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1. Bringing a story to life and disseminating it

1.1 How to bring a story to life

We can use different tools to bring our stories to life, such as: writing, photography, illustrations or events.

Such tools can be ONLINE or OFFLINE and there are many that can be used for storytelling, depending on specific preferences and needs.

To bring a story to life, you must first ask yourself what type of STORYCONTENT you want to create, in other words, what content is needed to bring the story to life.

Among these we can list:

- Blog posts/ articles
- Social posts
- Images, slideshows, gifs and videos
- Infographics
- Podcasts
- Online and offline events
- Webinars
- Press releases
- Brochures
- Postcards
- Books, magazines
- Etc.

Therefore, bringing storytelling to life requires a strategic and creative approach.

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Here are some steps you can follow to make the story more engaging and memorable:

1. **Know your audience:**

- understand who your audience is will help you create a story that resonates with them. Consider their interests, emotions, and values to tailor your narration to their needs.

2. **Identify the objective of the story:**

- clarify what message or objective you want to communicate through your story. This will help you maintain coherence and ensure that your narration has a specific purpose.

3. **Create a central character:**

- a well-developed character makes the story more compelling and relatable. Provide details of the character's personality, challenges and triumphs to arouse empathy in the audience.

4. **Use visual elements:**

- integrate images, graphics, and other visual elements to enrich your story. Visual elements can increase the emotional impact and help the audience visualise the story.

5. **Choose an effective narrative structure:**

- use a narrative structure that captures the attention of the audience. For example, the Before-After-Bridge structure, mentioned above, is an effective model that can create tension and involvement.

6. **Introduce conflicts and resolutions:**

- a good story often includes conflict and resolution. These elements add suspense and keep the audience interested until the end.

7. **Add emotion:**

- emotionality is crucial in storytelling. Try to arouse emotions in your audience, be it joy, compassion, suspense or any other feeling that contributes to the experience.

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8. **Use humour (if appropriate):**

- if possible, include elements of humour in your story. Humour can make the narrative lighter and bring the audience closer together.

9. **Keep your tone coherent:**

- ensure that the tone of your story is coherent with the message you want to convey and the audience you are addressing.

10. **Practice and receive feedback:**

- practice your story and ask for feedback from colleagues or friends. External input can help you improve your storytelling and identify areas for improvement.

Remember that the key is to engage the audience, create an emotional connection and leave a lasting impression. Experiment with different approaches and styles until you find the one that works best for your story and your audience.

So: **what questions to ask yourself before disseminating a story?**

- What tools do I use for storytelling?
- Writing? Photography? Illustration? Or many other things?
- What type of content best conveys my story?

1.2 Visual Storytelling

If, for example, we decide to use IMAGES to spread our STORY, we must focus on the EVOCATIVE power of these.

Images are essential to tell a story.

We think, we remember through images that contribute to constructing and **understanding reality**.

Our brain is inclined to narrative thinking.

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A single word or image can immediately call up a sequence of 'connected' images that draw on personal experiences and individual imagination.

Visual storytelling is a narrative approach that primarily uses visual elements, such as images, graphics, diagrams and other visual media, to communicate a story or message.

This form of communication is based on the idea that images can have a deeper emotional and engaging impact than words alone. Visual storytelling is widely used in various contexts, including presentations, advertising, marketing and digital storytelling.

Visual storytelling, therefore, means:

"activate visual narratives of the most powerful device that exists in nature - our brain -, which not only thinks, but by thinking gets excited and emotional - with the whole body - fixes memories".

Here are some key characteristics of visual storytelling:

1. **Using images and graphs:**

- visual elements such as photographs, illustrations, graphs and diagrams are used to tell a story or present information in a more engaging way.

2. **Emotionality and involvement:**

- the objective of visual storytelling is to emotionally engage the audience. Images can evoke stronger emotions and connections than written text.

3. **Simplification and clarity:**

- Visual storytelling often aims to simplify complex concepts through the use of clear visual representations. This can make information more accessible and understandable.

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4. **Narrative sequence:**

- Although based on visual elements, visual storytelling still follows a narrative sequence. This means that there is a structure and coherence in the presentation of information.

5. **Brand Storytelling:**

- in the context of marketing and corporate communication, visual storytelling is often used to tell the story of a brand, highlighting values, mission and creating an emotional connection with the audience.

6. **Visual presentations:**

- in presentations, visual storytelling can be applied using visually appealing slides supported by meaningful images, helping to hold the audience's attention.

In summary, visual storytelling is a powerful and effective way to communicate messages, convey stories and create emotional connections through the use of visual elements.

However, a beautiful photo in itself does not constitute a complete visual narrative.

To be so, it must:

- evoking shared imaginaries
- possess dramatic force
- be situated in a context that allows us to understand what has happened or what is about to happen before the shot
- arouse empathy

As with words, each element of a fixed, dynamic or drawn image provides information and contributes to the characterisation of a story.

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With regard to dissemination, it is crucial to consider:

- the visual imagery of the audience
- the choice of visual style
- the setting
- lighting
- the objects of the scene
- the protagonists
- hierarchies and relationships within the setting

REMEMBER: stories must compete with many other stories and many other contents.

In order to DISTINGUISH and reach the intended interlocutor, they must connect with PLACES and PEOPLE.

Each of their elements must connect back to an EXPERIENTIAL and RELATIONAL context and imagery.

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2. Dissemination of a story

Once again, the questions to be asked before creating and disseminating a story should be:

- What structure will the story have?
- What connection, emotion do I want to arouse?
- What words and images will I use?
- What intentions do I want to communicate?
- Is it authentic and coherent?
- What tone of voice will I use?

These questions are important to understand the target audience, the modes of expression and the ideal platforms on which to WORK.

Disseminating a storytelling story requires a holistic strategy involving several communication channels and platforms.

Obviously, the most used channels for storytelling are the SOCIAL NETWORKS.

Here are some tips on how to disseminate a story:

1. Choose the right platform:

- identify the most suitable channel for your story. It can be a blog, a social media platform, a podcast, a YouTube video or a combination of these.

2. Use social media:

- share snippets of your story through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. Use eye-catching images, relevant quotes and hashtags to increase visibility.

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3. Create multimedia content:

- if your story is suitable for multimedia content, create videos, images, podcasts or infographics that can amplify its impact. You can use these resources to engage a wider audience.

4. Involve influencers or collaborate with others:

- if possible, involve influencers or collaborate with other content creators. Partnerships can help expand the reach of your story and achieve new audiences.

5. Use email:

- if you have a list of subscribers, send newsletters that tell your story or provide links to the full content. Emails can be a direct way to connect with your audience.

6. Attend events or presentations:

- if your story can be told in public, participate in events, conferences or webinars. This can be an effective way to connect with your audience in a more direct way.

7. Create a Landing Page:

- If your story is part of a larger project, create a dedicated landing page (a standalone web page, created specifically for a marketing or advertising campaign. It's where a visitor "lands" after they click on a link in an email, or ads from Google, Bing, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or similar places on the web) on a website. You can use the page to share additional details, related resources and links to your social channels.

8. Participate in online groups:

- Participate in forums, discussion groups or online communities where your story might be relevant. Share your content authentically and participate in conversations.

9. Encourage sharing:

- provide your readers or viewers with an easy way to share your story. Integrate social sharing buttons or ask your audience directly to share if the story has touched them.

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10. Use paid advertising:

- if you have a budget, consider using paid advertising on social media or other platforms to reach a wider audience.

11. Reply to comments and interact:

- respond to audience comments and interactions. Direct interaction can increase reader interest and loyalty.

Remember that coherence and authenticity are the key. Maintain a consistent online presence, respond to audience reactions and adapt your strategy based on feedback and results.

3. Conclusions

From our lessons on storytelling, a fascinating world emerges in which emotions act as common threads between storyteller and audience. Through captivating stories, we are able to create bridges of empathy that link disparate human experiences, transforming the observer into a participant and opening doors to mutual understanding.

As story weavers, we have learnt to shape our stories with mastery. From the construction of an engaging beginning to the resolution of the conflict, every narrative thread has been woven with care and precision. We have learnt that every detail, every character and every twist is crucial to creating a compelling and memorable narrative fabric.

Finally, our lessons revealed to us the true power of words. Stories are not just entertainment; they are mirrors that reflect our experiences, challenge our beliefs and push us to take new paths. As storytellers, we have the privilege and responsibility to shape narrations that not only entertain, but inspire, transform and leave a lasting impression in the hearts and minds of audiences.