

I'm a Hyphenate; How Do I Market Myself?

All right, gorgeous ones, let's dive on in. Now, as always, I'm assuming you did your homework after listening to the MP3. No? Then do it now. I want you showing up to this PDF with your silos identified, a sense of your brand umbrella, and the ability to spot tasks as urgent vs. important whenever they land on your lap. That categorization and compartmentalization will be a lifesaver when it comes to managing your hyphenate lifestyle, and we'll need that structure to come up with a plan for how to market yourself effectively as the ninja you are!

So, what's your oxygen? When you're looking at your silos, what's the one that—if you were told you could no longer pursue it, ever—would feel like having your breath taken away?

That's where you're gonna spend your energy first. Because growing that thing that you cannot live without (whether it's acting, writing, singing, producing, directing, drawing, painting, costuming, coaching others, or any other creative career) will bring prosperity to the rest of your pursuits, faster.

Let's do a profit clarity exercise adapted from Marie Forleo, but instead of looking at what makes you the most money (as we well know that creative careers can sometimes be "copy, credit, meals" in nature for a long time), let's look at how much time you spend on it, how much joy you derive from it, and how effective its impact is on your overall creative career. Guys, I'm gonna warn you: This is a powerful analysis, and I recommend you do it at least once a year.

Lemme share mine with you first, then provide a blank spreadsheet for you to use.

Activity	Time Invested	Joy Derived	Overall Impact
writing	20 hrs./wk.	generally high	immeasurably high, especially due to reach of masses, which gratifies me amazingly
private coaching	5 hrs./wk.	very high	financially high, reach-of-masses low (deep impact, but only to one person at a time)
casting	5 hrs./wk.	varies based on drama level of the crew	potentially large amounts of stress if my picker is not great
admin	20 hrs./wk.	low	first thing to go once I can hire the best business manager on the planet

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From that small sampling of the many activities that make up my life in any given week, you can see that I do not enjoy the admin, but it's a huge part of my week. I *have to* pay bills and collect on debts and schedule meetings and manage my team's to-do lists. And as soon as that can all be outsourced, it will, because while it's important, its overall value compared to what I can put out into the world, weekly, in the same amount of time spent writing free columns or resource downloads or full-on GIVES at social networking platforms is low. Not ZERO, but low. And since there's someone else out there who could rock my world at chasing money or maintaining task lists, I know that's the first to go.

Now you. Get specific. Plays? Voiceover? CD workshops? Sending out postcards? Writing scripts for yourself or for others? Shooting self-produced works? Acting class? Auditioning? Staged readings? Networking? Masterminding? Songwriting? Your survival jobs? All of it. Plop it in and get specific!

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So, let's go back to me. I need to spend time growing the private coaching side of my business because it only takes 5 hrs./wk. but pays very well. Yes, I dislike that it prevents me from helping as many people at once as, say, my writing or speaking does, but if it pays so well that I can create more time to tour and give talks for free, that was a smart use of my hyphenate energy. Further, I need to budget to hire an office manager and let everything admin-related be something I pay someone else to do, because in that amount of time, I could DOUBLE the amount of content I could create for the masses, which brings me much joy. See that?

How about you? Now that you've analyzed your silos, where can you smartly focus some energy in order to grow the thing that will change your life for the better, quickly? Let's get specific. Fill this out:

**I pledge to put more energy into _____ because
it will help me sooner farm out _____. I will
give myself _____ months of living this pledge before expecting results.**

That last part is important, because you won't see results in a week or even a month. You need to invest in yourself as if you are the stock market. Make a smart investment and ride the waves 'til you see the payoff you knew would come.

Using your show bible and this adapted profit clarity exercise to really think about where you'd like to best invest your time will be incredibly powerful. If you're learning that postcards to so-and-so's casting office are resulting in call-ins more frequently than CD workshops with such-and-such casting assistant, that's easy analysis. Spend energy on what is WORKING. That will get *you* working sooner!

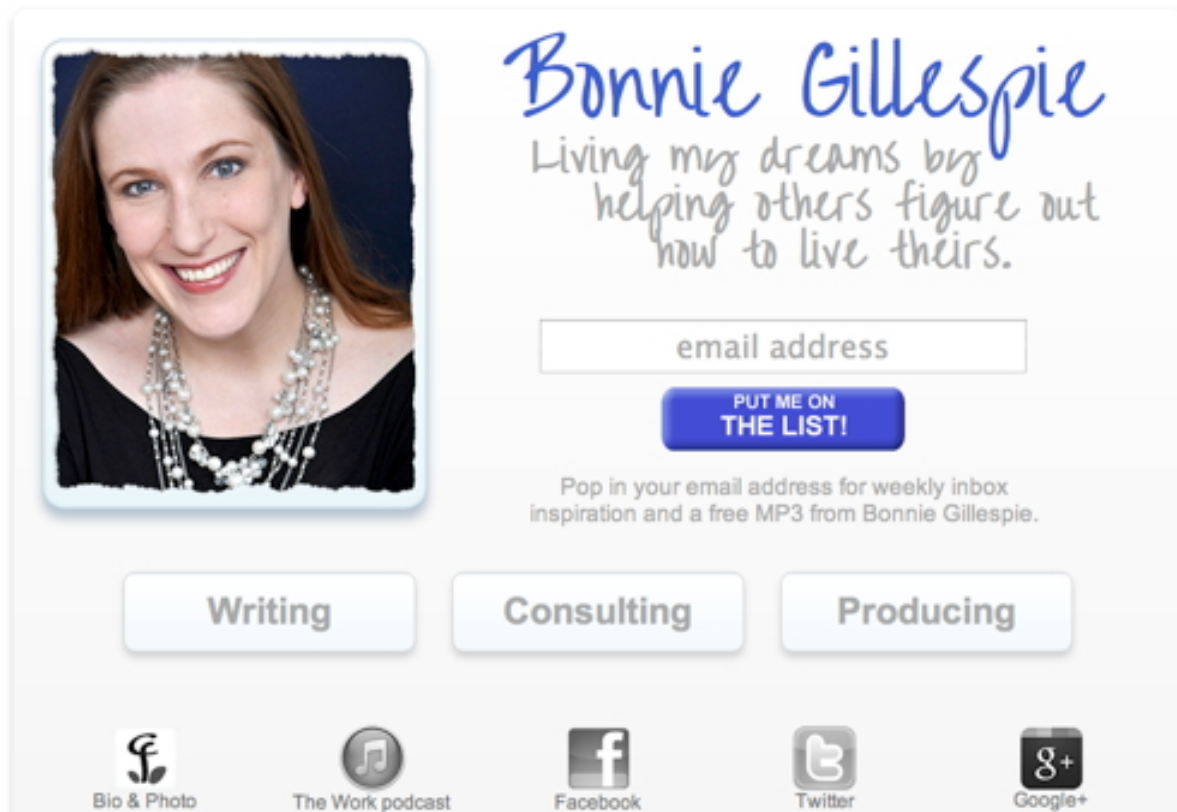
Yes, this means you have to really track what's happening in your career and where your efforts are being spent and to what end, but it's *soooooo* worth it, in the long haul. I say this as someone who has written weekly columns for actors since 1999 and who has coached actors since 2002 and who has cast indies since 2003 but who never once analyzed where the energy, time, and investment was best spent 'til 2013. It changed everything, I tell ya!

So, let's go back to that whole brand umbrella concept. You have all these silos. Did you examine their thruline? Again, I'll use me, because it's the best data I've got! I write, I cast, I produce, I tour to speak, I teach, I coach one-on-one, and what every little bit of that has in common is this: If I'm helping someone else have an a-ha moment about how they can move their career forward through something they'd not ever considered trying, I am totally stoked. Whether it's direction in the casting session, sharing a Bonnieism with a new population of students, or creating a branding breakthrough in a private, it's all linked from that same thruline.

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And whether you land on my website as a producer who'd like to hire me to cast for you, a content curator who'd like to hire me to write for you, or an actor who'd like to huddle with me in a group or one-on-one, you GET the thruline, and I give you a "choose your own adventure" map for the silos. Here, take a look at [BonnieGillespie.com](#) for a visual.



Each of those buttons (writing, consulting, producing) is a drop-down, with items that provide further detail depending on what you're seeking when you show up to the site. Not sure what you want? Join the mailing list or connect via social networking, lurk a bit, then get clear on what I offer that may ring your bells.

Now, of course, there's a challenge for you as an actor, because when you create a landing page that lists acting and writing and directing and producing and singing and modeling, and, and, and, you run the risk of telling your potential buyers that you really don't care HOW it happens; you just wanna be famous.

**Here's how you fix that: Nothing you share is about what YOU want in life
—it's about how you can best serve those who crave what you've got.**

Your thruline is the type of stories you tell. Whether you've written those stories, acted in them, sung about them, or directed others in them, your stories all have a thruline that clicks for that brand

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umbrella of yours. The silos are not so unique that buyers are confused (or worried you're a fame whore). Everything is a part of the whole.

Ninja!

Now, I mentioned in the MP3 that I was going to share a bit about how we're not plate spinners, but instead master chefs. Here we go. It's short and sweet (and includes vid here:

<http://youtu.be/UXwMae5-9qo?t=12m2s>, if you'd like to watch me talk about this during a recent panel discussion for Ms. in the Biz).

Whether we're hyphenates who are juggling acting, writing, producing, directing, survival jobs, and parenting all at once or we're "just actors" who are dealing with all the work of marketing, brand-building, craft coaching, networking, and targeting, we've definitely got a lot going on. No doubt.

When you watch a cooking show, you see these chefs running throughout the kitchen, prepping one thing while moving another thing into its final stages, chopping one ingredient while bringing something else to a boil. They're frantic but in control, most of the time. They're preheating the oven but they don't take their focus away from the sautéing that will go awry if they let it sit, unattended.

They're creating a MEAL. A delicious meal filled with several dishes made of many ingredients—and the sophistication of an orchestra conductor who knows exactly when to bring each element into the foreground for its solo.

As creatives, that's what we're doing. We're crafting a LIFE that's filled with daily practices, marketing strategies, self-produced content to show the buyers what we do best, and of course the delicious craft and love for storytelling that brings the whole experience together.

The next time you feel like you're spinning plates, remember that you're actually crafting a feast for everyone to enjoy. Take a breath. Take a step back. See what needs your immediate attention next. And keep on cookin'!

Finally, because you are going to sometimes create something for one element of your delicious meal, sometimes serve ONE of your silos only, I want you to run everything through that oh-so-popular brand filter to be sure that if *this* thing (blog post, MP3, status update on social networking, postcard, flyer, one-sheet, website page, cover letter, etc.) is the ONLY thing a target buyer sees, it does a great job representing brand YOU.

Why does everything I create have a footer with places to get more info about my various silos? Because no matter what it is you land upon, I want you steered to the source for the choose-your-own-adventure website, so you can get exactly what you crave. So, does your social media "about me" cover the whole story? Is your most recent rant on your blog at least couched in on-brand lingo so the

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buyers get you, despite the detour? When you're promoting that next play you've directed, are you including your URL on the postcard so that buyers can also check out your acting demo reel if they so desire?

Never serve a single silo more than you serve the brand umbrella, my friends. That is what endures, no matter how you're budgeting your time to grow the whole dang thing on any given day.

Please submit your questions for our follow-up Q&A MP3 immediately for the interactive subscription of **SMFA Essentials**! I'm so excited to help you through any sticking issues regarding your hyphenate status and how to market yourself. Send your email to: ninjaassistant@cricketfeet.com with the subject line: **Hyphenate Question**, so we can easily get you in the queue to help out with your questions, before we head into next month's awesome interactive **SMFA Essentials** module. Yippee!

I really hope you're feeling more excited and inspired by your creative career every day, beautiful people! Next month's interactive module is called **Clearing the Creative Clutter**. There are times when the busy-ness of it all gets overwhelming and the muse has trouble getting our attention. In this module, we'll break down some deceptively simple practices that will keep you creatively centered and always moving forward in this glorious career we've chosen. Ah... you know I loves me some mindset goodness!

We are ridiculously lucky to have a life in which we get to live our dreams, every day. Being blissed out, confident, and capable of achieving your every goal along the way is totally do-able. Unless you're SURE it's impossible, every little dream you hear whispering to you is absolutely, totally attainable. The *Self-Management for Actors* principles **work**. **Bonnie Gillespie is living her dreams by helping others figure out how to live theirs.** She casts SAG-AFTRA indie projects such as the zombie smash hit *BITE ME*, which made the leap from web to TV with **Lionsgate**. Bonnie's weekly column, **The Actors Voice**, runs at Actors Access and her podcast, **The Work**, is available on iTunes. Her books include *Casting Qs: A Collection of Casting Director Interviews*, *Acting Qs: Conversations with Working Actors*, *SMFA: The Ninja Within*, and *Self-Management for Actors: Getting Down to (Show) Business*, which has been named one of **The Top Ten Best Books on Acting Ever Written** and featured at the Tom Cruise actor resource blog. Bonnie coaches and facilitates seminars based on this top-selling book and has traveled internationally—to demystify the casting process and the business side of pursuing an artistic career—as a guest instructor at colleges, universities, actors' unions, and private acting studios. Bonnie has been featured on *Good Morning America*, *BBC Breakfast*, *UTV-Ireland*, *ARD-1 Germany*, *Sunrise Australia*, *CBC Radio One*, *BBC Radio 5*, *E! Online*, and in the *LA Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Stay plugged in with a visit to BonnieGillespie.com.



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