

Storytelling for brands - evolve or be left behind

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We can't escape storytelling these days. It's a new form of advertising and creating awareness for brands, whether it be advertisements, social media or marketing and PR.

We might be getting inundated with stories from all brands, everywhere, but the fact is, if your brand isn't making the shift, they are in danger of becoming proverbial dinosaurs.

Storytelling isn't anything new, it's just a new way for brands to get their messages across. Cast your mind back to having stories read to you as a child and how they were used to teach us important life lessons and social behaviour. Just like advertising and PR campaigns, our favourite stories were repeatedly read to us until we could recite them by heart and the life lessons and social behaviours were engrained in us. Brands are just tapping into a natural way of learning and teaching.



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Truth is, every brand is doing it. Everyone wants us to be emotionally attached to their brand because they know this has a significant impact on our purchasing decisions. Millennials especially want to see brands doing good and helping humanity, their communities and or the earth before they part with their hard-earned money; and storytelling is an effective way of showcasing this.

Steep competition for almost every brand and product forced the advertising and PR industries to evolve. It's no longer about pushing product in the faces of its consumers. Purchasing decisions changed from merely considering the benefits of the product or the "coolness" factor of it, to having an emotional connection with the brand. It's for this reason that brands, now more than ever; need to establish a personality (for lack of a better word) so that consumers see it as more than just a faceless company. Storytelling forms a big part of this by creating a sense of what the brand stands for in an easy and relatable manner.

There are a couple of brands that are already doing this incredibly well. BMW brought back their BMW Films campaign, which was a great hit in 2001 and 2002. The latest BMW Film is called [The Escape](#) and directed by South Africa's very own Neil Blomkamp and showcases the BMW 5 Series in subtle ways by way of storytelling.

Clothing retailer H&M also hit the mark with their entertaining short film [The Road Trip](#) featuring David Beckham and Kevin Hart.

Both these brands used well-known stars in their campaigns to lend it credibility and to garner interest. They were directed by industry professionals and were planned and scripted as if they were feature-length movies.

Brands don't have to go to these extremes to get great results; they can also forge emotional bonds with their consumers through images, infographics and short social media videos. Consumers are hungry for authentic, original, emotive, thought-provoking and often entertaining content (depending on the brand).

By thinking differently about how they package information to consumers, brands can cause a disruption in their industry and gain great results through story telling.

ABOUT ANNE DOLINSCHKE

Owner and chief strategist at Nfluential. I'm a gladiator in a pencil skirt with a main focus on influencer marketing strategy. I empower brands to implement effective and measurable influencer campaigns.

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