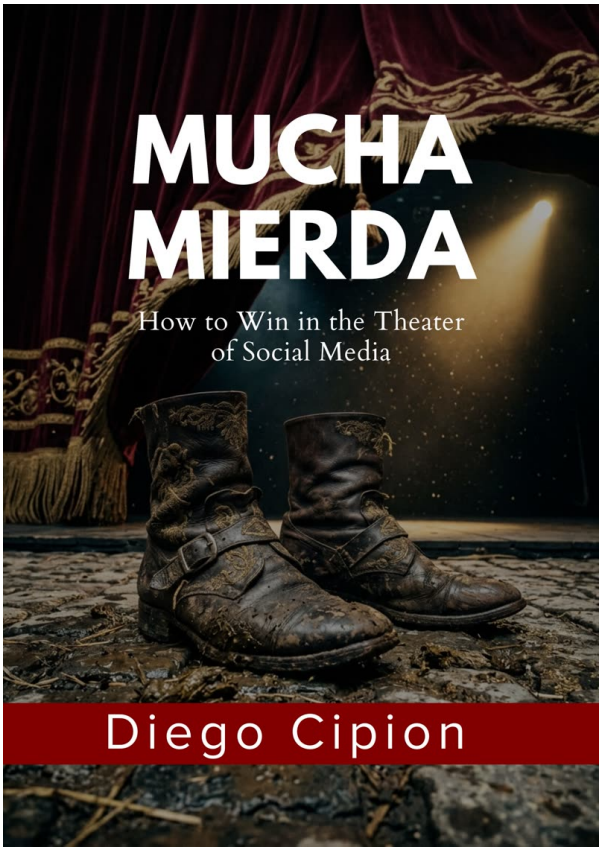


A FREE CHAPTER FROM MUCHA MIERDA

The 3-Second Rule

Chapter 24. By Diego Cipion

CHAPTER 24

The 3-Second Rule

Three seconds. That is the time you have in social media for a human to decide whether to give you their attention or move on to the next video.

Three seconds to stop the thumb. Three seconds to activate curiosity. Three seconds for the brain to make the decision, subconscious, almost automatic, to stay or go.

The three-second rule is not opinion. It comes from retention data on any platform. If you look at drop-off curves for TikTok, Instagram Reels, or YouTube Shorts, you'll see that between second zero and second three, most of the audience that leaves, leaves. After the fourth second, losses become much more gradual. That is, if you make it past three seconds, you've won.

What has to happen in those three seconds to pass the exam?

Three things must happen simultaneously.

One: the viewer must understand what type of content they've landed in. Is it comedy? Educational? Aesthetic? Testimonial? This is transmitted in the first shot, the first phrase, the first music. If the viewer doesn't classify your piece in the first three seconds, they leave.

Two: the viewer must feel a promise. The piece must promise that something is going to happen. Something worth watching. A story that will develop. A question that will be answered. A surprise that is being set up.

Three: the viewer must feel tension, understood as curiosity, not anxiety. Something in the first three seconds must generate the question "and then what?" If that question doesn't appear, there's no tension, and without tension there's no retention.

There are seven hook patterns that meet these three requirements and work across all platforms. They're not magic: they're proven patterns.

The informational bait. "I'm going to tell you three things nobody tells you about…", opens with a promise of valuable information.

The provocative question. "Do you know why nobody tells jokes anymore?", opens with a question the viewer can't answer.

The controversial statement. "Almost all personal trainers are selling lies." Puts the viewer in a state of "tell me more, let's see if you're right."

The unexpected action. Something visually strange in the first shot. An out-of-place object. A person doing something that doesn't fit.

The spoiled ending. "This is what happens when…" and you show the result, before explaining the process.

The visible transformation. Before and after, in a matter of one second. The human brain chases transformation the way it chases sugar.

The identification. "If you also hate…" or "if this has happened to you…", opens with a shared pain.

These seven patterns cover 80% of the hooks that work in social media. Don't use them all at once: use one per piece, whichever best fits the concept.

And what are the hooks that DON'T work? It's also worth knowing them.

The floating logo. If the first second is your logo, you've lost. The viewer detects "ad" and leaves.

The landscape shot without context. A pretty view of some mountains doesn't hook. Beauty without tension doesn't retain in social media.

The explanatory voiceover. "At our company we believe that…" Instant death.

The brand intro. The animation with the sound and the corporate signature. The fastest way to lose the viewer.

The long "hi, I'm…" If it takes you more than a second to introduce yourself, you've already lost half the audience.

Three seconds. That's what you have. Design them with the same obsession with which a novelist designs the first line of their novel. Because, in terms of retention, those three seconds are the most valuable thing you'll produce.

This is one of 50 chapters.

Mucha Mierda: How to Win in the Theater of Social Media

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