

DAIN WALKER

THE  
90 DAY  
BRAND  
PLAN



How to  
**Unleash Your  
Personal Brand**  
to Dominate  
the Competition  
and Scale Your  
Business

WILEY



“Dain Walker is the epitome of a branding virtuoso, seamlessly merging strategic prowess with an intuitive understanding of market dynamics. His unparalleled expertise has not only elevated brands to new heights but has also served as a beacon of inspiration for those fortunate enough to collaborate with him. Working alongside Dain has been an enlightening journey, where his keen insights and forward-thinking approach have reshaped my perspective on brand development. Without hesitation, I wholeheartedly recommend Dain to anyone seeking to establish a lasting and impactful presence in today’s competitive landscape.”

—Fred Schebesta, founder of Finder

“Dain is beyond a branding expert; he’s a brand therapist. He was able to get inside my brain and extract the details about my brand that I didn’t even know. He turned my abstract feelings into art and copy, and took me to the next level.”

—Mark Gagnon, comedian, cost of Camp Gagnon,  
and cohost of Flagrant Podcast



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# Thank You

**T**his book is dedicated to my wife, Elli Walker. Thank you for being my best friend, my partner in life, and for forever and always having my back no matter the venture I set out on—from sleeping on the floor in debt to growing a flourishing business together. You brighten my soul and I'm grateful for all that you do for me.

To my children, Harlo and Joey, who I hope will see the power of what happens when you give with an open heart, do good in the world, and create opportunities for others to chase their dreams. You both fill my heart with joy, keep me present, and remind me there are endless cherished moments together to be grateful for.

To Campbell Nugent and Denis Kucukovic for the late nights, early mornings, and tirelessly supporting me in my busy schedule to unpack my years of teachings and carefully articulate how I poured my mind into this book.

To Jared Wineera for supporting my vision for the agency Rivyl when it was merely an idea, for being an endearing friend pushing me to strive for more than I felt I deserved, for growing this group of wild creatives into a company we can forever be proud of, and for the beautiful illustrations you provided within this book.

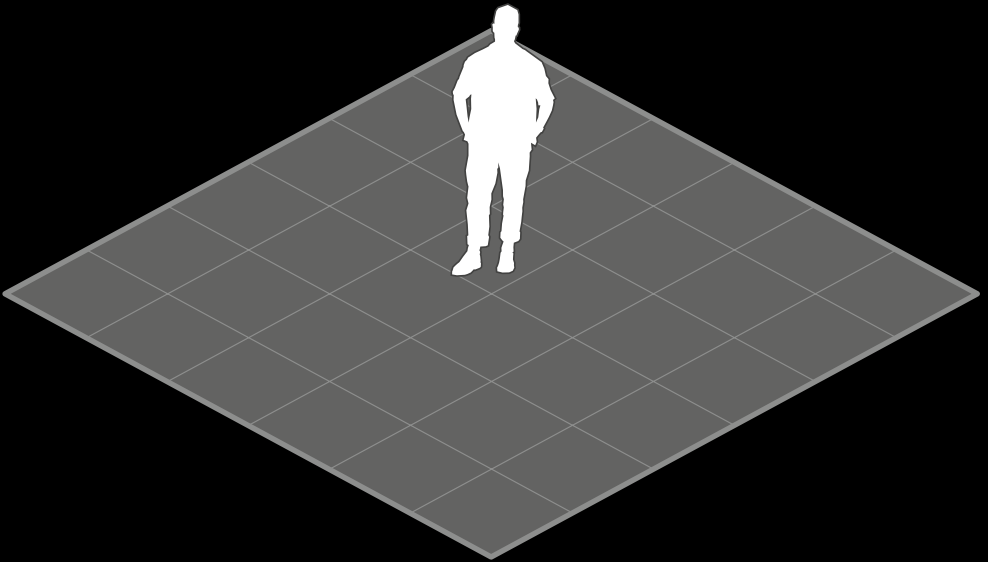
Also, to Gary Vee, who inspired me to get off my ass and just fucking start.

And finally, to the team at Rivyl, for your constant devotion to our mission with your wildly creative ideas, the love and care you give to our clients, and how you constantly urge me to take ourselves to new heights.



## Chapter 1

# PERSONAL BRANDS FILL STANDS



I stood in front of my company, exchanging gifts and bonuses at our annual end-of-year wrap-up, looking around at my team's faces. I found myself completely shaken by how far we had come in just three short years. Just four years prior, this was all an insane idea in my head, an idea I had while working my full-time retail job selling phones.

Before all of this, building a branding agency was purely a delusional and lofty “one day” goal of mine—something to dream about in the distant future. Back then I felt alone, afraid, yet I ventured into the unknown, with no guarantee of success, no money in my bank account, no previous business experience, no mentors or coaches—just stubbornness and the will to have a crack at something I had never done before: branding myself publicly. This is what I worked on for the next couple of years.

And what did I achieve after all this time? My agency Rivyl. A crew of 20 mavericks (an endearing term we use to refer to our team for their rebelliously creative nature), all responsible for an average of 70 client projects to juggle every month. They laughed, made fun of each other, and relished in the unfathomable success we had created for ourselves in such a short time frame as an aggressive start-up. They joked about their onboarding interviews in years past, when they'd initially questioned whether the company was a scam or not, questioned whether it would make it past the start-up phase or not. Starting in June 2022, Rivyl began hiring new employees every week and fitting out a new office in the heart of Sydney, Australia, north of the Harbour Bridge, with art and furnishings. My team applauded themselves for taking the plunge despite the initial risks. We celebrated the spoils of war together and plotted our course to climb to new heights in the following year.

Fast-forward to 2023. My team at Rivyl had just experienced unprecedented and admittedly unexpected success: completing a project that involved developing strategy and a complete brand design update for our client Simon Beard and his company Culture Kings, a \$600 million global suburban fashion retailer. Rivyl had prepared them for their launch into the US market on the Las Vegas strip; and their new flagship store was located in the largest retail space in Caesar's Palace. The store fitout and preparation for the project were crazy! The store featured the world's

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largest hat wall (three stories tall), a secret VIP room with exclusive limited-edition Nike Air Jordan drops, a basketball court in the middle of their store, a DJ booth overlooking the outlet, and the crowning jewel: a recording studio in the middle of the store for their frequent celebrity appearances, such as Snoop Dog, Drake, A\$AP Rocky, Juice WRLD, Justin Bieber, and more.

I'm writing this not to impress you, but to impress on you, that all of this happened because I built a personal brand.

My personal brand was the reason I made enough money to quit my job and work for myself. My personal brand was the reason I got my first client for my agency. My personal brand was the reason talent in my industry sought me out and demanded I let them work for me. My personal brand was the reason I was invited to share stages with life and business strategist Tony Robbins, author and business consultant Seth Godin, public speaker and educator Chris Do, entrepreneur Lewis Howes, sporting legend Tom Brady, business mogul Simon Beard, and businessman Tom Bilyeu. My personal brand was the reason I was able to build a multi-seven-figure company. My personal brand was the reason I had taken my company from a small start-up to 20+ employees in just three years. My personal brand was the reason I started Australia's fastest growing branding agency. My personal brand was how I landed the job with the CEO of Culture Kings and consulted with other brands such as CitiBank, Coca-Cola, JPMorgan Chase, and LSKD. My personal brand is the reason I'm writing this book; the publisher sought *me* out! All of this because I decided to build a personal brand when I was employed but in debt and wondering what I wanted to do with my life.

Having a personal brand gave me credibility in my industry. It gave me the altitude to position myself as a global expert and thought leader in all things branding. It prequalified me as a viable option to potential clients and companies because of my perceived value from my social validation.

Because of the prolific nature of my social media content, I became sought after as the solution for the branding problems I identified and frequently talked about. To my initial shock, CEOs and global brands (such as those that I just mentioned) sought out my expertise, because in their mind, I had all the answers. In their mind, I was the person



who really could solve their branding problems. And I found a way to monetize this. The whole reason for this book is to show you how to do this yourself. As intimidating as this might sound, anyone can do their version of this with the right tools and frameworks—whatever that looks like to you.

I crafted a personal brand so that I could serve up opportunities for myself on a golden platter—not knowing what they would be on the outlook, but knowing they would arrive if I got my face out of obscurity and into the limelight.

It's crazy to think back now that I ever had doubts, but I did. It's weird to think that the unhelpful opinions from my colleagues at the start mattered, because now they don't. It's odd to think that, had I never taken the leap of faith to get uncomfortable and expose myself to ridicule, I would not be writing this for you right now. At that time it was difficult to imagine anyone working for me as a consultant, let alone 20+ mavericks. I never thought in my wildest dreams, having grown up wearing Culture Kings apparel, that my team and I would be redesigning their logo and consulting with them on how to photograph their models, how to optimize their e-commerce platform, or what fonts they should be using on their store signage. I never saw myself as someone valuable that CEOs and founders of billion-dollar companies would call for advice on their personal and corporate branding. But here I am, and if I can do it, you can do it!

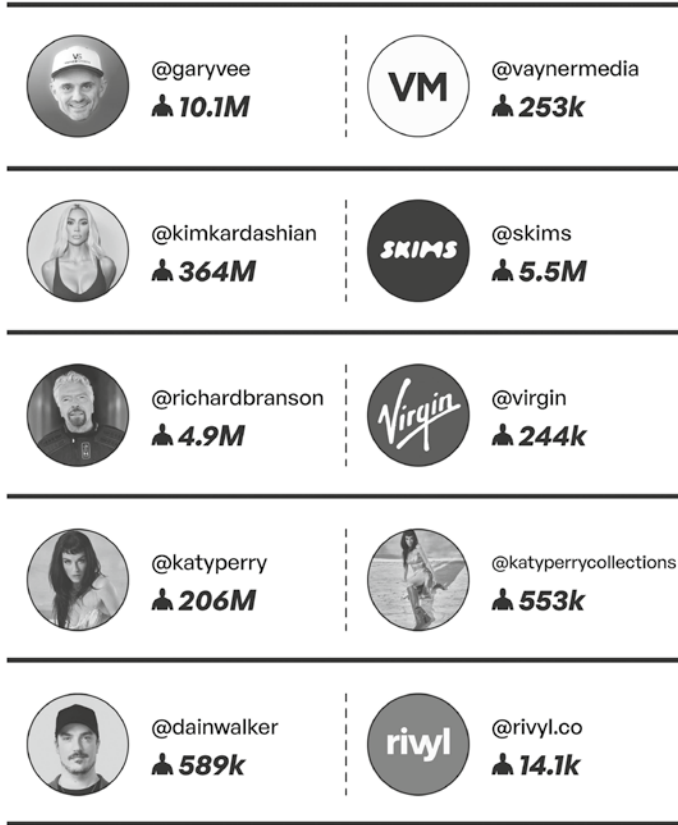


## Personal Branding Versus Company Branding

Do a favor for me. Whip out your phone and perform a quick social media search of the people in the following figure and their personal brands so that you can see how evident the impact of personal branding is. We care far more about people, their stories, their ideas, their actions, wins, losses, and behaviors than we care about corporations. People love people far more than they love companies.

Compare the number of followers each pair:

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What's glaringly evident is that the gap between their personal branding and corporate branding is not only palpable—it's unmistakable. Each one of these personal brands has more followers, more engagement, and more organic reach on social platforms than their corporate brands do. There is a science to this, and it's that human beings are wired to connect to people, not objects. And that's a big reason for the surge of influencers in today's market.

According to *Fortune* magazine, "92% of consumers trust recommendations from friends over information delivered through traditional ads."<sup>1</sup>

The recent cultural buzzword and phenomena of the influencer—an individual who has the capability to alter the belief systems of people—fits

this statistic perfectly. The term *influencer* isn't even a modern one—it's existed since the 1600s,<sup>2</sup> but its definition was expanded when it became a way to label the social media phenomenon of people leading others into buying things and joining causes they endorsed. This is not a new concept though; we humans have been doing this as far back as our records go. We want to wear the clothes celebrities wear, we want to drive the cars our friends drive, we want to listen to the music our friends listen to. We see movies our colleagues suggest we see, we hit that eating spot our family tells us is “to die for.” And this is why marketing heads and salespeople suggest taking advantage of influencer culture, because it stands to be a modern monetization technique.

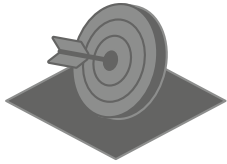
This has been the case for years. As a matter of fact, *Forbes* tells us that “in 2012, 78.6% of sales people using social media to sell out-performed those who weren't using social media.”<sup>3</sup>

When consultants, coaches, representatives, and reps work to impress us, we ask ourselves, “Are they worth listening to? What makes them an expert? Can they be trusted?” If we find that their social media is popping off with tens of thousands of followers, then in our minds . . . they have altitude. They have social proof that they're a high-networked individual who's highly sought after, with advice we should trust. Social media is the business card of the modern age. For our parents, it was a job title. For us, it's about how many people follow this person.

In the United States, according to *Harvard Business Review*, “70% of employers check out applicants' profiles as part of their screening process, and 54% have rejected applicants because of what they found.”<sup>4</sup>

Even when you're looking for a new job, you're not safe from the grip of your personal brand. I dare you to ask your most recent boss if they looked at your socials before hiring you. I'm almost certain they did. I admit that I do it. When people apply to Rivyl, I punch their name into Google and gain insights into what they care about, their opinions, what kind of person they are, and if they're a good cultural fit for my team or not. Your social media pages tell the world a lot about you—and if you don't have a social media following and rarely disclose anything, then that's also saying something. Some may see this as harsh, but given that at Rivyl, we're hiring for a job in *branding*, if a candidate doesn't have any social media presence, we don't hire them.

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### Make Your Mark

Whether we're aware of it or not, we all have a personal brand. If we're not using it to leverage opportunities in business, we're using it to keep our friends posted on what we had for breakfast, or we tag where we spent our holidays and take photos with our families. We share our opinions online, we debate with people, we comment on things. You can even gain a lot of information about someone by looking at whom they follow. Many broadcast their political beliefs. We even say a lot by what clothes we wear and how we take photos. We write bios about ourselves informing people about what we do, where we work, and what we care about. If you're reading this, I'm assuming you've engaged with social media in some shape or form. My question to you, however, is whether you're using it to its full advantage to get more opportunities in life like it has for me.

In my experience, the majority of my social media engagement activity has been with people asking me for advice. And that has been the major reason for my success in my industry.

What anyone with a cadence in sales, marketing, and advertising would see here is “money.” I asked myself, “If people are using social platforms as a means of consulting, problem-solving, insight-seeking, consumer recommendations, advice, tips, and direction, then, how can I leverage it?” To that, my answer was personal branding! I learned to use my public profile as a means to direct attention and traffic toward the things that would enable me to grow Rivyl by carefully and creatively promoting my products, services, events, and companies. I used personal branding as a free mechanism to alter the belief systems of people. I used my personal brand to educate business owners on the power of branding—and how, by participating in services with myself, they could get what they wanted (the ability to scale their companies) and do for themselves what I do for myself.

This is how you do what you've always wanted. Something great.

**Jeff Bezos:** He launched the first version of Amazon Prime at the end of 2004, then officially announced it to the public six weeks later in February 2005. The motto for Amazon Prime was “Shipping in 6 weeks or less. Guaranteed.” Now, it’s way quicker.<sup>5</sup>

**Jessica Alba:** Her “Honors Company” rose to instant success, garnering over \$10,000,000 in 2012, its first year of existence.<sup>6</sup>

**Tony Fadell:** He led the infamous iPod project in 2001, pitching the concept to Steve Jobs in March. The first iPods shipped to adoring customers in November of the same year.<sup>7</sup>

**Walt Disney:** Disneyland ended up going from Walt Disney’s mind to an actual reality in just 366 days. It’s now known as “the happiest place on earth.”<sup>8</sup>

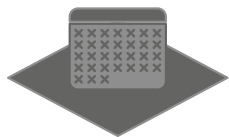
**Brendan Eich:** He wrote the first prototype of JavaScript in May 1995 in only 10 days. He then shipped the beta four short months later.<sup>9</sup>

**Brehon Somervell:** He made the plans for the Pentagon building, the world’s largest office building at the time, in just four days! The project began construction two months later and only took 491 days to complete.<sup>10</sup>

**Sylvester Stallone:** He wrote the screenplay for *Rocky* in three-and-a-half days. Principal photography on the film was completed in just 28 days, with a budget under \$1,000,000.<sup>11</sup>

**Napoleon Bonaparte:** In just 100 days, between March and June 1815, he escaped from prison in Elba, gathered 600 fighting troops and landed with them at Cannes, recruited an entire regiment, marched with them to Paris to recapture the government, increased his army to a size of 280,000 troops, marched into and invaded Belgium, defeated the Prussians with half an army, finally lost to a combined army of Wellington and Anglo-Prussian forces at Waterloo, was removed from his throne, and ended up once again in prison, this time at St. Helena.<sup>12</sup>

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### Do It in 90 Days

Human beings are phenomenal when they put their heads together and collaborate. Here's a short list of some human achievements that were accomplished when pressing to have a *ruthless dedication* to a cause.

My argument is that if you're going to launch your personal brand, do it in 90 days. It's a long enough time frame for progress to take place, a long enough runway for you to make the all the possible screw-ups required to understand how to grow a personal brand—mistakes that I will remedy by giving you a framework of thinking and specific tools to take action in the next chapters of this book. Take note: mistakes are inevitable. Failure must be welcomed with open arms, because it's a standard ingredient to success, to gaining experience, and to learning what's necessary to achieve something valuable in life.

I launched my personal brand in just 90 days:

- I started posting content daily from day 1, with about 400 followers made up of friends and family.
- I had 1,000 followers by week 2.
- I had my products and services established by week 4.
- I created a steady flow of paying clients by week 6.
- I handed in my resignation at my job in week 8.
- I had locked in six retainer clients for six months, each paying me \$3,500 US monthly on a retainer by week 9.
- I hired my first contractor to support the workload by week 10.
- I had more clients and \$72,000 US in my bank account at week 12.

By day 90, I had completely turned my life around by building a personal brand. In just 90 days I had gone from being so broke that I couldn't afford groceries to having the luxury of hiring someone to work with me. In just 90 days I had gone from working on my busted laptop with pirated software to buying expensive equipment with all the software I wanted. In just 90 days I had gone from doing all the work myself to delegating the majority of the workload to my contractors—while I handled all the client relations. In just 90 days I had gone from being afraid, full of doubt and