

# The New Spike

**Brand evolution**  
January 2011

# Assignment

**Define a new, broader, bigger Spike**

**Identify our unique story and service**

**Map what it'll take to make it real**

# Agenda

## 1 Context

Four truths about men and Spike

## 2 Strategy

The Spike metastory, service and principles

## 3 Action

The principles applied to content, sales, marketing  
Specific examples

# 1 Context

# Inputs

**1-on-1 interviews with the whole Spike team**

**Interviews with media buyers**

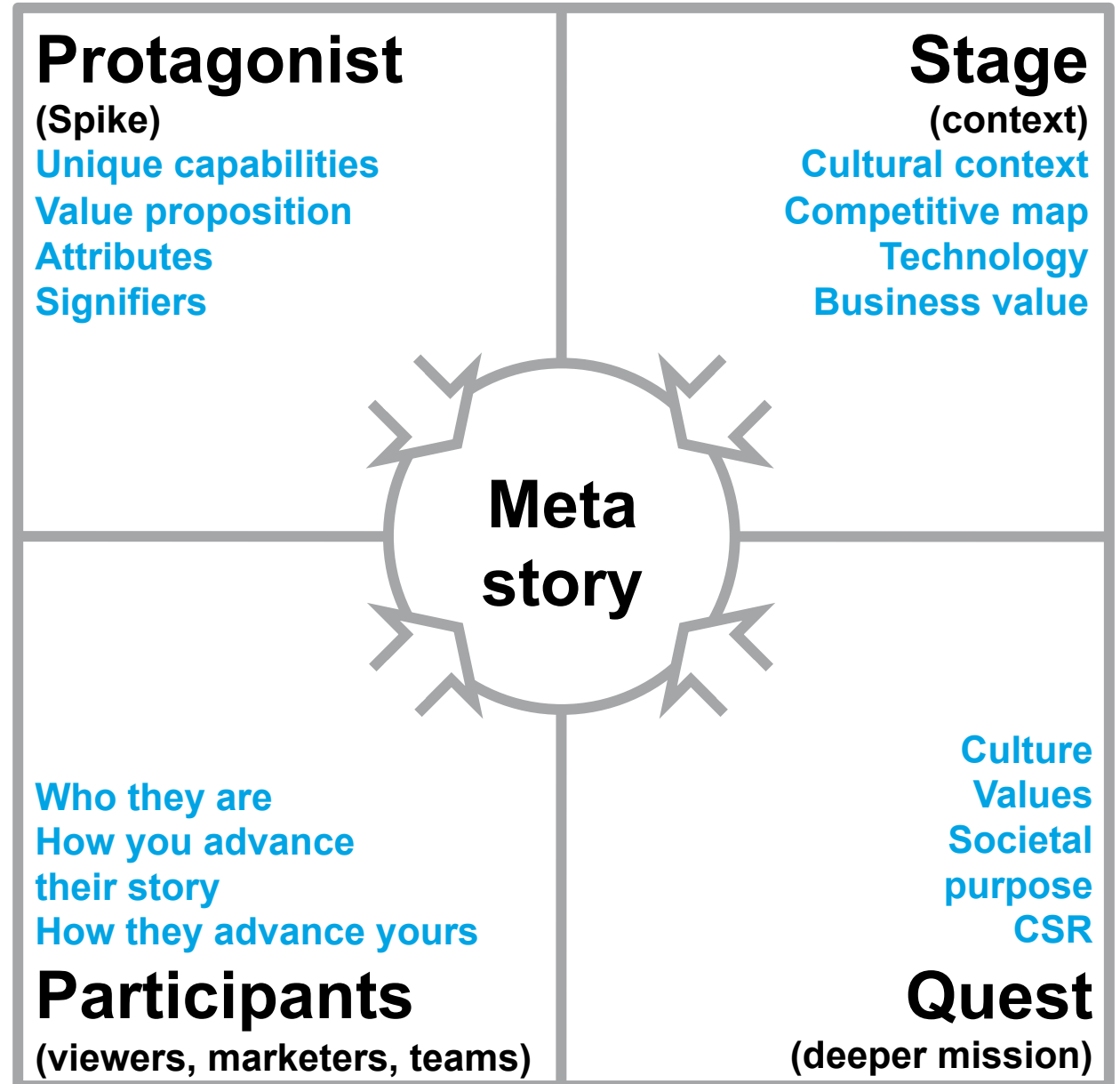
**Audits of on-air, on-line and app offers**

**Analysis of ratings and research**

**Analysis of external research on the state of men,  
the competition and technology**

**Workshops with internal team and various experts**

# Approach: Analyze Spike's situation from four perspectives



# Participants

## Identity crisis

Men are at a crossroads, as women's sense of place and identity have evolved, men's have remained static. The economic and societal changes such as single parent households, and reduction in the need for skilled labor have left many men and boys unclear about what it means to be a man.

## New roles but no roadmap

Men are helping out around the house more, spending more time with the kids, but see no reduction in expectations around the workplace, or society on the whole.

## A man and his toys

Men spend a lot of money and time with their toys – 15 hours a week with TV, 19 hours per week on the net. Need for the brand to live cross platform is paramount.

## Being the man

Men are constantly looking for ways to compete and test their skills – Video Games, Sports, Fantasy Sports, Card Games, etc. Also growth in 'skilling-up' 22% working on cars, 17% are taking on woodshop. Supports the 'info-tainment' idea. (ex. Bar-Rehab)

# Stage

## **The Mancession**

Since 2000, the only men who have seen their incomes grow are 55 and older. Men have lost 70% of the jobs and 75% of the money since the recession began. More women than men on the US payroll for the first time in history. Women get 58% of college degrees and 61% of masters degrees.

## **Man up**

There's a trend toward the times when men ruled the roost (advertising and entertainment). Retail spaces that capture a time when a man's home was his castle. Fashion trend more about hunting than office (flannel).

## **Rise of geek chic**

Social Network, GOOGLE Boys – the new heroes.

## **Getting back to masculinity**

Men are looking for purpose, expressing their masculinity by taking on old skills and making them new again; fishing (Deadliest Catch), Chopping down trees (Axe Man), Survival (Man vs. Wild), cooking, butchering, shop craft, etc.



# **Protagonist: Business issues**

**Slow growth**

**Narrow target audience...**

**...and thus ratings challenges**

**Need to capitalize on digital opportunities**

**Need to identify Spike 3.0**

# Protagonist: Brand perceptions

## **At best a stereotype, at worst a caricature**

There's a sense in the media buying world that as the brand has evolved it has become less about celebrating what's great about men, and more about playing into guys' base instincts.

## **Unmet opportunity to evolve**

There is a universal desire and cultural need to build a network that RESPECTS and LIKES men. A network that advertisers want to be PART of that men and the women that love them turn to, and that people can be proud defenders of.

# **Protagonist: A need to evolve**

## **To stay relevant to men today**

In a new context, informed by the economic and cultural developments

## **To enable business growth**

Attracting a broader age range of men, and not turning away women

Being seen by marketers as the go-to place to reach men

## **To compete in a multi-platform environment**

Defining an integrated offering that works across devices

# Quest: Cultural relevance, real usefulness

**“Permission  
to be a guy”**



**“Here’s how  
to be a man”**

**A TV channel  
with website**



**A truly cross-  
platform brand  
with utility**

# 2 Strategy

## The New Spike metastory

**Spike is a service  
that equips guys  
to be better men**

## The New Spike metastory

**Spike is a service  
that equips guys  
to be better men –  
with content, tools,  
and community.**

**The New Spike service**

**Utilitainment**



# The New Spike service

## **Utilitainment – like men – is purposeful.**

It enables men to explore, laugh, learn and grow, through humor, drama, sports and real-life experiences. It's entertainment that has utility.

Spike doesn't just bring men reality – we share authentic stories with real stakes, about themes that change men's lives: money, pride, love, survival. Coupled with information guys can use to become better men.

Spike doesn't just bring men comedy – we laugh at life through a uniquely male lens, celebrating men in all their amazing and heartbreaking glory.

Spike doesn't just bring men sports – we bring them stories of the true, raw and sometimes hard realities of competition.

Utilitainment crosses ages, lifestyles, cultures.

It also crosses screens – letting men access Spike wherever they want.

# The New Spike principles

Brand, like character, is revealed through **action**.  
And our principles guide our brand's actions.  
They're a combination of values, mantra and manual.

We won't always meet all of them.  
But we use them as our guide –  
in decisions about shows, sales strategies,  
marketing, events and partnerships.

# The New Spike principles

- 1 Spike celebrates what it is to be a man**
- 2 Spike equips guys to be better men**
- 3 Spike is always intriguing to women**
- 4 Spike looks for the wink**
- 5 Spike develops cross-device experiences**
- 6 Spike builds community**

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**We celebrate manhood in our content and all the services that surround it. We believe:**

Everyday men are proud and heroic. Confident, witty, strong and capable.

They love risk: trying new things, failing gloriously, brushing themselves off and getting up again.

They don't always know where they're going, but they always have fun getting there.

They are funny, compassionate and sexy, even when they are being big kids.

They are often wrong but never in doubt.

They love to compete with each other and themselves.

They are smart and ingenious, always finding a silver lining in dire circumstances.

Life would be dull without them.

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**Our service is Utilitainment, equipping men with content, tools and community.**

**We always look at the world through a male lens, and build purpose and utility around our content. Giving them tools to explore, play, compete and put their wits to use.**

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**Spike is for men and the women that love them.**

**She loves him for being a provider, a clown, a lover, for never giving up and making her feel great even when everything isn't going to plan.**

**He loves her for laughing at his exploits, regardless of outcome, standing by his side in thick and thin, worrying if he still finds her sexy, and always being thankful that men are from Mars and women are from Venus.**

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**Spike content always includes moments of humor, based on a shared men's world view.**

**Our content never gets too worthy or serious.**

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**Our audience is an early adopter of new technology. And so are we. We make Spike live in digital environments, we innovate and experiment. We partner with new technology platforms to reduce our risk and enhance our brand.**



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**We offer a place for viewers to respond, act or join in.**

**We use social media to create and develop conversations about what it means to be a man today.**

**We invite brands to be part of providing tools and building community.**

# 3

# Action

# How do the principles work in practice?

**For content**

**For ad sales**

**For marketing**

# Principles for content

## 1 Spike celebrates what it is to be a man

**Our content is centered on a celebration and exploration of what it is to be a man**

**Our shows are based on this theme**

**As are all the content and services that surround them**

# Principles for content

## 2 Spike equips guys to be better men

### For comedy

- **Celebrate the journey from guy to man** (Knocked Up, not Porky's)
- **Be irreverent but avoid gags for gags' sake** (King of The Hill or The Simpsons, not Beavis and Butthead)
- **Develop and reveal redeeming qualities in the characters** (Entourage, not Curb Your Enthusiasm)

### For drama

- **Celebrate the journey from guy to man** (Jerry McGuire or Boogie Nights, not American Psycho)
- **Action is awesome, but not action for action's sake** (Braveheart, or True Romance, not Grindhouse)
- **Explore darkness but not without redemption** (The Wrestler or Fight Club, not Texas Chainsaw Massacre)

### For reality

- **Find situations and stories that involve high stakes and celebrate the guy-to-man journey** (Coal or Deadliest Catch, not Chef Academy)
- **Cast real, relatable, aspirational men and guys** (Auction Hunters and Deadliest Warrior, not Farmer Wants a Wife)
- **Find a POV that's sympathetic, rather than mocking, towards the characters** (Pawn Stars not Flavor of Love)

# Principles for content

## 3 Spike is always intriguing to women

**Spike is always respectful of women**

**Spike embraces sexiness –  
but never in a gratuitous or degrading way**

**Spike wants women to watch too**

# Principles for content

## 4 Spike looks for the wink

**There are always moments of humor**

**Humor is based on a shared men's world view**

**Content is never too worthy or serious**

# Principles for content

## 5 Spike develops cross-device experiences

**Development efforts include web, mobile and gaming expertise from the start**

**Spike is with you.** A show concept fills time everyday on any device

**Spike is an early adopter** of new technologies to enhance show content

**Spike gives access** to full episodes across all devices. Even if it's hosted somewhere else, you can find it through Spike

**Spike creates engagement platforms** which all Spike content can plug into - giving people a single 'Spike Button' on every device

**Spike looks to sponsorship** to bring the Utili part of Utilitainment to life

**Spike is conversation provoking** in content and social. Then we give our audience a place to engage with the conversation – across devices

**Spike partners well with technology and service** creators who need our audience to succeed



# Principles for content

## 6 Spike builds community

**Engaging calls to action are embedded in content**

**User generated content is welcomed  
and in some cases aired**

**There's an overall Spike community platform  
to which show-level communities are linked**

# Principles for ad sales

Principle	What it means for ad sales
<b>1 Spike celebrates what it is to be a man</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We answer the cultural need for a network that RESPECTS and LIKES men</li><li>• Our offer is distinct from other male targeted brands that are limited to sports or news</li><li>• We deliver something unique: Utilitainment. A world where manhood is celebrated and men get to explore, play and compete – and thus are uniquely engaged</li><li>• We invite brands who share that world view to join us in engaging men</li></ul>
<b>2 Spike equips guys to be better men</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our content gives men a place where they can acquire new skills or test their wits against others</li><li>• Our sales targets cover a broad set of men from 18-49, as well as the women that love them</li></ul>
<b>3 Spike always intrigues women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our programming is something that women will enjoy watching with their man</li><li>• We offer a peek into a man's world that women don't always get to see or appreciate. A world where she is welcome and might even pick up a tip or two</li><li>• We can therefore sell adult audiences with credibility</li></ul>
<b>4 Spike looks for the wink</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We're professional, but we don't take ourselves too seriously</li><li>• We make the sales process fun</li></ul>
<b>5 Spike develops cross device experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our digital and airtime sales teams work together closely</li><li>• We sell integrated packages of spots, web and other sponsorships that builds on our goal of Utilitainment - packages that are purposeful and have utility</li><li>• We make strategic partnerships with marketers to enhance sales and help disseminate content</li></ul>
<b>6 Spike builds community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We build community that enables men to laugh, compete and share</li><li>• We seek out close relationships with platforms like Facebook and Foursquare</li></ul>

# Principles for marketing

Principle	What it means for marketing
<b>1 Spike celebrates what it is to be a man</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our marketing appeals to a broad male audience from 18 to 49 and beyond</li><li>• We make our marketing something people want to be part of and engage with</li><li>• In our promotions we look for the primary male motivation: as a provider, protector, player, explorer, daredevil. We revel in male characteristics of ingenuity, wit, strength and confidence</li><li>• Our interstitials don't just promote content, but provide know-how and info men can use</li></ul>
<b>2 Spike equips guys to be better men</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our marketing is Utilitainment, equipping men with content, tools and community</li><li>• We always look at the world through a male lens, and build purpose and utility around our content. Giving them tools to explore, play, compete and put their wits to use</li></ul>
<b>3 Spike always intrigues women</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The overall picture of women in our marketing shows that we love them as much as they love us</li><li>• Sexiness is fine – but it's not gratuitous or degrading</li><li>• Women appreciate why their men respond to our marketing</li></ul>
<b>4 Spike looks for the wink</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our marketing includes moments of humor...laughing with our men on their journey.</li><li>• Like men, Spike takes its job seriously but is never too worthy or judgmental.</li></ul>
<b>5 Spike develops cross device experiences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We eat our own dogfood: we innovate and experiment with cross-platform marketing</li><li>• Our promotions are as integrated across platforms and media as our content and services</li><li>• We become the go-to place for male orientated advertisers to interact with their audience.</li></ul>
<b>6 Spike builds community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Our marketing offers a place to respond, act or join in</li><li>• We use social media to create and develop conversations with viewers</li><li>• We invite brands to be part of providing tools and building community.</li></ul>

# Examples

## **For discussion – suggested candidates:**

Bootstrap Fund

Top Dog

Real Men Don't Hit Women

Carnivore (but with food truck promotion only – no restaurants)

# To summarize:

## **We help guys become better men through content**

by providing stories that portray all the aspects of the journey from guyhood to manhood – dramatic, comedic, fiction and non-fiction, original and licensed – stories that men can relate to and learn from.

## **We help guys become better men through tools**

by providing men with access to resources – tools we create, tools we partner with others to create, tools we license – that help guys become more successful men. From basic man skills, to skills that will help them become more attractive to women.

## **We help guys become better men through community**

by creating a conversational environment of questioning and exploring what it means to be a modern man, and by providing platforms that allow men to interact with us and with each other as that journey unfolds.

# Thanks!