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ROY PRICE

Director, Amazon Studios

HOW TO RETHINK CONTENT CREATION



When Roy Price lived in Los Angeles, developing animated TV shows such as *Kim Possible* for Disney, he followed what he calls the “guru system,” meaning “one exalted tastemaker curating programming.” That’s the Hollywood way. At Amazon Studios, the mega-retailer’s upstart entertainment production arm that aims to create original movies (likely for Amazon’s video-on-demand business), Price has embraced an even older system—the Homeric oral tradition. “Stories were sung aloud and if people hated them, they made changes over time,” he says. Price encourages aspiring screenwriters to submit work and allow anyone to modify or vote on it. If Amazon chooses to produce the work (it has a development deal with Warner Bros.), the writer gets a payoff. “I imagine that Homer took into account customer feedback,” Price says. “It’s the original method of developing content.”

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LAURA MATHER

Cofounder, Chief Strategy Officer, Silver Tail Systems

HOW TO THINK LIKE YOUR ENEMY

CRIMINAL THINKING TEST

Name: Laura Mather

How do you scam a company into renting you a car for \$20?

I'd probably get a prepaid card that only had \$20 on it, and mess with the mag stripe so they couldn't swipe it. Then I'd try to convince them the card was fine and that it's an emergency. I'd bring my baby and take his pacifier out so he'd cry, and say, 'I need to take him to the doctor, and I'd offer to leave the card with them. Play on their sympathy. I'd have enough to make it look legitimate. A frazzled mother is not someone who would defraud you.'

At left is Laura Mather's own answer to an interview question she poses to job applicants at her website security firm (which works with ING Direct and StubHub, among others). Silver Tail Systems uniquely maps all users' behavior at a site—then spots the crooks. To do that, Mather needs a team that can think like the bad guys. “Before I meet a prospective new client, I essentially do what criminals would do,” she says. When she unveils how she and her team could unhinge a prospect's site, “people usually say, ‘Wow, yeah, we need what you have.’”

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JESSICA ALBA

Cofounder,
The Honest CompanyHOW TO WOO AN
ECO-CONSCIOUS CROWD

Jessica Alba is not a scientist, nor has she played one on TV. But she is a mom, and she's done a lot of research. “I read a book called *Healthy Child Healthy World* when I was seven-and-a-half months pregnant, and my eyes were opened to all of the toxic chemicals that are in everyday household and baby products,” Alba says. “So I went to the author of that book, Christopher Gavigan, and I hounded him for a year. I said, ‘I appreciate you've given me a handbook, but you haven't given me a solution. Let's make the solution.’” Together, they developed a baby-care and household-cleaner company eco-friendly enough to calm her nerves, with a flagship product that's every new parent's largest recurring purchase. “We felt like the disposable-diaper industry was the greatest area of opportunity for innovation,” Alba says.

WIN ON THE BASICS

Consumers often forgive eco-friendly products for small failings, like deodorants that fade by evening. But diapers can't leak. Honest creates absorbency with a wheat, corn, and wood-fluff mix and did independent testing—finding, it claims, that its diapers achieve up to 35% more total absorption than conventional and other eco-friendly diapers.

SPEAK THROUGH DESIGN

Eco-conscious parents are often young and hip, so you can't just sell them on an ingredient list. Honest's product design is influenced by French soap makers and designers like Alexander McQueen. “You spend more time changing your kid's bum every single day than anything else,” Alba says. “Why not have it be more pleasant?”

PRIORITIZE PROPERLY

The diaper is more than 85% biodegradable, and though Alba relies on her science-minded team for the specifics, her direction is more gut based: She cares most about cleansing the materials that touch babies' skin. “I do love the planet, but the health of my child comes first,” she says. Now the company is working to green the rest, like the tab that fastens the diaper closed.

HIDE NOTHING

Alba's consumer expects purity of product, so her website keeps the details honest, too: Paper for fluff comes from certified sustainable forests; its baby wipes are biodegradable. “I wanted a company that's transparent,” says Alba. “I was sick of people saying, ‘This is our green line, it costs a dollar more,’ but it's the same stuff that's in everything else. They deleted one fragrance, but it still has tons of carcinogens. Like, really?”

Alba and her youngest daughter, Haven, strike a pose in Honest's runway-ready patterned diapers.

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