaking point. While there are certainly stand-out sections, particularly Tim O'Reilly's, web innovator and founder of O'Reilly Media, the remainder brings to mind men standing on well-lit stages with jeans and a lightly ruffled sport coat dropping business-isms like "synergy." "Becoming a startup titan is tough and many people fail," the book tells you, but then quietly assures you that "you are different: you are a creative but a realist, an idea-man with the execution to boot." It's all seems a bit disingenuous, and certainly not practical. However, if you can look beyond the back-patting and fraternity style ego-boosting, the book is truly a beautiful thing to look at.

This book is a collection of 21 short essays by thought leaders that are full of insight. The essays are split into four sections: Defining Your Purpose, Building Your Product, Serving Your Customers, Leading Your Team, with a final essay by Seth Godin to call you to action. The ideas are not new, but they are presented in a pithy very readable way. The book does not present a blue-print as such, but more a set of questions you need to answer before you embark on the journey. Simply a must have for any business leader - what are you waiting for?

This whole series of books is well conceived and executed. The chapters are concise, fast and well edited. For anyone who wants to learn from some of the top performing business and creative individuals in the country, these are great books to learn from. The key factor of these books is that they teach you on what's important in moving forward in your life, not just in your career or in your creativity. In today's economy, we all need to be self-directed and gain the expertise of what we want out of life. Purpose and meaning are what we should all be doing, forging expertise and a life worth living. Anything less than that is a waste of time and more importantly, a waste of your life. I'd recommend the whole series of these books to anyone who wants to fight through the fear of change and the growing cultural phenomenon of having our lives taken over by technology.

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