



Signature Moments *Framework*

Designing moments people actually remember

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Twenty-six years building brands for hospitality, events and lifestyle

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BEFORE YOU START

Why this exists

You rarely meet your next client at the moment they're ready to buy. You might meet them months before their calendar is even set, and months is a long time to be forgotten in.

Being noticed isn't enough. Difference gets you noticed but noticed can fade quickly. What makes someone remember you, specifically, at the exact point they're ready to hire, is something else entirely.

A touchpoint is any place your business meets a client or prospect. Most of them are forgettable, and that's fine. A Signature Moment is a touchpoint amplified with an element of Brand Truth, designed on purpose to make someone feel something. Once they feel it, they remember it.

Touchpoint + Brand Truth = Signature Moment

This framework is designed to help you create moments that are ownable, memorable and repeatable, not just a nice idea that happens once.

What a Signature Moment creates

A Signature Moment isn't simply about doing something impressive. It creates:

- Surprise and delight — something they didn't expect.
- A glimpse of expertise — you show what you're capable of.
- Excitement — they start imagining what you could do for them and have the confidence that you can deliver it.

A Signature Moment can happen before, during or after someone works with you.

Start with your Brand Truth

Everything in this framework depends on one thing being already decided: your Brand Truth, the fundamental building blocks of what makes your business truly individual.

First, what sits beneath your brand

1. What values do you work by?

Lego's values are playful. Apple's are innovative.

2. What's the essence of the impact of your work?

One photographer captures candid moments. Another captures the atmosphere.

3. What's your mission?

Your higher purpose, often the whole reason you set up the business in the first place.

Then, how it shows up in practice

The first three questions are about what you believe. These three are the proof, the version your clients would actually recognise, because it's what they've seen you do, not what you've told them you stand for.

4. What do people notice about you straight away?

5. What do you notice or do that others usually miss?

6. What remains true even on your busiest day?

Put it together

Example: Our Brand Truth is... playful. We prove it by... finding unexpected ways to make the experience more enjoyable.

Our Brand Truth is...

We prove it by...

The framework, at a glance

Five steps, in order. Each one builds on the last, so the temptation to skip straight to Expression is worth resisting.



The question each step answers

- 1 Truth** What must this moment prove about us?
- 2 Timing** Where will it matter most, before, during or after?
- 3 Feeling** What should the person feel?
- 4 Expression** What could we say, send, show, remember or do?
- 5 Filter** Is it true to us, meaningful to them, specific enough to retell, and repeatable?

1 Truth

What must this moment prove about us?

This isn't about reciting your values. It's about deciding what this specific moment, at this specific point in the relationship, needs to demonstrate. Different moments can prove different facets of the same Brand Truth, and trying to prove everything at once is how you end up proving nothing.

Ask yourself

What's the one thing I want this person to believe about us, right now, more than anything else?

If they described this moment to someone else in a single sentence, what would that sentence say about us?

For example

An event planner meeting a hotel General Manager for the first time needs this moment to prove creative thinking and taste, not just enthusiasm. That's the truth doing the work, before a single idea gets chosen.

Your answer

2 Timing

Where will it matter most, before, during or after?

The same idea lands completely differently depending on when it arrives. Offered too early, a gesture can feel presumptuous, as though you're trying too hard before you've earned the right to. Offered too late, the same gesture reads as an afterthought, something bolted on because it was expected rather than felt.

If you're only designing one Signature Moment to start, put it in Before. You need someone engaged and excited to work with you before During and After even become possible.

Ask yourself

What's actually happening for this person, emotionally, at this exact point in the relationship?

Do they need to feel reassured, celebrated, or simply seen, and which of those is only true right now?

For example

This is a Before moment, the very first touchpoint in a brand new relationship. That changes everything about how it needs to land.

Your answer

3 Feeling

What should the person feel?

Every Signature Moment should be designed backward from a single target emotion. Not a vague sense of delight, but something specific enough to design toward: reassured, surprised, proud, relieved, seen.

Ask yourself

If I could only choose one emotion for this moment to produce, what would it be, and why that one specifically?

What would this person be doing, or saying, in the minute right after they feel it?

For example

Not delight for its own sake. Confidence, specifically, that this planner sees things other people miss. That's a different feeling to design toward.

Your answer

4 Expression

What could we say, send, show, remember or do?

This is where most people start, and it's actually meant to be the last step. The form a moment takes, a note, a gift, a call, a gesture, only works once it's already been filtered through Truth, Timing and Feeling.

Skip straight to Expression and you get a nice idea with nothing underneath it, easy to copy and easy to forget.

Ask yourself

Given what this moment needs to prove, and how it needs to feel, what's the simplest and most specific way to bring that to life?

Am I choosing this because it's right for this moment, or because it's what I always do?

For example

A one-page 'what we heard' plan. Their three pressure points, one practical idea for each, and the detail everybody else missed. Proof of the work, not a promise of it, and it only makes sense because truth, timing and feeling were already decided.

Your answer

5 Filter

Is it true to us, meaningful to them, specific enough to retell, and repeatable?

This is the check that separates an expensive but forgettable gesture from a Signature Moment people actually remember. An idea has to pass all four. Fail even one and you've made something nice, not something that gets remembered and retold.

- **True to us.** Could a stranger with no idea whose brand this is still guess it was yours?
- **Meaningful to them.** Does it require you to know something specific about this person, not just their industry?
- **Specific enough to retell.** Could they describe it to a colleague in one sentence and get a real reaction back?
- **Repeatable.** Can your team deliver this consistently, or does it only work when you personally are having a good day?

For example

Could a stranger guess the 'what we heard' plan was hers? Yes, naming the detail everyone else missed is a habit she repeats with every client. Could the GM retell it in one sentence? Yes. Is it repeatable? Yes, it's a format, not a one-off effort. Passes all four.

My Signature Moment

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

The Signature Moment journey

Every relationship with a client moves through three phases. Signature Moments can and should happen across all three.

Before

Create the anticipation. Give them a reason to choose you, demonstrate expertise, show what is possible and build confidence.

During

Make the process itself feel considered, personal and unexpectedly good. Give them a reason to love working with you.

After

Make the experience last beyond the final deliverable. Give them a reason to remember you, talk about you or come back to you.

The final deliverable is not the final touchpoint.

Five ways to bring it to life

Here's what all five parts of the framework look like across a single client relationship, from first proposal to ninety days after the event.

BEFORE

The 'we heard you' page

A corporate planner might tell you their priority is making registration completely seamless, because they had queues at their last event. They might also mention that thirty percent of delegates are coming from overseas. Put both of those right at the top of your proposal and show them exactly how you'll address them.

You've remembered what matters to them, rather than sending your standard proposal.

The internal sell-in pack

Imagine your contact loves what you're proposing, but now they have to convince their boss, their finance director or procurement. Give them one beautifully designed page that explains the idea, the value and why you. They can literally forward it internally.

The signature moment is making your contact look good and making their life easier.

DURING

The calm-before message

Three weeks before an event, the client normally starts worrying about final numbers, menus and signage. Don't wait for the panicked email. Send them a message first: 'We know this is usually when things get busy, so we've already put together a checklist for you.'

You're remembered for making something easier before they even asked.

The behind-the-scenes proof

Maybe you've noticed the registration desk will bottleneck because of where it's positioned. You quietly change the layout, the event runs smoothly, and afterwards you tell them: 'You probably didn't notice this, but we moved registration because we anticipated a queue of around a hundred people at that point.'

Signature moments aren't necessarily grand gestures.

AFTER

The impact return

Ninety days after the event, instead of 'hope you're well,' go back with something useful: 'Your event generated four hundred new leads, and your international guests engaged particularly strongly with X. We've got an idea for how you could build on that next time.'

You've given them a reason to think about you again when they're not even currently buying.

A Signature Moment isn't necessarily a gift. It can be something you say, send, show, remember or do.

Map your touchpoints

[illegible]

Run it through the framework

Take one starred touchpoint and work it through all five parts. Don't skip to Expression, however tempting.

My touchpoint

1. Truth — what must this moment prove about us?

2. Timing — before, during or after?

3. Feeling — what should they feel?

4. Expression — what will we say, send, show, remember or do?

5. Filter — does it pass all four checks?

- True to us
- Meaningful to them
- Specific enough to retell
- Repeatable

Make it real

What will we test first?

Who will own it?

When will we test it?

How will we know it worked?

Big brands. Smaller ideas. The same principles.

You'll see a mix of big brands, UAE examples and smaller, more relatable businesses, alongside examples from our own work. That's deliberate.

The big brands show what's possible at scale. The smaller examples show that the same thinking can be applied without a huge marketing team or budget.

Don't copy the execution. Borrow the thinking, then scale it to your business.

EMIRATES

A flight becomes a keepsake.

Cabin crew take an instant family photograph and present it in an Emirates frame. The experience travels home with the customer.

The signature moment: They've turned something temporary into something customers can keep.

Borrow the idea: What happens during your service that could become something your client takes away with them?



EXPO 2020

A vast event becomes a personal quest.

The passport and pavilion stamps gave visitors a reason to participate, return and retain a physical memory afterwards.

The signature moment: A simple physical object turns passive visitors into participants.

Borrow the idea: Can you give your customer something to collect, complete, discover or build as they move through your experience?

ANANYA CARDS

An invitation becomes the first experience.

From handmade paper and wax seals to monograms, statement shapes and illustrations, the details can reflect a couple's story or culture, telling it long before the event begins.

The signature moment: The event starts before the event.

Borrow the idea: Look at the first touchpoint your customer receives. Don't just ask what information it needs to contain, ask what you could make them feel, discover or anticipate.



MARRIOTT

A corporate gift becomes a journey.

For a Dubai press event, a bespoke suitcase brought together five senses and five different restaurant experiences, turning a corporate takeaway into an experience guests could discover and remember.

The signature moment: The gift wasn't the takeaway. The experience was.

Borrow the idea: What could you combine from your own products, services or expertise to create something clients can discover?

CAREEM

Convenience feels local.

Frequent destinations are remembered, while local factors such as Iftar times influence the experience. Brand Truth is expressed through usefulness, not merchandise.

The signature moment: The brand demonstrates that it understands the customer's context rather than simply telling them that it does.

Borrow the idea: What could you anticipate, remember or personalise that would make your client's life easier?

FOOD & HOSPITALITY

Make the familiar unexpected.

Take something people recognise and introduce an unexpected flavour, cultural influence, presentation or combination. A familiar dish with an unexpected twist can create the same effect without requiring a huge production.

The signature moment: Familiar enough to understand. Unexpected enough to remember.

Borrow the idea: What could you combine, reinterpret or present differently in your own business?

EVENTS

Let people experience the expertise.

Live calligraphy, engraving, illustration, craft demonstrations, chef interactions and other live skills give guests a chance to see expertise happening in front of them and, where possible, participate.

The signature moment: Don't just let guests watch. Give them a reason to interact.

Borrow the idea: What expertise could you put in front of your guests rather than simply showing them the finished result?

The Signature Moment anatomy

Use this lens when looking at any touchpoint.

Ordinary

What would normally happen?

Unexpected

What could you change, add, remove or reinterpret?

Signature

What makes your version distinctly yours?

Impact

What will the customer feel, discover, remember or retell?

The goal isn't to make every touchpoint spectacular. It's to identify the moments where a small, considered shift creates an impact far bigger than the shift itself.

YOUR NEXT STEP

You now have the method

Five steps, four checks and a worksheet you can run against your own business.

The opportunity is not to add more gestures. It is to identify the touchpoints that matter, decide what each one needs to prove, and design moments that are true to your brand and meaningful to the person experiencing it.

Do this once for your strongest touchpoint. Then do it again for Before, During and After, until each phase has one moment worth remembering.

The strongest signature moments are often surprisingly simple. They feel natural because they are rooted in the brand, but memorable because someone has thought about them on purpose.

Exclusive: The Art of Being Remembered attendees

15% off your Signature Moments Power Up Hour. In one focused session, we'll identify the moments in your business with the greatest potential to become Signature Moments.

Bring one customer journey. Leave with three ownable Signature Moments and an action plan.

Book here today.
creative-id.com/signature-moments

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