

Welcome

Online Course #1: Choosing a marketable concept (How to avoid the single biggest mistake made by new screenwriters)

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- A premise with no market has virtually no way of selling.
- Seems obvious, right?
- But yet many writers fail to consider where they will sell their screenplay until it's finished!
- I wrote a post that covers some of this information here:

<http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/writing-your-screenplay/the-single-biggest-mistake-that-i-see-from-new-writers-their-concept-is-not-marketable/>

**Selling
Your
Screenplay
.com**

with
Ashley Scott Meyers

Online Class#1: Choosing a Marketable Concept

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- Movies are really expensive.
- Screenwriters often fail to understand how difficult it is to make money from a film.
- Good news! Since so many screenwriters don't consider the markets, if you do, it'll give you a leg up!

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- A good premise can be sold even if the screenplay isn't that great. However, a good screenplay can't be sold if the premise isn't marketable.

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- Suppose you already have a screenplay and you don't think the concept is that marketable?

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- *John Carter*
 - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0401729>
 - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Carter_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Carter_(film))

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- *The Watch*
 - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1298649>
 - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Watch_\(2012_film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Watch_(2012_film))

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- *Couple's Retreat*
 - http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1078940/?ref=fn_al_tt_1
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Couples_Retreat

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- *Magic Mike*
 - http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1915581/?ref=fn_al_tt_1
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magic_Mike

Part 1: Why is a marketable concept is so important?

- Crooked Arrow
 - <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1954352/>

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- High Concept?
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High-concept>

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- High Concept?
- You don't have to have a high concept premise to be marketable!

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- A concept is “marketable” if the audience for your story is clear...
- AND your story is easily understood by that audience...
- AND your concept is interesting to that audience.

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- Back to *Crooked Arrows*
- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1954352/>

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- New writer's miss smaller markets.

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- Films from 2012
- <http://boxofficemojo.com/yearly/chart/?yr=2012>

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- *Argo*
- *Silver Lining Playbook*
- *Life of Pi*

Part 2: What makes a concept marketable?

- A concept is “marketable” if the audience for your story is clear...
- AND your story is easily understood by that audience...
- AND your concept is interesting to that audience.

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Is the audience clear for your story?
- Is your concept easily understandable by your audience?
- Is your concept interesting to your audience?

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Is the audience clear for your story?

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Is your concept easily understandable by your audience?

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Is your concept easily understandable by your audience?
- I wrote a post on writing a good log line here:
- <http://www.sellingyourscreenplay.com/how-to-sell-your-screenplay/writing-a-screenplay-logline/>

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Is your concept interesting to your audience?

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- *Magic Mike*

Part 3: How can I make sure my screenplay's concept is marketable?

- Argo
- Silver Lining Playbook
- Life of Pi

Part 4: How can I come up with concepts that are marketable?

- Immerse yourself in the markets
 - Watch a ton of movies
 - Read a ton of scripts

Part 4: How can I come up with concepts that are marketable?

- Watch the news

Part 4: How can I come up with concepts that are marketable?

- Talk with producers.

Part 4: How can I come up with concepts that are marketable?

- Do not try and reinvent the wheel.

Part 4: How can I come up with concepts that are marketable?

- Repetition

Part 5: Exercises

- Fix some of the screenplays you have sitting on your shelf.

Part 5: Exercises

- 7 Day Challenge: Come up with 1 log line per day for a week.

Part 5: Exercises

- Pitch your log line to people.

Part 5: Exercises

- Put some recent movies into the concept template.

Part 5: Exercises

- Dig down into some niches.

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- The concept is not the only thing I consider when deciding if I should write on a new spec screenplay idea.

Part 6: Final Thoughts

1. Is the concept marketable? (first and foremost)
 - a. A concept is “marketable” if the audience for my story is clear AND my story is easily understood by that audience AND my concept is interesting to that audience.
 - This means I should write the log line before I begin writing.
 - The “what is it?” must be clear.
2. Strong Protagonist (i.e. Samuel L. Jackson in *Pulp Fiction*)
 - a. Clear arch
 - b. Likeable or at least very interesting
3. Strong ending (i.e. *Shawshank Redemption*)
4. Some artistic thread that will stand the test of time (i.e. *Citizen Kane*)

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- You still need a good screenplay!

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- Don't overlook the smaller markets.

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- Use the concept template!
- A concept is “marketable” if the audience for your story is clear...
- AND your story is easily understood by that audience...
- AND your concept is interesting to that audience.

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- Questions?

Part 6: Final Thoughts

- Pitch your log line.