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The Show the Horse Framework

Revealing Overlooked Assets and Building the Systems That Turn Them into Value

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Developed by Orin France

Abstract

The Show the Horse Framework is a systems-level method for identifying valuable assets that are present but under-realized because the systems surrounding them fail to present them clearly, make them understandable to their intended audiences, or convert attention into measurable value.

The framework distinguishes visibility from presentation, centers the protection of the source asset, and examines how spectacle, internal incentives, organizational habit, and missed controlled opportunities can obstruct audience understanding. It organizes analysis around an operating cycle connecting the source asset, presentation system, audience understanding, engagement, value creation, measurement, and improvement.

Seven diagnostic questions support practical application across racing, media, governance, consulting, and other institutional settings. The framework is designed to move analysis beyond impression and unsupported criticism by identifying measurable presentation criteria, exposing system drift, and creating feedback loops that strengthen value realization over time.

Keywords

Show the Horse Framework; systems analysis; systems thinking; presentation systems; source assets; asset realization; audience understanding; audience utility; engagement; value creation; operational measurement; controlled opportunities; organizational drift; media strategy

Core Premise

Organizations often possess valuable assets that are visible but not truly presented, understood, measured, or converted into value.

The asset exists.

The value does not.

The missing element is the presentation system.

The Primary Diagnostic Question

What valuable asset is already present, and what system is preventing people from understanding and valuing it?

The Core Conversion Chain

Asset



Presentation



Understanding



Engagement



Value

Failure at any stage reduces value realization.

Principle 1

Visibility Is Not Presentation

People often assume:

If viewers can see something, it has been shown.

The framework says:

Visibility and presentation are different.

A horse can be on screen and still not be presented.

A company can have a website and still fail to present its capabilities.

A government can announce a project and still fail to make its value understood.

A person can possess extensive experience and still fail to present the capability that experience represents.

Principle 2

The Source Asset Must Be Protected

Every system has a primary asset.

In racing:

The horse.

In media:

The information.

In governance:

The institution.

In consulting:

The capability.

The framework asks:

What is the source asset?

Then:

Is the system protecting it?

Or:

Is the system distracting from it?

Principle 3

Spectacle Can Obscure Value

More cameras, graphics, production, and activity do not necessarily create more value.

Sometimes they reduce value.

Why?

Because spectacle can displace understanding.

Activity can create the appearance of communication without actually helping the audience recognize, understand, or value the underlying asset.

Principle 4

Controlled Opportunities Matter Most

The framework gives particular attention to controlled opportunities because they provide the clearest test of system performance.

Examples include:

- horses circling behind the starting gate;
- paddock presentation;
- the parade ring;
- formal introductions;
- planned demonstrations;
- scheduled public communications;
- predictable moments of audience attention.

The framework asks:

Did the system use the controlled opportunity?

Or:

Did it waste it?

This principle extends far beyond racing.

When the organization controls the timing, access, subject, and method of presentation, the result offers a particularly useful test of whether the system is working.

Principle 5

Value Must Be Measurable

The framework converts observation and criticism into operational measures.

Instead of relying on vague complaints, it asks:

Can the outcome be measured?

Examples include:

- field completion;
- identification integrity;
- useful exposure;
- synchronization;
- audience comprehension;
- engagement;
- conversion;
- repeated missed opportunities.

The framework seeks:

Operational metrics, not unsupported impressions.

Measurement does not eliminate expert judgment. It makes the basis of that judgment visible, consistent, and testable.

Principle 6

Audience Utility Is the Test

The framework repeatedly asks:

What does the audience need?

Not:

What does the producer enjoy?

Not:

What looks impressive internally?

Not:

What tradition prefers?

Not:

What is most convenient for the organization?

The framework evaluates presentation through audience utility.

A presentation system succeeds when the intended audience can recognize the asset, understand its relevance, remain engaged, and act on that understanding where appropriate.

Principle 7

Systems Drift Toward Internal Priorities

Over time, organizations can begin optimizing for:

- habit;
- workflow;
- internal incentives;
- production preferences;
- departmental convenience;
- institutional routine.

The system gradually begins serving itself rather than the intended audience.

The framework exists to identify and correct this drift.

It asks whether internal priorities have displaced the audience outcome the system was originally created to produce.

Principle 8

Conversion Is the Real Goal

Presentation is the conversion mechanism, not the final objective.

The ultimate question is:

How does an existing asset become understood, engaged with, and converted into value?

Examples:

Horse

Horse

- recognition
- understanding
- connection
- engagement
- value

Broadcast

Broadcast

- attention
- understanding
- engagement
- distribution, sponsorship, or public value

Institution

Institution

- understanding
- trust
- legitimacy
- value

Capability

Capability

- presentation
- evidence
- opportunity
- value

Presentation creates the conditions through which the asset can be recognized and understood.

Understanding creates the conditions for engagement.

Engagement creates the possibility of value.

The Operating Cycle

SOURCE ASSET



PRESENTATION SYSTEM



AUDIENCE UNDERSTANDING



ENGAGEMENT



VALUE CREATION



MEASUREMENT



IMPROVEMENT

The return path is essential.

Improvement is not the end of the process. What the organization learns through measurement must feed back into the presentation system.

The cycle then begins again with a stronger system for presenting and protecting the source asset.

Seven Diagnostic Questions

The framework continuously asks:

1. **What is the source asset?**
2. **Is it being properly presented?**
3. **Is the audience able to understand it?**
4. **Is meaningful engagement occurring?**
5. **Is value being created?**
6. **Can the result be measured?**

7. What controlled opportunities are being wasted?

The Framework in One Statement

The Show the Horse Framework identifies valuable assets that are already present, examines whether the systems surrounding them make those assets understandable and useful to their intended audiences, and develops measurable presentation systems that convert overlooked capability into value.

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Version 1.0: This file was revised only to add citation and identification details. The substantive content is unchanged.