



Brand Storytelling–Telling and Selling

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ABSTRACT

In this marketing saturated world, it's more crucial than ever for brands to rise above their nose. People are bored and they are vexed up with the standard marketing tactics. Fortunately, with the explosion in popularity of online video over past decade, building compelling stories around one's brand is easier than ever. Stories mesmerize people and are often more easily recalled than facts. Story telling is one of the most powerful ways to breathe life into your brand and often one of the main components of a content marketing approach. Brand story telling is vital to the success of your brand because of the connection building power it contains. In order for consumers to form a personal connection with brand, company stories must be authentic, creative and inspirational. Through story telling businesses can appear more human, more relatable. This article mainly focuses on the concept of brand storytelling, its importance, how brand stories can be built and how they can be shared to the target audience.

KEYWORDS

Brand Storytelling, Brand experiences, Emotions, Feelings, Target audience

INTRODUCTION

From a very young age, we love listening stories, as we grow older, we respond to tales and anecdotes. Story telling is what connects us to humanity. It is what links us to our past and provides a glimpse into our future. Stories fascinate people and are often more easily remembered than facts.

Story telling is one of the most dominant ways to respire life into your brand and often one of the major components of content marketing. Brand story telling is vital to the success of your brand because of the connection building power it contains. Every brand has multiple stories to tell. Every achievement from the conception of the brand idea to the direction in which it is headed contains a story. By giving products and services an identity by capturing and sharing the stories they really are, can take target audience on a journey they yearn to experience. In order for consumers to form a personal connection with brand, company stories must be authentic, creative and inspirational. Through story telling businesses can become more human, more related.

WHAT IS BRAND STORY TELLING

A brand story is more than content and narrative. The story goes beyond what's written in the copy on a website, the text in a brochure or the presentation used to pinch to investors or customers. Your story isn't it what you tell to people, it's also what they believe about you based on the signals your brand sends.

The story is a whole picture made up of facts, feelings and interpretations, which implies that part of your story isn't even revealed by you. Stories are emotional bonds that connect you with your customers.

Each element of your business or brand, ranging the colors or texture of your packaging and business cards, to the staff you hire is part of your brand story and every element should reflect the truth about your brand back to your audience.

Brand story telling can greatly enhance interest and engagement in you and your business. It has emerged from the explosion of content marketing, brand journalism and article writing that has taken a prominent role in today's marketing mix.

Brand story involves evoking feelings from your audience to capture their attention, make the story reliable and keeping

your story simple and easy to understand. Stories and the art of storytelling play a prominent role in content marketing today.

IMPORTANCE OF BRAND STORY TELLING

Stories produce experiences: Experiences leave lasting impressions. They go far deeper than facts, figures. By developing a story-based experience, you make your audiences to walk away an impression of your brand that doesn't rest on the precarious edges of their minds but sits deep in their heart.

Stories reveal what makes your message unique: The uniqueness of your offering does not stay for long, as there are copycats. What cannot be duplicated is who you are, what's your origin story, Where did your brand come from, how that has created your product or service. When your figures, facts and features are in line, your story can set you apart from competition.

Stories are emotional bond that connects you with your customers: If it weren't for stories, your brand wouldn't mean much to your audience. It's those stories that create a real connection. (EX: Face book now dedicates an entire site to stories. Fans can post their individual and collective experiences)

Stories shape information into meaning: A true marketer will weave the story around the information to create meaning for the audience.

Stories can motivate an audience towards your goal: Stories are uniquely able to move people's heart, mind feet and wallets in the story teller's intended direction.

Stories are more likely to be shared: Everyone share stories every day. When a story resonates- moves people emotionally – they retell it many times over, ultimately amplifying the message.

Stories are less likely to be resisted: People generally do not resist stories , and are excited to hear what comes next.

HOW TO FIND A BRAND STORY

Great stories aren't always obvious. They require deep thought and self reflection. This needs to answer certain questions like:

1. **Why does your business exist:** What was the reason to getting into business, what audience your business serves, what makes you interesting, what makes you different.
2. **What is your history:** What is your company history, was there a special event or driving force, where did your first store open, when and what was it called, how has it grown, who was your first customer, and what was their experience.
3. **Who are your main characters:** Who founded the company, and why did they found it, what inspired them, what sought of struggle did they face.
4. **What is your company mission:** What is its purpose, what are the goals.
5. **What are your core brand values:** What makes your company hold close, how these brand values changed over time has, what is the philosophy behind your company, and how did that come about.
6. **How do your customers feel:** What do your customers say about your brand, what is the best and the worst thing they have said, why do they buy from you and what keeps them coming back.
7. **How have you failed:** Failures often makes the best stories. Ask yourself how you have failed and how you have overcome your failures.

While finding your brand story, see that your story is :

Honest- One cannot build trust if one's brand story isn't built on foundation of truth. The story should feature real people and events, exactly as they occurred, should be based on genuine emotions and trust.

Human: People trust people but not corporations. Hence brand stories should be human in nature as far as possible, featuring actual people and events. Usage of natural language is required to make people trust its authenticity.

Original: Brand story should be original in nature, thus offering a new perspective to make people pay attention.

Simple: The simpler the story, the better it would sound and more trustworthy and sharable it will be.

Relatable: The more relatable the story is the more you are connected with your customers.

Visually Conveyed: Customers want to see, view and hear your story. Visuals (photos, videos, drawings, visual expressions) communicate faster than words and bring life to the story.

TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE STORY TELLING:

1. **The Cliffhanger:** This is the oldest technique. In this technique, focus is laid down on the problem the business or the product solves. Employ storytelling to describe the problem and create suspense around how it will be solved. When done well, you will capture your audience attention.
2. **Imagery:** Imagery is essentially using words to paint a picture. It is the idea of showing, not telling. It is a powerful technique because it stimulates the reader's or listener's imagination.
3. **The Metaphor:** A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes an implicit, implied, or hidden comparison between two things or objects that are poles apart but have a common characteristic. Metaphors make stories memorable.
4. **The Underdog:** Underdog is loved by everyone. Research has shown that the triumph of an underdog overcoming all odds actually hits harder emotionally than when an average or above-average persona succeeds. By using this archetype in brand storytelling, one can impact the audience more intensely in the end.

THREE C'S OF BUSINESS STORYTELLING:

Connect – Use stories to connect with prospects and convert them into customers.

Convey – Use stories to convey your expertise, relevance, humanity and values.

Create – Use stories to create customer memories that compel them to come back

SHARING BRAND STORY:

Brand stories need to be shared as much as possible. They should touch all points of communication where your customers can learn more about your brand, i.e., from social media and marketing content to PR and events. Here are some tips for sharing brand stories effectively:

1. **Learn how to tell a good story:** Even the best brand stories need matched delivery. This includes voice, tone, wording, language, style, and imagery among other things. Good storytelling captures attention, draws people in, keeps them engaged and builds a bond between listener and teller. Stories should be shown not just told. Set a stage, create a mood, appeal to the senses and use a hook ending that keeps the listeners wanting more.
2. **Empower your employees:** Make sure that your employees are invested in the story and carry it with them both offline and online. Employees are the biggest brand advocates and are crucial to communicating with customers.
3. **Tell it everywhere:** Make your story part of what your company is and everything it does. Whatever you do your story should have an underlying presence.
4. **Encourage customers to tell the story:** Customer stories make some of the best brand stories. They are the one's experiencing your products or services first hand, and if they are pleased they are more likely to share their experience. Displaying their experiences on websites and other marketing materials will reinforce one's brand story.
5. **Keep on telling:** Stories need to be told continuously. Just as companies continue to grow, so do stories. Add relevant and up-to-date anecdotes for context and freshness from time to time.

SOME EXAMPLES OF BRAND STORYTELLING

- **Paper Boat:** Life is still beautiful

Paper boat, the traditional Indian drinks brand, takes us on a nostalgic walk down memory lane and narrates stories from our childhood.

- **Raymond:** The Complete Man

Raymond's "The Complete Man " is one of those timeless brand propositions and it even finds relevance in today's context, as told in the beautiful film.

- **Google Search:** Reunion

The internet savvy generation needs no introduction to Google. But for the millions in India who aren't still aware, the reunion story of two best friends perfectly captures how much Google is a part of our everyday lives.

CONCLUSION

It comes as no surprise that some of the best communications in the world are stories well told. Stories make biggest impact and have the strongest emotional contact in the least amount of time. Building compelling story around even most unexciting brand or product is a winning strategy that savvy marketers should employ every time. Which is why, behind the success of every great brand, there lays a great story.

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