



The growth of social media and content marketing

- the technique of creating and distributing relevant content to attract defined audiences -

have given brands the opportunity to tell their stories as part of their marketing initiative.

Great brand stories are not ads or sales pitches; they are pieces of communication that intrigue and emotionally connect with consumers. They speak truthfully while being consistent with the brand strategy.

Storytelling is the cornerstone of great brands. We can help you create your own and help move you closer to your brand marketing goals.

Why do we tell stories?

Because as human beings we feel attracted by them. Our brain recreates everything it perceives. It has been scientifically proven that when reading words like “perfume” or “chocolate”, both smell and taste are activated in the brain (NeuroImage, 2016) thanks to memories. In fact, in 2011 psychologist Raymond Mar concluded that the mental connections we use to understand a story are the same ones we use to know how to interact with others.

When analyzing the aforementioned information, we understand why storytelling is successful. It is the natural way for humans to communicate, and to evoke our own stories; storytelling also works as an effective way to retain details, which is the reason why we even remember the dialogues in our favorite movies.

In order to successfully apply storytelling, you have to be a good storyteller and build an appealing plot. You can start with these three elements that I took from the Center for Digital Storytelling in Berkeley:

Point of view:

Use your voice and perspective to provide a tale that grabs your listener, while giving an emotional and authentic context to what you are offering.



Do you want an example of this? A video called “Google Search: Reunion” is a good one: a granddaughter listens about how her grandfather got separated from his best childhood friend. She decides to look for him, finds the number of a store in Pakistan and pulls off the longed-for encounter. The world’s biggest search engine is an unspoken protagonist, while a human voice gives us the benefits it offers as technology.

Emotional content:

To generate empathy, the plot must present a dramatic question that keeps the users' attention until the outcome or conclusion of the story.

I quickly think of the Super Bowl TV ads. As a matter of fact, Keith Quesenberry’s analysis concluded that the most successful ads were those that included the unfolding of a story with conflict-resolution, and predicted the most successful ad of the 2014 season to be the “Budweiser Clydesdale Puppy Love” ad.



Thus, with over 50 million views - 80% organic - it became number one that year by reaching out to YouTubers with the story of a puppy living on a ranch where his best friend is a Clydesdale horse. The puppy's reality changes when given up for adoption and separated from the horse. The viewer is kept under tension and eager to know the outcome that reunites the dog and the horse to stay as #BestBuds.

Narrative rhythm:

The story must have enough content to connect to users without overwhelming them. It is the balance of a clear and simple story that delivers the message without too much flip flopping.

Staying on the Super Bowl topic, a well-known case was the 2011 ad “Volkswagen - The Force”, which broke the mold for ads by launching its one-minute video on Youtube the weekend before the event, reaching 1.8 million views on its first day before being broadcasted on television.



But, from the point of view of storytelling, we take this example from the flow of the story itself, as it shows different situations in which a boy disguised as Darth Vader is trying to use The Force. Each scenario builds up the tension of the plot as the mini-Vader's frustration is growing. Volkswagen appears to become the surprise outcome and even the protagonist of the story.

What do these stories have in common?

Their focus was not to directly talk about the brand. Their features are shown by using the insights on the development of a story that moves and connects with the viewer. All of these examples were successful, because they created a simple and appealing plot with emotional content that had a voice or a character which distinguished them, and a storytelling with a viewer looking forward to a conclusion. What are you waiting for to take the first step and tell your own story?



RDLB.Agency services include corporate and product revamping, marketing strategy, competitive analysis, brand positioning, graphic design, creative content, and more importantly, brand storytelling.

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