

The case for telling stories

The human mind is wired for narrative. Set the scene, introduce the characters, hit us with the central conflict and we're hooked. Our neurons light up like a pinball machine and keep us asking "And then what happened? And *then* what?" When you're stocking your communications toolbox, smart professionals put storytelling front and centre.

Six compelling reasons to tell stories

1. **To capture attention.** There's a reason *Jaws* opens with the dramatic skinny-dipping scene instead of the marine biologist pontificating on the dangers of sharks. Stories are a great way to pull your audience in.
2. **To engage emotion.** Knowing that your donation helped build a well in Africa is informative. Knowing that 11-year-old Beatrice can go to school because she no longer has to trudge three kilometres each way to fetch water? That hits home.
3. **To transform eye-glazing jargon into crystal-clear imagery.** Sure, your company's strategic resources and technical capabilities can benefit your client's business. But why not tell them about the jig Helen did in her office after you helped her make the big sale?
4. **To be sticky.** Not only do we remember stories, we share them: over coffee, around the campfire, at the next business cocktail do. You can't put a price on that kind of publicity.
5. **To make technical information meaningful.** Don't just tell your customers that your new GPS technology features advanced heading accuracy and a tri-antenna system that compensates for pitch, roll and yaw. Describe how it helped one captain navigate his vessel safely to shore during Hurricane Sandy.
6. **To shape attitudes.** The best stories shift our beliefs by helping us see the world through different eyes. For years, soldiers returning from conflict with post-traumatic stress disorder faced stigma and shame. By going public with his own struggles in *Shake Hands with the Devil*, Roméo Dallaire transformed public perceptions of PTSD.

Got a story that needs to be told? Call or email us to discuss your next project.