



Astly Media
creating conversations

Writing for your Brand

Dan Pritchard, Astley Media



Writing for your Brand

Blogging

Creativity, Content and Community





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**CIPR
PRIDE
AWARDS
2017**

**GOLD
WINNER**



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Why write?

‘After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world’

Philip Pullman



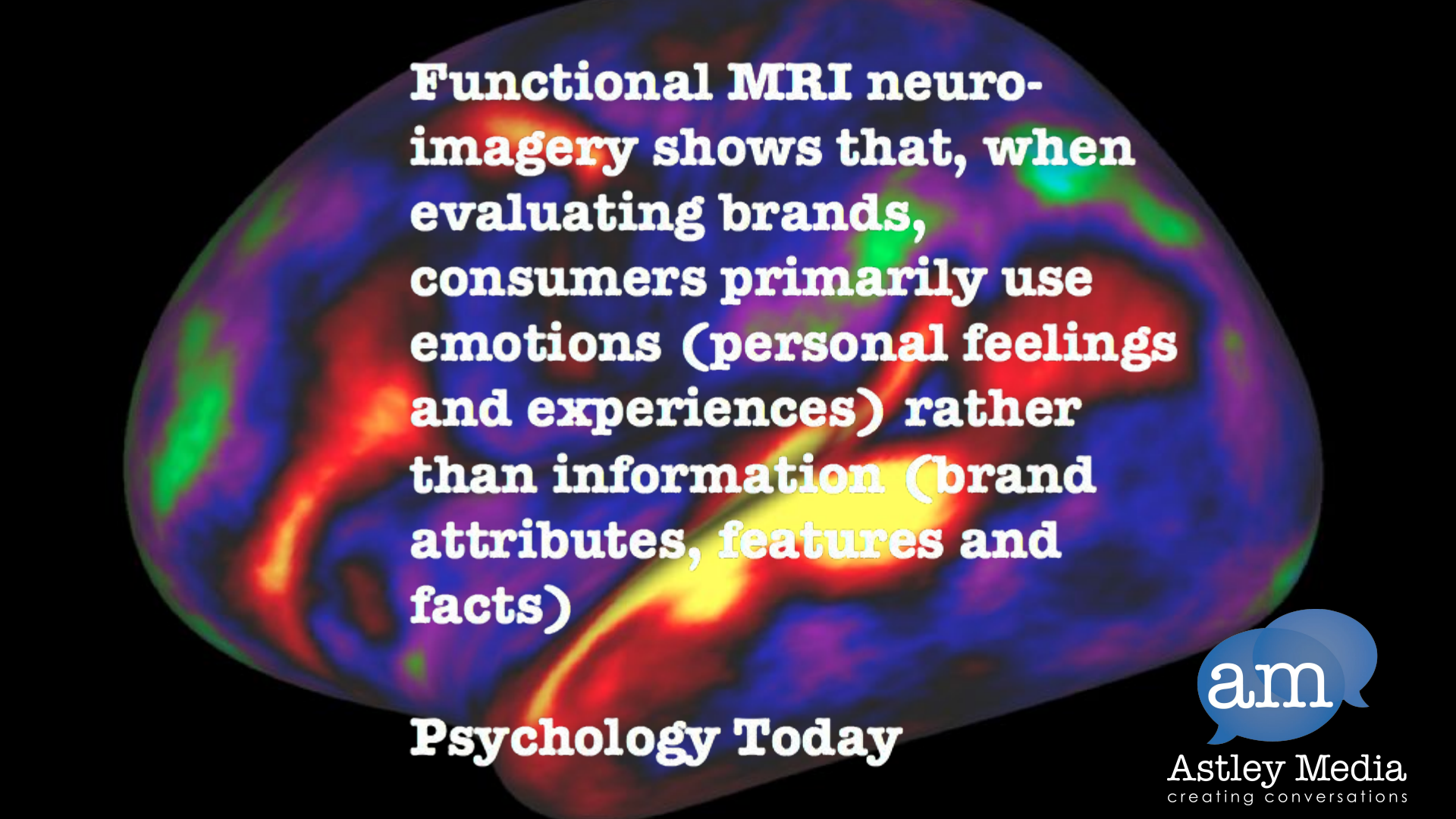
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The background of the image is a textured, reddish-brown cave wall. It is covered with numerous red ochre paintings. Some of the paintings are clearly identifiable as animals, such as a large bull or bison in the upper left, and several human-like figures with long, thin limbs, possibly representing hunters or dancers. The paintings are scattered across the wall, with some appearing more prominent than others.

**Ever since humans began
painting on cave walls,
telling stories has been
one of our most
fundamental
communication methods**



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**Functional MRI neuro-
imagery shows that, when
evaluating brands,
consumers primarily use
emotions (personal feelings
and experiences) rather
than information (brand
attributes, features and
facts)**

Psychology Today



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Today
1 Creativity
2 Content
3 Community



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Creativity and your brand



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Get creative - for you

- Explore the unknown. Routine and habit can squash creativity and stifle us
- Keep an idea book
- Use mind maps
- Design and foster an environment that encourages creativity
- Be creative away from work
- Find Your muse



Get creative - for you

- Think like an artist
- Be curious
- Create a vision board
- Do something - go for a walk!
- Collaborate
- Think about 'what ifs'

Get creative - for your brand

Subject matter that is different

Appeal to an audience that doesn't expect it

Fun

Generous

Different angle on a 'same-old'

Brave

Ridiculous

Competitions, quiz, surveys, weird stats...

Nostalgia

Future-looking

Collaborative

Forget about you





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Jack on Roamer courtesy of the Sonoma County Library





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bird

[Home](#) [Sunglasses](#) [Share Your Sun](#) [About us](#) [Contact](#) [Stories](#)



bird



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Content



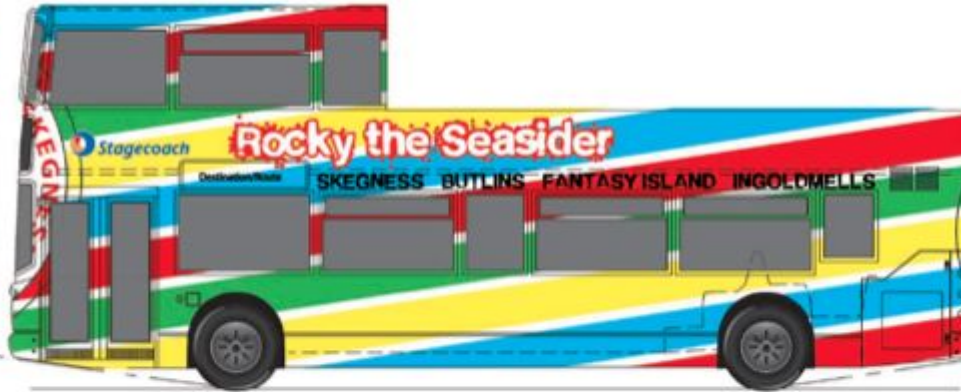
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HOLIDAYS ARE COMIN'



DEVON STYLE





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TIL 7901

Skegness Seaside

homepage

Hello...My Name is Rocky

Me and my friends the Seaside live in Skegness and love taking holidaymakers for a ride up and down the coast. I have been busy making this website so you can see what me and my friends get up to in Skegness.

We are known around Skegness as the Seaside and we all have open tops so everyone upstairs can enjoy the sunshine and see all the exciting things on their holiday.



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02:32 / 06:55

Singing Skegness coach drivers No Direction in good voice
DURATION: 06:55
Scott and Caria hear from Skegness coach drivers No Direction

Skegness Seaside

homepage

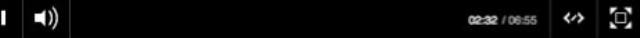
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Me and my friends the Seaside live in Skegness and love taking holidaymakers for a ride up and down the coast. I have been busy making this website so you can see what me and my friends get up to in Skegness.

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Singing Skegness coach drivers No Direction in good voice
DURATION: 06:55
Scott and Carla hear from Skegness coach drivers No Direction

Skegness Seasideers

homepage

Hello...My Name is Rocky

Me and my friends the Seasideers live in Skegness and love taking holidaymakers for a ride up and down the coast. I have been busy making this website so you can see what me and my friends get up to in Skegness.

We are known around Skegness as the Seasideers and we all have open tops so everyone upstairs can enjoy the sunshine and see all the exciting things on their holiday.



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What makes a great story?

Embrace the Human - Telling the story of a real person can transform the oversized into human-scale. It makes it real.

Accentuate the Positive - People connect with emotional content. The stronger the emotion, the better.

Track a Narrative - To capture people's attention, your story needs to have a dramatic narrative arc:

exposition > rising action > climax > falling action > denouement





Blogging



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Why blog?

Engage with potential customers

SEO benefits

Tell stories over time

Involve others

Brand awareness

New audiences based on subject

Campaign promotions &
competitions

Creating conversations about your
brand / subjects of interest

Traffic to website

Data

Connect to other bloggers



Blogging tips

Keep it real

Show passion

Be brave

Tell stories

Have fun



Blogging tips

Relevant to a niche audience

One topic

Consistent

Collaborative

Make it easy to read and share

Measure and capture data

Keywords, phrases, links

Call to action where appropriate

Great headline

Design it





LinkedIn

foursquare

YouTube



vimeo

LIVE JOURNAL

facebook



Blogger

my



twitter



flickr

Bēha



Blogging resources

ProBlogger.com - top tips

Hubspot - content marketing

SumoMe - collect email addresses

BuzzSumo - measure sharing

Etype - spelling and suggestions as you go



Use your blog to

Focus on niche areas

The 'inside' story

The wider story

Host competitions and promotions

Spread happiness

Encourage sharing - video, photos

Gather ideas

Shape your purpose

Tell different people's stories

Ask for help

Help others

Get people's views

Connect with other bloggers

Tune into the news agenda

Giveaways

Photo diary

Surveys



Use your blog to

BUILD
RELATIONSHIPS
COMMUNITY
CUSTOMERS





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SATURDAY, 7 MARCH 2016

MOTHER'S DAY WITHOUT MUM

'Are you doing anything with your mum for Mother's Day?' Oh god.

This question, when asked in general office conversation, used to bring on a kind of anxiety sweat and leave me wishing I could morph into Flat Stanley and escape under the door. Usually, a simple, 'Nah, not much!' would cover it and I'd swiftly make an 'urgent' phone call, praying the discussion would shift to last night's *I'm a Celebrity* by the time I had finished. The problem was, any level of truthful natter would have opened an uncomfortable can of worms. It turns out 'My mum's dead, actually,' is not a workplace crowd-pleaser.

It's not that I mind talking about it – I was fifteen when she died (the big C) and after you've said 'she died' enough times it becomes quite matter-of-fact. It just doesn't feel that matter-of-fact for other people, who invariably feel the need to say that they're sorry/they didn't know/it must be so hard, to which it is customary to respond that it's fine/it was a long time ago/you're not upset. And by this point the YouTube clip of the Ninja Cats which has been providing belly laughs all morning has been turned off as a mark of respect, as tumbleweed crawls towards the photocopier.

One time, the casual question thrown my way was, 'Help settle the debate Sarah – do you bother with Mother's Day flowers for your mum or do you agree they're a rip off?' Oh dear. *Think think think.*

'Erm...well, supermarket flowers aren't always as pricey, and you have to expect some mark-up on these commercial days.' Phew, awkwardness averted. (Much less awkward than the factual, 'I don't buy her flowers every year, just the years I'm taking a bunch to the spot we scattered her ashes.')

MOST POPULAR POSTS

LESSON 44: THE PARENTING RESOLUTIONS WE CAN'T KEEP (F**K YOU SUPERMUM)

MOTHER'S DAY WITHOUT MUM

LESSON 57: IT'S OKAY TO LOSE YOUR SHIT

SOMEBODY'S DAUGHTER, SOMEBODY'S SON

LESSON 57: SURVIVING SOFT PLAY

LESSON 46: TEN THINGS YOU SWORE YOU WOULDN'T DO AS PARENTS (BUT DO)

LESSON 40: TEN REASONS WHY TODDLERS ARE TOSSERS

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MUM WITH THE RED COAT

BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ 2016 (7)

▼ MARCH 2016 (2)

MOTHER'S DAY WITHOUT MUM

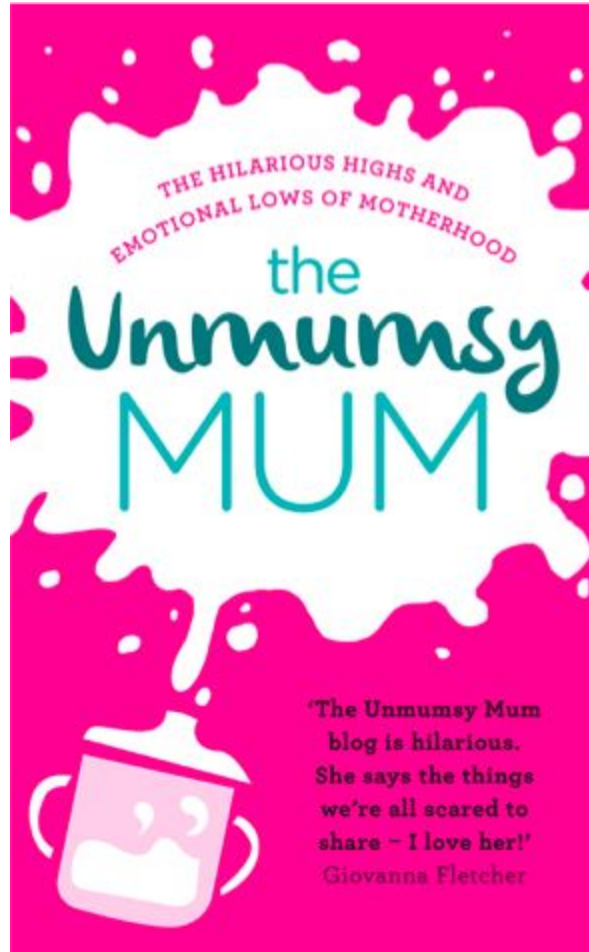
MOTHER'S DAY: POSH FACE CREAM AND PEAS

▶ FEBRUARY 2016 (3)

▶ JANUARY 2016 (2)



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THE HILARIOUS HIGHS AND
EMOTIONAL LOWS OF MOTHERHOOD

the
Unmumsy
MUM

'The Unmumsy Mum
blog is hilarious.
She says the things
we're all scared to
share - I love her!'
Giovanna Fletcher





GENERAL | hardbacks

		Last week	Weeks in top 10
1	HOW IT WORKS: THE MUM /Jason Hazeley & Joel Morris (M Joseph £6.99) An anatomy of motherhood, the latest edition in the humorous series 46,325 (91,560)	1	4
2	THE UNMUMSY MUM /The Unmumsy Mum (Bantam Press £12.99) Internet blogger takes us through the highs and lows of motherhood 8,790 (27,495)	2	4
3	HOW IT WORKS: THE WIFE /Jason Hazeley & Joel Morris (M Joseph £6.99) Children's book-style satire on the subject of wives 4,995 (256,695)	5	18
4	HOW IT WORKS: THE HUSBAND /Jason Hazeley & Joel Morris (M Joseph £6.99) Ladybird-like parody about husbands, with text and illustrations 4,795 (290,755)	3	19
5	BROKEN VOWS /Tom Bower (Faber £20) A dramatic re-evaluation of the former prime minister Tony Blair in and out of power 4,240 (4,240)	-	1
6	MAKING IT UP AS I GO ALONG /Marian Keyes (M Joseph £14.99) Humorous observations on modern life from the Irish novelist 3,390 (9,030)	11	1
7	THE LADYBIRD BOOK OF MINDFIII NESS		



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This cool idea is a great example of cost-effective PR

Published on February 26, 2018



Marc Astley | [✓ Following](#)

CEO of award-winning marketing/PR/design firm Astley Media. Founde...

[39 articles](#)



9



1



I booked in to a Premier Inn just a few days ago and came across a great example of a heartfelt gesture which was actually a brilliant PR exercise.

The team there had simply left a note warning drivers about the impending cold weather and left a bottle of deicer and a bunch of scrapers for people to borrow.

Genius!

This idea demonstrated that the staff a) cared about and b) thought about their customers.

Not only that, it would potentially improve safety on the roads.

I asked the receptionist just who was behind the initiative and he explained that the management team were given a small budget each

month to spend creatively.

Another example of their thoughtfulness was a bunch of colouring crayons and pads for children to take to their rooms.

I love the simplicity of these ideas, and the fact that they were not, in origin, PR driven.

In fact, I cannot remember any of the marketing messages in my room or around the hotel... but, I have told everyone who will listen about the note and the de-icer.

Step forward the staff at Premier Inn Fitzroy Road, Exeter.

I salute you!



Writing



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Just do it

Step 1: Understand your audience

Step 2: Start with a topic and working title

Step 3: Write an intro (and make it captivating)

Step 4: Organize your content

Step 5: Write!

Step 6: Edit/proofread your post, and fix your formatting



Remember

Timeless content - sticks around

Be Truthful

Reveal your voice

Have a point and conviction

Be useful and informative

Be patient and learn



Tips

Show not tell

Emotional moments beat facts

Nail the headline and intro

Short sentences and paragraphs

Build in ways for readers to get involved

Check your facts and spelling

Get a second opinion (test: makes you stop, think, laugh?)

End with a call to action



Your CD has been gently taken from our CD Baby shelves with sterilized contamination-free gloves and placed onto a satin pillow.

A team of 50 employees inspected your CD and polished it to make sure it was in the best possible condition before mailing.

Our packing specialist from Japan lit a candle and a hush fell over the crowd as he put your CD into the finest gold-lined box that money can buy.

We all had a wonderful celebration afterwards and the whole party marched down the street to the post office where the entire town of Portland waved "Bon Voyage!" to your package, on its way to you, in our private CD Baby jet on this day, Thursday, July 5th.

I hope you had a wonderful time shopping at CD Baby. We sure did. Your picture is on our wall as "Customer of the Year." We're all exhausted but can't wait for you to come back to CDBABY.COM!!

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Sigh...

--

Derek Sivers, president, CD Baby
the little store with the best new independent music
<http://cdbaby.com> cdbaby@cdbaby.com (503)595-3000





Community



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Tips

Find your people

Create a 'neutral zone'

Give value

Listen and learn

Share

Collaborate

Find the right platform / channel





CHARTERED INSTITUTE
OF PUBLIC RELATIONS



FT2G Partners



BARCLAYS



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PKF FRANCISCLARK

Chartered accountants & business advisers



buywithconfidence.gov.uk
DEVON'S SHOPPING & TOURIST TRADING STANDARDS



digital, smart, ethical



Supporters



Universities of Bath, Bristol,
Exeter, Southampton & Surrey



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ASTLEY MEDIA INSPIRES



Previous Inspires' Events

November 2017: Flourish - a vision for a prosperous future

October 2017: The road to resilience one-day event

September 2017: The road to resilience business breakfast



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- Events
- Social media
- Marketing campaigns
- Facebook advertising
- Award entries

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