



## THE ART OF STORY TELLING

### Introduction

**Andrew Griffiths:** Welcome to the art of story telling. I think it's our final workshop in the series with Nick and myself. I've got to say it's been a blast. We haven't packed any major stadiums as you can probably tell. But you know what, it's been such a hoot to have such really great small groups to be able to work with and to be able to talk about a topic which is something that is so interesting and so powerful and so current in so many ways as well.



But it's good having such a small group as this in such a cool venue. What have we got here? There are some hash tags, did I get that right, art of story? My social media guru made sure I did that. So feel free to comment away if you want to share anything, share any information as well.

As you can tell, one of our big desires for today, apart from welcoming you at this stage and saying thank you to the people who have come from New Zealand and from out of town, from different parts of the world, is to feel that this is a really relaxed kind of a day. It's a really relaxed kind of a workshop, it's informal. The real objective here is to share as much information as we can. In this kind of environment we really can do that in such a nice way.

It's also a great opportunity to maybe meet a few people, share a few ideas. For me it's been wonderful to meet some people who I've communicated with and to put some faces to some email, that's always a nice thing. I just want to say thank you so much for giving up a Saturday. I understand time is really precious for everyone these days, even if you're escaping from children. For us it's really important that we give you lots of value because you've given up your time, paid some cash to come along to something like this, so we want to make sure we deliver.



Story telling has definitely gone mainstream in the last few years, there is no doubt about it. Ironically what we're going to tell you about I think is the fact that it has always been around as we know. Most of us know that story telling is not something that is new, but it's a bit of a hot topic. It's a hot topic of discussion in so many ways.



There are books that have come out. Like any collective consciousness, thoughts come up and appear all at the one time. I think last year five or six books came out on story telling, what are the stories we should be telling, how to use story telling in different areas.

What I'm finding interesting these days is just how mainstream it's become. Let me give you an example about that. I got an email yesterday from the Sydney Transit Authority asking if I could do a presentation on story telling to eight of their staff in a management role. Now these guys are running trains and buses. I emailed the chap back and said, what is the perspective, I don't quite understand? He said, we realize we need to train our team to tell stories to get the messages across to our people.

It was quite intriguing, it was interesting, since we've done this workshop what kind of things have come out of the woodwork. I'm seeing in places like CBS they are talking about story telling. We've got corporate leadership and accounting groups talking about story telling for training, for talking to clients, for talking about successes. Certainly in writing books, an area where I spend a lot of my time, story telling using anecdotes, using shared experiences, observations, realizations are just such a big part of it.

Most of us are watching TED talks. Who here watches TED talks? Who here doesn't watch TED talks? Some don't have time, I understand that. But it is interesting that most people do. I look at watching TED talks as a training device for me. They're wonderful storytellers. Most people doing a TED talk are really good storytellers on any kind of topic. I find myself being fascinated because I'm learning about something that I have absolutely no interest in whatsoever but I'm intrigued by the person who is telling that story. It's interesting.

It leads onto the thought then, why are we doing this? This was Nick's idea. Nick came to me earlier this year and said, we should do a workshop on story telling. As you can tell, this is not a money making venture for us. This is not the idea of packing a room with a million people.



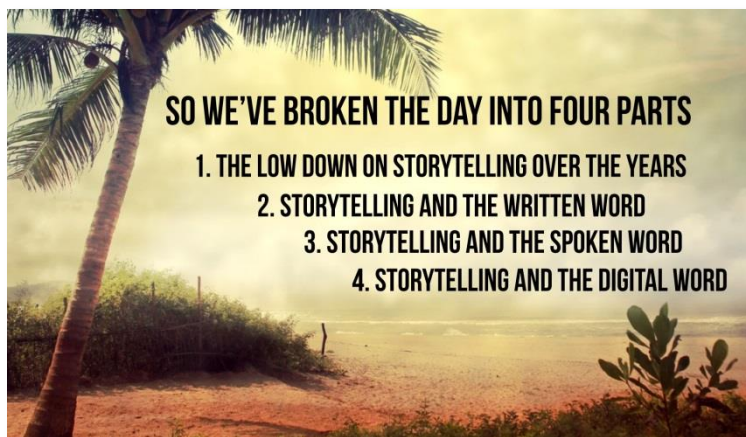
That in its own right is a wonderful story. We're professional presenters, we're doing workshops all the time. You guys all know the type of thing I do and Nick does even more than I do in that space. For us, it's something we're passionate about. It is not always just about making a pile of money. It's about talking about ideas, it's about sharing thoughts, it's about challenging yourself with your own thinking and trying to look at things in a different way.

I've got to say I've found it extraordinarily rewarding to be doing this workshop series from that point of view. We've had some very spirited discussions around story telling. We've had people standing on tables to defend a point which was cool, weird and creepy all at the same time. Something about that all works.

Our aim is really around that whole concept of sharing what we know, sharing our thoughts, our views, but also to hear from you too. What's your take on story telling? Beth, you tell stories through photos, that's your way. We've all got our different ways that we're doing story telling. The greatest thing about it is now we've got this wonderful opportunity to be incorporating it into our business, into our life and into everything that we're doing.

I think it's so wonderful to see people telling stories and it's not just a Kumbayah thing. Story telling is not that big a thing. It's nice to see it getting that acceptance in so many spaces and being applied across so many areas.

It is a very big and complicated topic. That's the other thing that I've realized. Story telling is not an easy topic to teach in a day. That's certainly what we took out of this. What direction do you take this? You could spend a day talking about one angle. We've had people say, could you do a week long Art of Story telling workshop? We say no because a) we don't want to and b) we'd all be bored senseless. But you look at it and say, there are lots of applications that you could do over a longer period of time.



It's interesting, I think there is so much complicated discussion around what really should be such a simple topic. It's something we should all be inherently able to do. Yet I wonder if these days we've become less able to tell our story because we spend way too much time on mobile phones or on computers and perhaps not talking as much.

We've broken the day into four parts that we felt is the most relevant for everyone in terms of





knowing who you are, where you're coming from, what your backgrounds are, as much as we can.

First of all Nick is going to give you a bit of lowdown on story telling, the history which is cool. He's really going to destroy most of your thoughts about many beloved authors and writers that we had, which is one of my favorite parts of the day.

Number two, I'm going to talk about story telling in the written word and a bit more about how we can use stories and give you some practical information around that. Then I'm going to talk about story telling and the spoken word, so presenting. This is probably the area which strangely enough I'm most passionate about. Even though I like to write and include stories, I'm most passionate about presenting and telling stories. Then story telling in the digital world is what Nick will bring the day to a close with. That's pretty fascinating.

We're going to cover a range of areas, everything from *Frozen*, the movie, right through to *Frankenstein* and all realms in between. There are lots of videos and lots of interesting material. The biggest and most important thing here that we want to get out of today or we're going to ask from you today is to really please keep an open mind about it.

For me personally, my ultimate aim from this is you would go away and you would say you've got permission to tell stories about yourself and you need to tell more stories about your business in particular: what you do, what you stand for, what you believe in, all of those kinds of things. I think there is a bit of hesitancy in us to do that. We've certainly found that with the people at the workshop. They needed permission to tell stories. I found that a funny thought because I've just told stories and have never really felt I needed to ask permission.

Does anyone feel that? Does anyone feel they can't tell stories because it is not professional enough or it's dumbing down what I do if I incorporate stories? Anything like that? Great, it's more of that concept of people just thinking, it's all about me if I'm telling stories. It depends on the type of story you're telling, doesn't it? That's the key.

What can you expect from us? We're going to say things that you won't like. What you're going to get from us is our views and our ideas. I don't think there is a right or wrong around any of this when it comes to story telling. I personally don't believe it's like that. Most importantly, we're going to share lots of our own stories and show you how to apply those to your business, how to apply those to your life. We'll give some very interesting things about planning your communication, your stories. I think you should find that really valuable. I certainly found that extremely valuable.

Nick is going to talk about story arcs which are something that really put an extraordinary amount of perspective for me on releasing information and data in the story format. That is



something that will be very handy. Of course we will be as irreverent as we possibly can throughout the day as well.

Now we are going to film today. The reason is that we are going to turn this into an online kind of program. We will give everyone in the room a free copy of that as well, so everyone will have access to that. It will probably take six or eight weeks before it's available. We'll send you log in details and you will have free access to all the video and so on.

If you don't want to be in the video, we're not going to shine the camera in anyone's face or anything. But if you don't want to be on there, just let Darren know and he will make sure he makes a note of it and we'll have a pixilated face. Hopefully that is something that is cool.

The other thing is the microphones. We've got a microphone running around the room. A couple sessions will be Q and As and Darren is going to be our microphone runner.

The next thing is, we're really sorry about something, and that is that we're not trying to sell you anything today. I think often we're so used to going to events and what is the punch line? What is the \$10,000 thing, the \$20,000 thing? There is nothing that we're trying to sell to you today. You don't have to worry, you don't have to be stressed, you don't have to have your credit cards, you don't have to do any of that kind of thing. It is all just about today.

We like that and I find that a relief myself, not to be up here trying to sell. I'm enjoying that more and more. It's not very good for my business model but it makes it nice. Even on webinars people say to be now, it's nice on that webinar, you're not selling anything. I think, yes, it's nice.



We do cover a lot of ground, it's pretty full on throughout the day. There is a lot of information. In my two sessions in particular there is a lot of data. Most of you know I'm a little bit like that, I share data, data, data. We've tried to break that down. Just as always, please stay present as much as you can. We'll try to make sure you do.

Our aim is for you to take a whole pile of information out that you can use whether it is running gyms, wellbeing for dogs, doing social media, cafes, restaurants, boating, whatever it is, it doesn't matter, whatever you're doing today. We've looked at everyone who is here today, your businesses, where you're



coming from and have tried to tailor the information to make sure it's going to be right for you. Hopefully we've got that.

The last point, is if you really do master the art of telling stories, whether it is written, verbally or then across digital media, it is quite extraordinary what changes. I find for me personally, as a presenter, it definitely changed so much for me. I wasn't just another presenter when I learnt how to tell stories in a much better way. When I embraced that concept and shared anecdotes and did so much more of that, I got so much more out of my presenting but I also noticed that other people did as well.

It was the same with my writing, whether it was my writing about a business or about my own business or writing about anything, I noticed so much changed. I hope you get a bit of that as well out of today.

We're going to send you a copy of this presentation from today. You'll have access to that next week. We'll send you that as well, probably by slide share so you can download it.



What I'd like to do now is go quickly round the group and I'd love to find out about you. Introduce yourself, say who you are, what you do and maybe tell us the context in which you tell stories at the moment and what you want to get out of today.

Tracy: Hi, I'm Tracy. Do I tell stories? Actually quite a lot. I learnt story telling from a very young age and I worked in a library at school.

It was all about books and stories. I always found that is the best way to get a message across about yourself or somebody else. It just engages a lot more.

**Andrew:** What are you here today for?

**Tracy:** Networking with my friends. I want to improve story telling, see what you've said around putting it in digital media with Nick and especially with the spoken word.

**Andrew:** Good, thank you Tracy. Jules.





**Jules:** Hi, I'm Jules Blondell. I take business messages and turn them into videos. I'm here because I tell stories through video for my clients all the time. I tend to default to asking the clients to tell stories. So I want to become more proficient at writing those stories and scripting

for my clients. That's what I want out of today. Also I've got to present in front of the KPI group and I want to story tell when I present as well. So I have two reasons.

**Beth:** Hi, I'm Beth Jennings and I am a photographer in Melbourne. I work with businesses and families to capture who they really are, not just what they look like. It's all around your brand story or your family story. So you're right, I do tell stories with photos. I wanted to come today to check that I'm covering that as best as I can. Am I missing anything? Not probably in the visuals, with the photo element, but more the supporting material that I put with it if I blog around it. I want to just check that it is all as good as it can be.

**Andrew:** It's an interesting thing because we've had a number of other people who are doing quite a bit of telling the stories of others. We had a lady who runs a consulting business around that in Brisbane. For her, the idea of coming to this was a bit of that. It was a checklist. What am I doing, am I doing it right, perhaps is there something else I could be doing? That's nice to have that checklist. As you say, you get the photos right, is the story around that right? That's a nice way to look at it.

**Agnetha:** My name is Agnetha and I design offices where people actually want to go to work. I have found resource stories to tell, actually that's probably the most fundamental element of how I create connections with my clients to talk about office space matters.

It sounds like a horrible topic but as soon as I have an article like the Curse of the Oversize Meeting Table, then suddenly I get attraction. An oversize meeting table can destroy a sales meeting so then suddenly people want to hear how that happened. I'm here to become more natural and relaxed when telling stories in person. Also to write articles much more easily because I write good articles but I find it excruciatingly difficult.

So I don't divorce my husband. I work in the thrilling world of both the Jim's Group and building inspections, so it is quite dry at times. The principle of not having a divorce at the end of this is I'm going to take that work around being in people's homes and buildings and actually start to work more directly with women around the decisions they make in their homes. I want to tell stories around that to create a business for myself.

**Andrew:** What kind of business, do you mind my asking?



**Agnetha:** Basically building around the concept of She Builds. It's both an online and face to face community that supports women with not necessarily making a million dollars out of property investing but actually just maintaining and building a safe and important space to be.

**Andrew:** That's great. A friend of mine started a blog a while back called The Imperfect Mum. I'm not sure if you're familiar with it. She just started writing, just blogging about her own thoughts. It was a journal more than anything else. It was her thoughts about how she just felt so imperfect as a mother and shared that. All of a sudden there were forty thousand people who have joined. It's now moved to a website.

If you hit that right resonance and tell the story correctly and authentically, it's amazing what happens, isn't it? Hopefully we'll save your marriage, it's a big goal.

**Helen:** Hi, I'm Helen and I'm the top dog at Wellbeing for Dogs. We're a pet food company making a difference on the planet about how we feed our dogs and nourish them. While dogs themselves are a story and it's very easy to tell a story about dogs, we love them so much, the thing that I'm trying to do is a paradigm shift, a different attitude to how we go about feeding them. I want to change people's behavior and their views about it. That really needs a story to wrap it in.

The other reason I'm here is my reasons for coming into this business, why I'm doing it, are so diverse. I have so many paths that took me here. I want to craft my own personal story which resonates with a lot of people. So that is my overarching objective and the rest will follow, I hope.

**Angela:** Good morning everybody. My name is Angela, but you can call me Ange. I get called a lot worse. I'm a personal trainer. I'm from New Zealand as you can probably tell. I probably have told lots of stories over my thirty year career in the health and fitness industry. I'd like to improve on it.

I'm here today because I've got Andrew's books in my office staring at me. I have communicated with him on a number of occasions by email. It was a pleasure to come to Melbourne again; I've got family here and to meet Andrew face to face instead of going to Auckland. Why would I go to Auckland? I'll bring my money to Australia.

**Kylie:** Hi, I'm here, to be perfectly honest with you, to hang out with really cool people. I miss all the KPIs and love Nick and Andrew. Of course I'm also a fulltime learning junkie and you can never get enough learning and new insights. So I'm here to learn from the guys and hang out with a roomful of cool, amazing, savvy entrepreneurs. All of you know me, I'm a speaker, consultant, author, all those things.





**Diana:** Hi, I'm Diana Barnett. I have an online portal helping parents with young kids create toxin free lifestyles. It's with a blog and a multi-vendor marketplace. On top of that, I'm starting a podcast to help the vendors who sell on my marketplace to become stronger businesses, learning from other conscious businesses. My aim for today, is a) get better story telling for my website and also b) get better story telling for my interviews with conscious businesses.

**Stewart:** Hi I'm Stewart. I'm a sculptor and a project manager of larger scale public sculpture. I'd like to tell more stories about my personal sculptures, about the context, so people get a connection and engagement with it. That's the thing that inevitably sells a sculpture when people connect with it. You've got to spend a lot of money to buy sculpture, it's an expensive item to buy.

As far as project management of the larger scale sculpture, there's a process that I want to include more stories about the way you can possibly get the process wrong and how that is quite scary. There are a lot of unknown things if you go on and naively take it on yourself and try to do it. I guess the end goal for me is to tap into those and get on with writing things. I find I get stuck and maybe the story telling would be a bit more of a casual, authentic way to tell things. It might help me to get out of my stuck rut and get on with writing.

**Andrew:** You're still sculpting obviously.

**Stewart:** Yes, I get to do that about four weeks out of the year. The rest is business.

**Ruth:** Hi, I'm Ruth Mackay. I'm here because, for the last seven years, I was the founder and managed a company that was and still is one hundred percent virtual. So my people work all over Australia and New Zealand. I now want to take this to the Australian business landscape. Though it's only early days, I'm finding there's quite a resistance for companies to look at more flexibility in the workplace by a virtual workforce.

It seems airy fairy to them, in the cloud, they don't know how to manage that. If I don't have them sitting next to me, how do I manage them effectively? All the facts and figures don't seem to be moving it. So I'm hoping, if I tell my stories about the benefits I reaped and our company reaped, hopefully putting it into a delivery that is real and down to earth from a story perspective, will get better traction.

**Andrew:** I've no doubt at all you will. To me, that's a perfect example of being able to use story telling in a way that you're not getting traction in what's going on. It means you can keep hitting your head against a brick wall, wait for the market to change or change your story. I've seen so much happening in that area where people say, we've got to change how we're communicating. It's as simple as that. It will be very interesting to see how that evolves.



**Ruth:** The other thing I find is that most of the people that I need to embrace it, I hate to categorize, but they are a fifty-five year old man who has never done anything else except gone to the office. Facts and figures don't really resonate. I need to be able to tell a story that is real but that they can connect with and I'm not doing that right now.

**Andrew:** Interesting. I'm going to talk about success stories a little bit later as well. We don't really use success stories as well as we could. We're a little bit programmed to use testimonials but that is like one tenth of a success story in reality. It's different to a case story, it all feels very clinical. I'm going to talk about how you can use success stories much more effectively in your business. I think that is the direction we need to be going down.

We're still a little, 'my company was founded in 2011 and I offer this service and so on.' People have fallen asleep after 'my company was founded'. They didn't get much beyond that point. You haven't got any attention, you haven't got anything.

**Claire:** Hi Andrew, my name is Claire. I run a paddock to plate café in Balwyn called Scarvelli. My reasons for being here are a few. One is I love to talk but I have a lot of trouble putting structure into what I want to say. The other thing, similar to Helen is I've got lots of paths that I've taken to get me here where I am now. So I need to put structure and order into that and then create a real umbrella kind of story that ties the café together and why we're here and what we do and our philosophy and feeling.

The other little thing is, every time I get a microphone in my hand, I feel anxiety. I want to eliminate that and I find the more you know what you're about to talk about, the easier it is to say what you want to say. It just comes out a lot better, whereas now you think, what am I going to say, what do I do first, what do I do second? So I want to have a story come out that is natural, interesting and people want to know more.

**Andrew:** I'm going to use an example a little later on about an organic dairy farm that I think I spoke to you about at some stage. I've done a bit of work on sharing that story about the organic dairy farm and their organic café and how that was structured. This farm has won a whole lot of awards and the café has won a lot of awards. The business has really transformed a part of the Atherton tablelands at the back of where I live.

It was interesting. What really did that for them was they just changed their story. Far from saying what everyone else says, 'we make milk and we grow food', they turned it into a much more compelling narrative. They use that in awards, they use their story in everything: in all their awards, in their material. Mungalli Creek Dairy is their name but I'll talk about that a little bit more. Thanks folks. It's always interesting. There's Darren.



**Darren:** Most of you know me, Darren Finkelstein, the boat guy. I run a business that is all about connecting people, families and their kids on the water together to enjoy quality time. As my media career is starting to develop, everything I do is all about telling stories and I need to get better at it. I couldn't think of two better blokes to listen to.

**Andrew:** Darren is helping us out today too, so thanks very much for doing that.

Thanks guys, nice to get that intro, nice to get a bit of the lay of the land on where everyone is at and why everyone is here. We'll do our utmost to make sure we address where every single person is coming from, trials, tribulations, opportunities, those kinds of things. But I have absolutely no doubt at all that you're all going to get a lot out of today and so will we.

I'm going to hand you across to Nick and he's going to do some background now on "The Art of Story Telling". Over to you buddy.





## SESSION ONE

**Nick:** Thank you mate. For those people in the room who don't know me, my name is Nick Bowditch. I come from a learning development and tech startup background. Most recently I'm from a tech giant background working for both Facebook and Twitter in Australia. I want to tell you two stories before we get started. The first one is my story and the second one is the story that really has defined me much more than my own story.



My story is that I spent an eight year period away from Australia. In that eight years I had a very similar background to the big fellow, in that I taught people how to dive and hopefully not drown. For eight years I worked in the scuba diving industry in Asia and the Caribbean, the Greek islands and Latin America. It was pretty much as awesome as that sounds. But after those eight years away from Australia, everything gets old after a while, even the most amazing eight year period of travel and cool places.

I really missed Australia and my family and my friends, so I thought, I'll go home. So I lobbed back home after eight years and I really had no skills, no employable skills, no transferable skills. I'd sat on a beach and talked rubbish to girls and tried to get them to dive for eight years. That doesn't really translate into useful, employable skills. So I struggled to get back into the workforce.

I thought, what do I know how to do? I know how to travel, so I'll get a job in the travel industry. It was the worst decision ever, I'll tell you why in a second. I got a job in a call centre with about three hundred other people on the floor. We'd all sit in our three by three cubicles and be phone monkeys. Has anyone worked in call centers? It's the pits, it's so bad.

First of all, I had to travel two hours there and two hours back, every single day, twenty hours on the train, to get to this terrible job. Call centers are call centers and I think everybody has an idea what it is like. But I worked in a place where you had to log off the system to go to the toilet, or lunch. At the end of the week, you'd get this spreadsheet with the three hundred people who worked there and how much time they'd been to the toilet that week, in a



competition. The people who had been to the toilet the least got a \$50 Myer voucher at the end of the week because they were much more productive sitting at their desk.

Not only was it soul destroying but it probably created a few urinary tract infections over the years too, that place. It was dire, it was really bad. The worst part about it, I traveled twenty hours to it and I'd sit in this little cage, and they did that on purpose, with a computer connected to the internet and a phone.

At first I thought, that's odd. Then it started eating away at me the more weeks I worked in this place. Why wasn't I and everyone sitting at home in their pajamas doing this? There was really no reason whatsoever for us to be there, other than you could go to the toilet all the time at home and no one would know.

I thought, someone has got to build a business, and at the time it didn't exist. Someone has got to build a business where you can buy a travel package online and the person you're buying it from is online, sitting in the garage or whatever and it can't possibly fail. So the idea burnt away and burnt away in me. Then I started to get really depressed about this job and about my future and about my family and my life. Things started to implode a little bit and I was just becoming really bad to live with.

One day my wife and I had a discussion. It was determined out of that discussion that I should quit the job, start the business that I had talked about for ages that didn't exist. If I didn't, I should just be quiet about it because she was well over it and fair enough.

So that Friday at the end of the week, I went into my boss' office very meekly and politely resigned, just in case I was back there in two weeks. He let me go without putting up much of a fight which was disappointing. That probably said how useful I was in the place, and I left. Then I started [nickbowditchtravel.com](http://nickbowditchtravel.com). That was like a blog.

When we started we had about \$400 in the bank between my wife and I. She was a fulltime student at the time, so she wasn't exactly revenue positive, although she brought other skills to the table. We didn't have any money and we didn't have any business acumen. I had no experience running business at all. But I thought, how hard could it be?

About a week after starting this new business and being unemployed, we found out we were having our first baby as well. So no money, baby coming, no idea how to run a business, but I was a very good Googler, and still am. I kept googling things like 'how do you start a business with no money?' 'How do you feed a family with no money?' and different things.

The thing that kept coming back to me was social media. It's free. This is a long time ago. When



we started that business, there were no ads on Facebook, so it was a while ago. If you read the articles I was reading, all you had to do was start a Facebook page, people would flock to it. They would buy anything you wanted them to and you would be a millionaire in a few weeks. So I thought, this sounds alright, we'll do that.

Because there were no ads, it was really about relationships and story telling. If we had any money when I started, we would have gone broke a few times. It was a terrible business and we really struggled to make money. Then I found the power of online video and YouTube and telling a story through video.

I'd record these two minute silly videos of me being an idiot, talking about Thailand. 'You should take your family to Thailand' and whatever. It really started to take off. I'd put all this science into creating this great business and then it was really all about these two minute silly videos where I made a fool of myself and talked about the destination. That was what actually started to sell. Eighteen months after that, we became a million dollar business and were off and running.

That was my first online business and I've had two since, one being an affiliate sales business and one being an agency where we helped small businesses with their social effort. Out of that, I got a job at Facebook.

I was doing a gig like this, a ninety minute social schtick. It was in Melbourne at the National Small Business Summit. It sounds a lot more grandiose than it is. A guy came up to me at the end of it and said, great presentation. I said, thank you. He said, my name is Andy and I'm from Facebook. I thought, goodness, what have I just been saying for the last ninety minutes about Facebook, rewinding it. I thought, the next thing out of his mouth would be 'and we're suing you. Cease and desist.'

He said, we're going to start a small business team here in Australia and New Zealand, based in Sydney. We want you to run it. He'd done a lot of research about me and knew all the ad campaigns we'd run and all sorts of things. His coming to watch that gig was the final interview, without me even knowing.

It was really great. I stayed there for just over two years, building that team and building that business. Then I left earlier this year and now I'm working at twitter one day a week, basically doing the same thing for Twitter. They are where Facebook was two and half years ago in the journey of building the small business environment. So that's where I'm at now. Then I just basically do a lot of this sort of speaking and a bit of writing and so on.





You'd think that was my story right? But that's not my story really. This is my story. In this envelope is about four and half years' of research done by my Mum to try to find out who she was and therefore who I am. So this is the story that really defines me.

In 1920ish, we think, there was a six year old boy and an eight year old girl. The six year old boy was my grandfather. They lived on a property on the south coast of New South Wales with their Mum and Dad and a few extended family.

One day their Dad drives out to work as he did every day. Literally a few minutes after pulling out of the driveway, two cars came in. In one car was a nun, and one car was a social worker type person and a policeman. They came in and they kidnapped them to take them from their indigenous family to give them to a white family to improve their life and to save them.

Of course it did anything but that. But the power of that story is that my Pop died when he was eighty-seven years old, so eighty-one years after that. For eighty-six of those years he had never told that story, ever. The stigma was too great, the shame of it was too great, that shame was ingrained in him, and therefore he wasn't able to tell that story. Because he wasn't able to tell that story, we didn't know any of this.

My Mum grew up without knowing who she was and therefore we don't really know who we are. She didn't know who her grandparents were. She didn't know if she had any cousins. She couldn't speak to her auntie, who is Pop's sister, because you didn't speak about it. Even my Nan who was married to him never spoke about it, never asked him about it.

You only had to look at him and know that he was an Aborigine. You knew, everyone knew, and yet you couldn't tell that story. So I've spent the last few years really trying to reclaim all that for my kids. I don't want them to be robbed of that either; they might choose to follow that path of their aboriginality or not. Either way, I'm going to tell them that story, the story that I was never told, the story my Mum was never told.

It's really a story of how powerful stories can be if they're not told. I get really emotional about it because I just think it is so terrible. I think it was brutal and cruel and if he was able to talk about it and if he was able to tell the story, our lives would be very different. My Mum's would be very different. I wanted to tell you that.

I have four children and the oldest is five. We have a five, three, two and a one year old. They have a lot of advantages, my kids. They have a really good life and they'll probably always will, hopefully. But the thing they can have now which I didn't have is the real story of their background and their life and their blood. That's the story that moves me and that's one that really changes me and keeps me telling stories and connecting with them and connecting with you as well.



We'll reflect on that a little bit but what I want to do today is go through the story telling framework that Andrew and I put together. We want to tell that story from my Dreamtime through to the time of Facebook. We will introduce a framework that we have printed out for you which is basically a structure to tell your story, how to construct your story. Then we also want to talk about how to deconstruct and reconstruct a story. We all have our story.

I was really impressed actually in the whip round and Andrew said, no one should say 'my company was founded then' and everyone is bored. Not one person said that. Claire you said you were nervous and intimidated by talking, but it didn't feel like that. That's the inner Claire telling you that because externally it didn't seem like that. So I want to talk about how we might use stories in that way.

I do want to reflect on my Aboriginal heritage and the story telling that comes from that because they're the longest stories that have ever been told. Indigenous Australia is the longest surviving civilization on earth, sixty thousand years of telling stories.

I was told a story by an Aboriginal lady a few weeks ago, not from my mob, from a mob in Sydney. It was the story of the waratah. The waratah is a flower which is the state emblem of New South Wales. It is red, but she tells the Dreamtime story that they used to be white. The red came from two parrots which loved each other and couldn't be together. When they were separated, their tears ran blood all over the white waratahs and that's why they're red.

She told it in such a way, that I thought, ok, that's totally believable. But she also told it as if she'd just made it up or just heard it yesterday. I said, where's that story written down? I'd love to read that. She said, it's not written down, it just came to me. My Mum told me that, her Mum told her that. That story is 40,000 years old potentially and it's all word of mouth. That is cool.

I want to hark back to that as much as I can. I'm proud of my indigenous heritage, but I'm proud of the fact that stories in general for humans can exist over that sort of time and still be so accurate and so beautiful and so passionate. We'll talk about that.

Fast forward, what I want to do is give you a brief history of story telling and storytellers over the years right up to now. These paintings go back to 45,000 BC, they've been dated and they are in Arnhem land, in Australia. These two animals don't exist anymore, they're extinct now. This story is about how to live with these animals and not be killed by them.

So a lot of story telling over the years, prehistoric story telling and pre time story telling that we'll talk about in a second is about telling the story of your family and you're telling fables and so on. But a lot of it is about surviving, how to eat, how to feed, how to not be eaten, how to coexist with other people. This is one of those stories.



These are caves in France. Has anyone been to Lascaux? This cave system is awesome. They're only 15,000 BC, only 15,000 years old. These again are stories of how to live with these beasts that are around us all the time and not be eaten by them. There are also stories in here about how to kill and cook this meat and not die from eating it. That's a pretty powerful story to pass down. It's interesting it was told so long ago and in such a vast way.



In Mesopotamia there was a ruler called Gilgamesh and he was a narcissist. Gilgamesh wanted his story told for ever and ever, he was truly a narcissist. This is the example of the first story being written down, or the hard copy version of a story. Twelve thousand years ago he had his story produced in parts around the town carved into the architecture of the town, page by page or story by story. His people, his minions couldn't help but know everything about him and be reminded of him all the time as they read this book, this epic drama as they moved through town. I think that is cool.



I want to talk a lot about how stories empower people, particularly women. Story telling empowers women especially. Murasaki Shikibu was a lady-in-waiting in the Japanese court about a thousand years ago. She was a poet. She wrote under a pseudonym because she had no power in her life. Yet the material she wrote, which is still taught as if it was modern literature in Japan,

in that culture was very powerful and very empowering of other women who worked as servants in Japan at the time. This is a lesson of really how much power stories can give, even if you're not telling them.

Let us fast forward to this young fellow. He wrote a few plays back in the day. The interesting thing about Shakespeare was that the majority of material he wrote didn't get produced in his lifetime. He was like Roy Orbison, much more famous after he died and successful after he died.





He was a prolific writer obviously but the great tragedy of that was there was no take up on his story at the time. His life would have been totally different, had that been so. But he was still a prolific writer and positive in his writing about it.

Jane Austen was also a symbol of female power at a time when females had no power. She was educated, she was wealthy but her stories were able to mock the ruling class and the aristocracy, so much so that it made it welcoming and engaging for everybody and it really changed Britain at the time.



Fast forward to these two. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were messed up. A lot of the fairytales we teach our children were written by these two lunatics. We still tell them exactly as they were written. It's just the inflexion of your voice that makes it sweet that Hansel and Gretel escape the psychopathic, pedophile, murdering woman. That's messed up; so many of their stories were really dark.

This guy Wilhelm, he was the darkness. Without him, these stories would just be horror stories, but it was balanced by the fact the kids are cute. But they weren't written as kids' fairytales. These were written for adults. We've now corrupted them over three hundred years to make them these cute sorts of stories. The lesson is stories aren't always as you plan them and they're not engaged and received as you plan them either.

Another good example is Mary Shelley who is most famous for *Frankenstein* and also for being a wife of a famous person at the time. The interesting thing about Shelley was she was a great student and great exponent of Gothic Romanticism. She wrote *Frankenstein* as a love story. In her mind it was a love story. If you think about it, it's a messed up love story but it kind of is. There is an element of love story about it. Yet it is a horror story now, three hundred years on. Again, it's that how you write your story and how you believe your story is going to be told could be very different to how it is received. That is true in business as well as personal work.

I'm going to burst another bubble here. Hans Christian Anderson was by all accounts someone you wouldn't leave your children anywhere near. He was a bad person. There are different stories. I have two mates from Denmark, one who is a real Anderson scholar and the other has just learnt it over time. He wrote a lot of stories which are obviously fairytales and are kids'



stories now. But he wasn't that guy at all. The lesson is, it doesn't matter who it is, you can still write something completely external of your life or experience or whatever.

I think he wrote the most damaging story of the female race ever. It was *The Little Mermaid*. Disney picked it up and made it into a cute film which I don't think any girl on earth should be shown ever. It says that you are not going to be anything unless you give up who you are, give up your cool fin thing and living in the water to get legs so you can get some guy. That's a terrible message, but this is the message we give our girls, thanks to Hans.



Dickens was interesting because Dickens wrote about a Britain that was dark and sad and poor. It was, but it wasn't his Britain. He wasn't connected to that life at all. Yet he wrote very clearly and you would think, reading his material, that was the Britain he lived in and it wasn't at all.

The cool thing about Dickens was that he was the first blogger. A lot of his work wasn't 'I've written a book, here it is'. A lot of his work was 'I've written this chapter, here it is. People read the chapter and wanted more and he'd write the next one. So he was writing stories in installments, blogging. At the end he'd have a piece of work. Obviously he was doing it because he couldn't write quickly enough and there was a hunger for his work. He was just holding people off by giving it piece by piece.



That's an interesting thing to think about for us. Do you want to give them the whole cow or do you want to give them just a glass? This is how you have to think about it.

Does anyone know who Edith Wharton was? No, neither did I. She wrote a book called *The Age of Innocence*, which was the most famous thing she wrote. Everyone one of us should know who she is.



She won three Pulitzer prizes and one Nobel Prize for Literature in a time when women weren't recognized for anything. Yet nobody knows who she is. If she was a man winning those four coveted awards, she'd have statues everywhere.

I include her because she is really a symbol of that lack of power despite being a really great storyteller. There is not always the opportunity for people, especially women, to really break out and make a big statement in story telling. But surely there is now and we'll talk a bit more about that. But this woman certainly did that.

She was a feminist icon, she was a successful author, she was a powerful socio-political figure at the time. A lot of it came from writing from experience but also writing about the way things should have been, the way things should be. I think we can all write that, whether it be business communications or personal communications. Some of the most powerful story telling you can write is the story of what should be. Everyone knows what it is, everyone is living it all the time and she was a good example of that.

This woman is probably the single most influential author, in her genre, of all time. Movies like *The Sixth Sense* or anything that has a twist at the end would never have happened had it not been for Agatha Christie. She was the original whodunit and she was the original woman who wrote with the writing device called the trick, which is when you say, I did not see that coming, when you get to that bit. It's a very powerful device and she was a very influential woman.



As was this man, he could tell a story or two. He obviously became famous for animation. We'll talk about Pixar in a minute because I'm a massive fan and scholar of Pixar because I have to be. It really all started with Walt Disney and we'll cover some more Pixar things in a second.

Has anyone been to Morocco? This is Marrakech in Morocco. This is Jamaa el Fna which is the main

square. I was in Marrakech for about a week and in Morocco for about six weeks. In this city I was in for about a week and every day it was either 50 or 51 degrees when I was there in the daytime. So you don't do anything in the daytime except sit around and say, wow, this is what 50 degrees feels like. This square is empty.





But in the nighttime it comes alive. There are food carts and unreal smells and noise. There are acrobats and snake charmers and all sorts of crazy things. It is a really great environment. There are about four or five old men who tell stories to an assembled group. They just sit on a milk crate or stand up or whatever, soapbox style and people sit in front of them and they tell their stories.

At the time my Arabic was basically please, thank you and where is the toilet, which when you're in Morocco is pretty handy to know. I didn't understand a single word of what these storytellers said.

Yet one night and the next night, I sat in front of this guy for four hours and listened to him tell stories in Arabic. I was completely engaged and hanging on every word of every story. There was drama, there was comedy, there was thriller and different things. I didn't understand it vocally at all but he was such a powerful storyteller in the way he used his voice and projection and characterizations with his face. Also the reactions of the people of the people who were assembled told me what was happening a little bit. They were laughing and crying; it was super story telling.

I wanted to include that because it's not always about the written word. Andrew is going to talk about speaking and presenting but there is so much more to story telling than that for some people. That guy could never have stood up like we do in front of five thousand people at a gig and do a presentation. That would have been too much for him. But at this level of, I can engage you in this beautiful story, he was just solid, just gold. So I wanted to include that as a modern example.



The final two examples are from my time at Facebook. This lady is called Sheryl Sandberg. She runs Facebook basically. She is a very impressive woman and a very good storyteller. She is very simple in her communication. She is the Chief Operating Officer. She makes all the business decisions and she heads all the business teams and they all report to her.

She would never have had that job ten years ago, not just because the world has changed but because Facebook has really changed. Facebook really changed the way that the ceiling looks, especially for women. She is a really great storyteller, very self-deprecating but super clever.



She is very intimidating as well in a lot of ways for both men and women, basically because of her intellect and her charm.

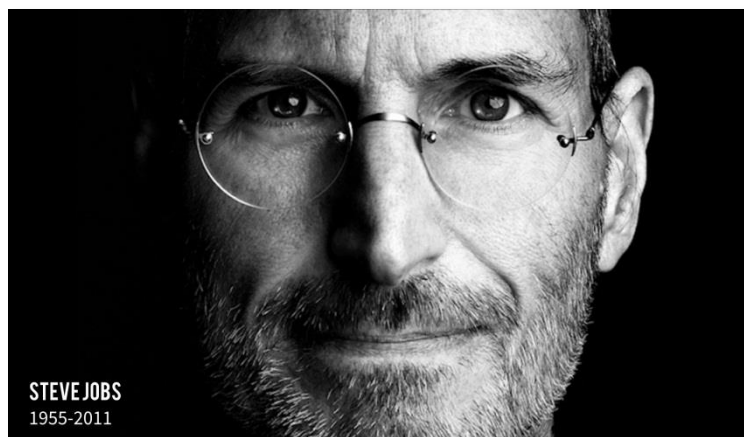


This guy is my man crush really. His name is Chris Cox. He is the Vice President of Product at Facebook. The thing I love about Chris is he can tell a story. He was the fourth employee at Facebook, employed by Zuck right at the start. He tells a story which is a bit famous now of how he left that meeting and said to Mark Zuckerberg, I'm not interested. This will never be anything. No one is even going to

know what Facebook is. It's a dumb idea and you'll never be able to make any money from it. So he swallows that now.

The great thing about him is, every time someone starts at Facebook, they go through a week long orientation. At ten o'clock on the first Monday morning, Chris Cox, the Vice President of Product, speaks to the incoming class. It might be ten people, it might be a hundred. He tells that story for an hour, no slides, no notes, every eye on him. You think you're in Disneyland anyway the first day there because there are so many cool things going on.

He tells that story every Monday of his life and has done so for the last seven years. Every single Monday he tells the same story. But when you sit there and listen to it, it's like the first time he has every told it. He is so engaging and so passionate and funny. He is just perfect.



This guy, Steve Jobs, could tell a story or two as well. From a business communications and from a commercial messaging point of view, he was not a greatly endearing guy one to one by all accounts. He wasn't a particularly pleasant character at times. But he was able to convince people that first of all they needed to carry music around with them on something that wasn't a tape or

whatever. But actually this iPod thing was like a magic trick that you could load songs on for



free and listen to whenever. Then it became a phone. People said, I've got to have that. He created the fanaticism around Apple that I am completely beholden to.

I was saying the other day, if someone bagged Apple to me, I would punch them in the face. That's how strongly I feel about that branding, indirectly or directly because of this guy.

The other side of him was in the time when he wasn't at Apple. He worked to create something called Pixar. I'm going to play a couple of clips of Pixar, one in this session and one in the last session. This one for me sums up story telling in so many ways. It goes for three minutes and I will talk to you after it. Just think about what tells the story here and what traditionally is missing from this story. (Disney Pixar "Up")



It's beautiful story telling but what device isn't used there? Words, there are none at all. Yet you cover sixty, seventy years' of life in three minutes, ups, downs, the whole thing. One of the devices that is in there that we'll talk about a bit is music, the score. It moves quickly and whimsically and then it gets quite dark when it is dark. There are also the little visual cues of the ties being done up and how those

ties changed and then they end up in the bow tie to cover that forty years in four seconds period of that thing.

I just think that is fantastic story telling for someone to have written that and put it in that movie. Is that for kids? No, that's for Mums and Dads. We'll visit Pixar a bit later as well. I just love it.

We're going to give you copy of the framework that Andrew and I put together. A lot of feedback we get about constructing stories is people saying to me, I don't know how to start, or I've got nothing to talk about. I'm sure the video makers in the room, people who do corporate videos, have people say to them all the time, no one is going to watch my video. But it all depends on how you frame it and how you talk about it.

There are seven basic features of the framework that covers how you're going to do it. The seven basic premises, we'll use throughout the day through both of Andrew's sessions as well.





The first is why tell the story? What are you trying to get out of it, what is the point of telling the story and so on. The second thing is authenticity. I think authenticity is the most important thing we have, not just in business and in story telling, but in life.

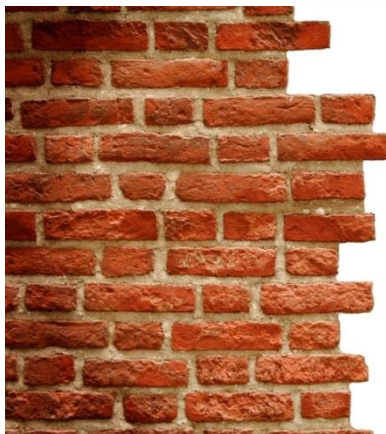
If I turned up to these gigs, or any of the gigs I do in a shirt and tie or a jacket and tie, people would think, that is not quite right, that is not quite congruent with my message and who I am. So I think the authenticity thing is totally, at first anyway, the perception of how you look and how the story looks, then underlying that, there are obviously different things.

But can you tell it authentically? Is it an appropriate story for you to be telling? Should the story being told, be told in the first place? Should you be telling it as well? What is the key message you want people to take away? You should have that before you even start in some ways. I always like starting at the end in these things. The outline of the story is obviously important, whether you're writing a book or a blog post. It's still good to write chapter headings or just start to write and then the other material will come, hopefully.

What is the best vehicle for the delivery of that story? Is it online, is it a book, is it a blog piece or spoken presentation? Most importantly how do you measure it? Has it worked? Has it hit the mark? Has it delivered that message to the people you want to deliver it to?

### THE STORYTELLING FRAMEWORK

- ★ **Why tell the story?**
- ★ **Can you tell it authentically?**
- ★ **Is it an appropriate story to be told?**
- ★ **What is the key message to take away?**
- ★ **Outline the story.**
- ★ **What is the best mechanism for the story?**
- ★ **How do you know if it has worked?**



### HOW TO CONSTRUCT YOUR STORY.

Show, don't tell.

Have a beginning,  
a middle and an end.  
But start with the end.

Always use,  
"Let me tell you a story".

Let's dig a bit deeper. How do you construct the story? I think it can be very overwhelming or it can be very simple. I like simple, so I prefer the show, don't tell.

Even if it is the story of more nutritious, more accessible dog food, this can be told potentially from the point of view of the pet or the people who feeding that pet and how it changes their life, how

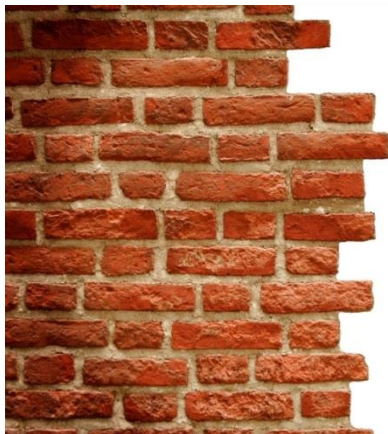


their life fits in around their animal. It's not even talking about the pet food. That whole back story is so much more important and showing rather than telling the features and benefits works really well.

I think you should always have the beginning, middle and end. That three act play has lasted the test of time. But I like to think about the end first, start at the end.

This is a bit contentious, always use 'let me tell you a story'. I think this, obviously, because I wrote it. Some people do say, don't premise it that way. If you do, people will say, oh, I don't want to hear a story. The rationale of that is that people don't want to hear stories, but I don't know that people don't want to hear stories. I think people are used to hearing stories. If you're a good storyteller, it doesn't matter how much they don't want to hear it, they still are going to hear it.

I said at the very start, I want to tell you two stories. So you think, ok, hit me with it. I'm not going to be given a brochure, I'm not going to be given give some boring sales pitch, I going to be told a story. I think for me, that's makes people more receptive.



### HOW TO CONSTRUCT YOUR STORY.

Choose a classic story structure or invent your own:

- The great journey.
- Coming of age.
- The sacrifice.
- The epic battle.
- The fall from grace.

There are ten basic story structures. Most of the stories that you could rattle off the top of your head, movies or stories come from one of these ten. Or you could use your own. They are the great journey, the coming of age, the sacrifice, the battle and the fall from grace, the trick which is the Christie twist at the end, love, fate, revenge and mystery.

Every great movie or every great book has basically come from at least one of those ten things. We're going to give you this presentation as well. So you choose one of those or maybe you come up with your own.

Something I learned at Facebook and I still think about a lot is people look at what you tell them to look at. On a website for instance or on a social platform, we directed people exactly to where we wanted them to look and potentially where we didn't want them to look.

A strong call to action on a website is strong because you've grabbed them and said, no, here, look here, click here. So from a story telling point of view, you might have lots and lots of noise

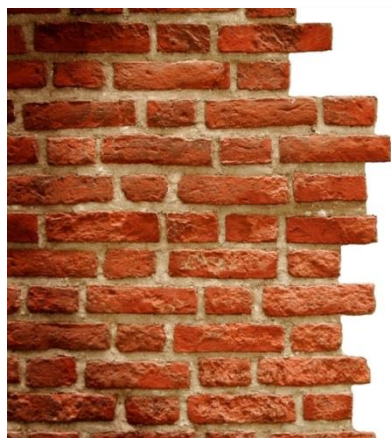




but you really want to hone it down and say, this is the message I want to give you. Here it is. You're really telling someone exactly what you want from them or where to look.

Goodies and baddies don't always work. The extreme of love and hate, good and bad doesn't always work. Humans are far more hard wired to be empathetic than to choose a side. Think about that from a business story telling point of view. Or from personal training point of view, it's not fat or skinny, it's everything else that comes with either the journey or the reward of that journey. That's what people are far more hard wired to accept.

Something else we learned at Facebook is that you want to make them sad or you want to make them scared. From a business point of view, if you want uptake on your logo or uptake on your message, or from a politics point of view, it also works as well. Make someone sad or make someone scared and they'll be far more engaged in your journey.



### HOW TO CONSTRUCT YOUR STORY.

People are more affected by brands and logos when they are scared or sad.

People are inherently lazy. Make it easy for them.

Anticipating is better than getting.

### HOW TO CONSTRUCT YOUR STORY.

Choose a classic story structure or invent your own:

The trick.  
Love.  
Fate.  
Revenge.  
Mystery.

I always thing in a presenting point of view, I would much rather make you cry than make you laugh because I think that is more endearing and that is more engaging. People are lazy and a bit dumb generally, so don't make it hard for them, remove the friction as much as you can from the engagement and the consumption of your story. Tell them where they need to go, take them there and

make it easy, the easier the better.

Every kid at Christmas knows anticipation is better than getting. So build the anticipation, build the story and then hopefully the getting is just a nice reward at the end.

How do you start? Where does the construction of the story start? Almost every time I deliver a corporate message for a client or we redesign an About Us page on a website or whatever, we start with this very simple children's fairy tale structure. Once upon a time, there was this and





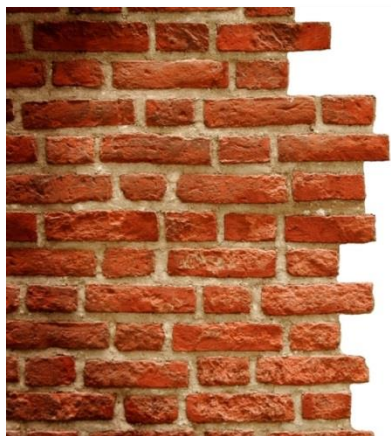
every day this happened and then one day something different happened. Because of that, this happened and then because of that, they all lived happily ever after. It sounds so childish and basic but it really works.

So, there has always been the pet food industry. It has always been there and you have always had to feed your pets and so on. Every day, people bought dog food or pet food without even thinking about it, either the process of how they bought it or how the dog felt about it or what it meant to him and their life and their health and nutrition and so on.

One day this mob comes along and they've got a different way of thinking about it and a different way of producing food and marketing it to pets. Because of that, suddenly pets are far more healthy and living longer and enjoying their life more. The relationship between the owner and pet is better and because of that, that business really started to take off and got a lot more interest from different people. Now they do cats and budgies and all sorts in the same way. Finally they all lived happily ever after.

You see it's problem, solution, simple marketing. Marketing is lies, marketing is lying. But if you make the marketing, the lying, about solving a problem, and tell that story through that very simple child fairy tale structure, it works. You don't have to say 'once upon a time' as you're telling your story, as I didn't then, you can say, the way it's always been is this, every day people have done this. But one day, this came along. That might work.

In video it works just as well. A two minute video can show, this is the opening of our first shop or this was how our first website looked and it was abominable. But every day people came to it. One day, we decided to get video on instead of doing whatever. Because of that, now we're big and because of that, we lived happily ever after. It's a really basic structure but is applicable across every single story.



### HOW TO CONSTRUCT YOUR STORY.

Stuck in the middle?

Make a list of what  
WOULDN'T happen next.

That is the start. What if you get stuck in the middle? I think this works nine times out of ten. If you're stuck in the middle of the creation of a story, I always make a list of what wouldn't happen next, literally making a list. In making that list of what would not possibly happen next, nine times out of ten the thing that does come next comes to me. You're just ruling out the ridiculous until all that remains



is the obvious, at least to you. So think about how you might use that and then how you use story arcs.



Some people in this room have heard me talk a lot about story arcs. Story arcs are basically arcs that bind characters into different characterizations and different parts of a bigger story. I'll show you how we're going to do that. This is *Frozen*, which is a phenomenon, even by Disney standards. There are many reasons for that, but one of the main reasons it's a phenomenon is that it

completely disrupts Disney. It disrupts everything that has gone before it, except maybe *Brave* which is another movie similar to it.

What is the disruption? What is the difference in this movie to every other piece of Disney material we force down our kids' necks? The boy is not the hero, firstly, in fact he is contemptible. He is the baddie and the male is never the baddie. In Disney it is always the wicked stepmother or the evil witch. You've got to pit the woman against the woman to make it work.

The other thing is the female characters are the strongest characters. Spoiler alert, she chooses the love of her sister over the love of her guy for the happy resolution. That never happens, ever.

The other thing about it is the guys are accessories, they are external figures to the whole story rather than the crux of the story. It's always the girl needs the guy to kiss her on the lips to wake her up from her sleep, or she has to get married because then she is going to be happy. That is a terrible message to tell girls.

My five year old daughter went through a period of obsessively wanting to be a princess. I've beaten it out of her over time. If you're going to be anything, be the queen. Princesses have to be competitive and scrappy and whatever. At least be the queen and in charge. The other thing is, I think to present a story about the only way you can complete yourself is with another person, is a terrible message.

For the people who haven't seen it, I'll give you a quick précis. This woman is the queen. Her

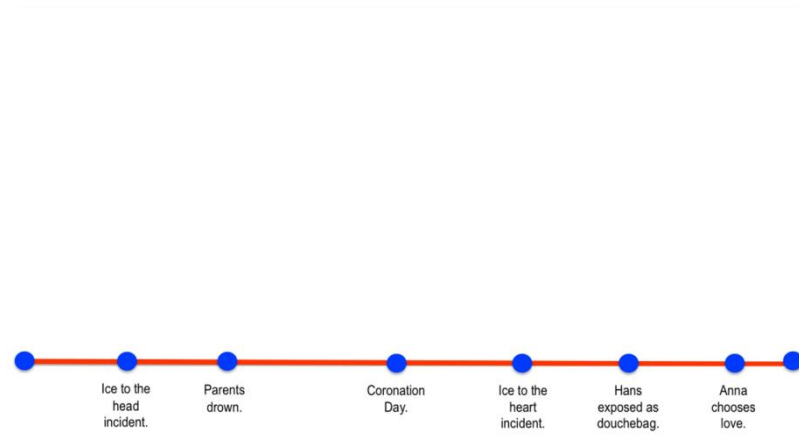


parents died and that is why she's the queen. She's got this special power and she can shoot ice at people. It's cool but she is really ashamed of it for some reason and hates it. This is her sister who is the real hero of the story. She goes and finds her because she takes off when she realizes she is going to hurt people with her ice.

This guy, Kristoff is the hero. In every other Disney film he would be the hero and yet he is not, he is snubbed at the end in a way. He is not required for the happy ending.

This person is the trick, is the Agatha Christie. I won't spoil it for anyone who hasn't seen it but he's not as he seems.

This annoying and slightly disturbing character is the story arc. He's a binding character and I'll show you in a second how that works. When you first watch it, I can't remember the first time I watched it, you think this is just an annoying person, the Jar Jar Binks of *Frozen*. What's he really in it for, I don't really get it. But he is the character who binds the whole thing together.



I want to show you how it works with story arcs. This is the timeline of the story with the major events along the way. This is the start of the movie and the end of the movie. The major incidents are when she receives the ice to the head, the parents' drowning, the coronation day, the ice to the heart incident,

Hans being exposed as contemptible and Anna choosing love.

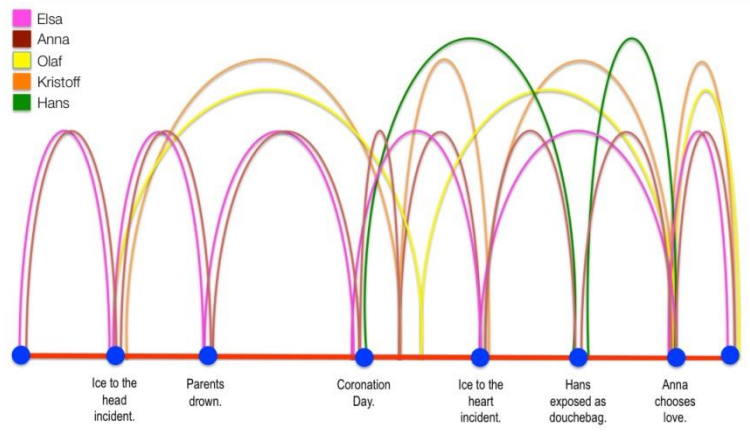
If you think about how this story is bound together, characterization wise, it is this. The top two are the two sisters, and through the story, they're bound together until she goes mad and starts shooting all over the place. Then they split up through here and then they're resolved at the end.

The annoying little snowman is, right from the start almost, the person who binds the story together and the girls together. He's the one who works out the act of love which is going to save her, not the guy. The would-be hero is through it as well, separate to it. He's in there and then the baddie just comes in half-way through and then he is edged out before the end to allow for the happy resolution.

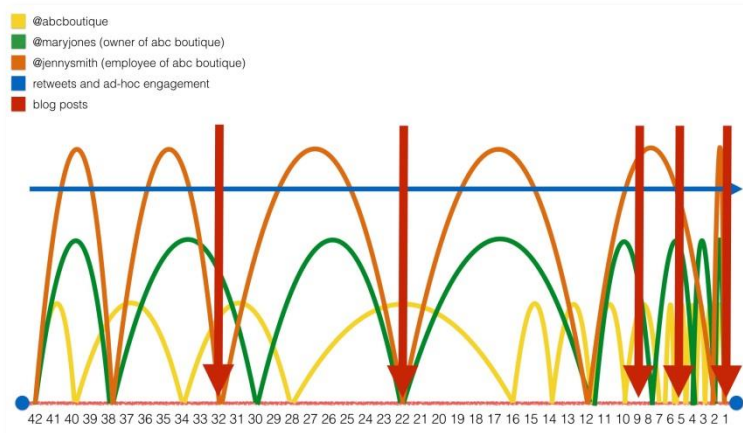




Why am I showing you that? Why do I say that? This can be from your business story telling point of view, this could be the opening of a shop, the opening of a second shop, the launch of a website, the launch of your startup, whatever it is. You want to think about how you're telling your story, from a marketing point of view or not, well before that time. Plan the characterization and plan the story telling through. Let's show that in a more detailed way.



This is that event in your business or it might be the start of summer or whatever. They're days, so six weeks back, forty-two days back is when you start to think about telling this story from a business point of view. Think of this being some point or some major event in your business' life. I'm going to use the example of a boutique, but this could be anything.



The first thing I want to overlay in here is the Twitter account for the boutique.

This is the corporate messaging. You start that six weeks back, with a tweet there, a tweet a couple of days later. You might space it out a little bit because you don't want to be too weird about it. As you get towards the opening of the store or the event, it starts to be more and more prolific.

There are tweet after tweet after tweet because now people are engaged in the story and they're thinking about the story. They become a consumer of the business before the business is even opened.

The second layer I want to put on it then is the owner of that store. This is her twitter account or whatever it might be. She's going to obviously talk about the fact that she is opening this new store. She is pretty happy about that but she is not tweeting as often as the corporate account. You don't want to be too creepy about it and you want to keep people inside. You can see that sort of tweeting and that messaging.



This can be Facebook, it can be blog posts, it can be anything. I'm just picking twitter because they pay me at the moment. So that is the third thing, someone who works at the store. It's even more important that they don't say, I love where I work. It's fantastic and the people are great. You want something from them but not necessarily prolific rubbish. So it's spaced out a little bit more again.

Then the fourth thing is all of the other conversation that goes on. Retweets, ad hoc engagement, just chatter. You can see this is Olaf, this is the snowman, this is binding the whole story together.

The fifth element that I'm going to put on here, but you can put anywhere is just, for instance, blog posts. How do blog posts fit in with this communication as well?

Then you have at the end of that, a six week content calendar plan to tell the story of opening the new business, whatever the thing is you're working towards.. You have a calendarized, organized way to tell that story and put the layers in.

There might be other layers too. If you think about this from a movie point of view, then you think about the score and how the music changes and so on. For your business, that might be Facebook you can overlay in that or media PR interviews, whatever.

Planning that story or planning your content, especially from a business point of view, means you don't come into your work on Tuesday at nine o'clock in the morning and sit in front of your computer and say, right today I'm going to write on my Facebook page about the business. An hour and a half later you're still on the Kardashians' page and you've actually done nothing.

This means you can be structured. Everyone who is either part of your story or part of telling your story knows the plan.

Who works on behalf of other people, like an agency or you're telling other people's stories? From that point of view, of course then you can show the stakeholders of your story making, six weeks' of plan and everyone is on the same page. This is a great way to get you organized and makes sure that every element of your story is being told in every way that you can.

I want you to think briefly about the worst movie you've ever seen. Feel free to choose my example, *The Notebook*, or choose another one. I want to quickly talk about reconstructing and deconstructing a story. Has everyone got the terrible movie in their head? I don't mean *Speed 2* terrible, but something about it is bad, the ending is rubbish, or you wouldn't have done it that way or whatever.



Now I want you to think about the thing that really makes it bad for you. It might be characterization, it might be the acting, it might be the casting. Has everyone got that? Now I want you to think about how you would reconstruct that story and make it better for you.



For instance, this movie, *The Notebook*, for me, I didn't find it sad because I didn't really connect to her. I just think he's an insipid man, so I don't really connect to him at all. I would remake it with someone else. The casting was bad for me. The story telling was so obvious to me. Everything about it was obvious to me. Likewise, *Titanic* – that boat just took way too long to sink. Could she not have just moved over a little bit and let him on that massive bit of wood she was lying on? These are the things that I would change.

I want three quick volunteers to tell me, firstly, the movie, what's wrong with it and how you fix it.

**Volunteer:** *Pretty Woman*.

**Nick:** Because of the glorification of prostitution by any chance?

**Volunteer:** Yes, but I also think that it made it look really attractive. She was having a great time. The thing I hated as I watched it twice, I wanted to watch it twice to find out why I liked it so much. How I would change it? Definitely I wouldn't want to glorify prostitution.

**Nick:** The interesting thing is in the story telling aspect of that movie, you actually forget she's a prostitute. It's a love story. It's not a love story. He's completely exploiting her. The whole thing is so messed up.

**Audience:** She is exploiting him.

**Nick:** Is she in the position of power in that movie? She does not have the power in that movie.

**Audience:** She does.





**Nick:** In what way? In the way he picks her up off the street and then if he didn't stay with her she'd be back on the street?

**Audience:** She controlled it. He came in his car and went through the sunroof and climbed up.

**Nick:** I'm with you. It's not a story young women should watch. I think it's a messed up premise for a love story. Two more?

**Volunteer:** I think you kick those movies you don't like out of your head. I was watching something the other day on TiVo. It was a really nice movie, a really nice story and had great actors. But the dialogue was bad, you couldn't engage at all. The whole thing needs to come together, doesn't it? It was very stilted and you just got bored. I deleted it.

**Nick:** It's funny. That aspect is funny, but it is also funny the diversity of movies that come out when you talk about this. Someone in Brisbane said *Days of Thunder*. *Days of Thunder* is the best movie ever made. That is the single best love story ever told. How can you not love *Days of Thunder*? It's got everything. You laugh, you cry, it's got everything. I think it's fantastic. It's got NASCAR.

**Volunteer:** Mine is Spanish art house, it was called *Pan's Labyrinth*.

**Nick:** I'm with you on that too. How would you make it better? It's a fantastic story.

**Volunteer:** It's a fantastic story. There is so much allegory and metaphor in there. But you didn't connect with them, they were too unreal. The hilarious thing for me was I was out with a guy I had been seeing for a little while but not super long. He had been the one who had wanted to see it. I disengaged from the movie. At some point I looked across and saw that he was totally disengaged with it. But he sat there because he thought I was enjoying it.

**Nick:** It's interesting about the consumption of your story.

**Volunteer:** The conversations we had afterwards were interesting.

**Nick:** *Vanilla Sky* was another Tom Cruise failure.

**Volunteer:** The one I had in my head which I am trying to work through was *The Fly*, the remake of *The Fly*, the Jeff Goldblum one. The cast, the fly, the whole thing I can't get any other movie into my head other than that one. If you ask me what would make it better, not making it might have helped. The cast were terrible, the whole thing was not real at all. If you put a bit more effort into it, it could have been a bit more creepy and spooky.



**Nick:** I always wonder, when you come to the end of some movies and say, oh, was that it? I wonder if that is just because of the edit or if that was the end they always had in mind.

**Volunteer:** Or someone, the editor, died who was responsible for the end?

**Nick:** I'll just finish with this. I think that if you think about the best stories and we've spoken about the storytellers as well as stories over time, from my indigenous heritage right through to today, the best stories come from disrupting the disrupted. Not just disruption, I talk about disruption all the time, but if you can disrupt what is already disrupted, that's what will be significant.

If you have a trade business, some people have disrupted that now by having a website and that is not very 'tradey'. But then you can disrupt the website of the trade business for instance and then that changes everything again. It's important, because it is a deeper understanding.

For instance, the movie *Brave* which is an animated story which came out before *Frozen* was the first that really had a powerful female character. But there was only one in it. It was love of a family. It was good story telling but *Frozen* really took that empowerment of women to another level. It was really disrupting the disruption of Disney before it.

From a story telling point of view on a website, I'm working with some guys on the Sunshine Coast and they make with apps and they work in a very high tech world. The About Us page of their website is a disruption on any other thing before it. It's a lot of video, it's a lot of story telling about them personally and their personal history and their struggles. It's really personal material that disrupts that.

Now we're disrupting that again by gamifying it. We're having some bits that you only get if you've seen the website ten times, twenty times, a hundred times. There are Easter eggs on the website which are hidden little things that you don't know are there.

They are little videos of them talking to their kids or playing. A deeper part of the tapestry of the story telling is underneath the website. It's to disrupt what has already been changed.

People are making cool websites now with HTML fibre and different things and people say, that is cool. But you can add gamification on that, and I'll talk a lot about gamification in the last bit. That is just game based leaning to something which shouldn't have games, which is our business world. That can change everything again. It might be best explained in the last session when I show you examples. It's not live yet. We've filmed everything now and we've got all the anecdotes and Easter eggs and story telling.



Gamification is rewarding people, choose your own adventure. There are two things involved. It's to take people away from the brand. I talk to a lot of businesses a lot about un-branding as opposed to branding. For the last five years we've told businesses and businesses have expected that you had to build a tribe around you. You need a fan base. You need a following on Facebook, you need heaps of followers on twitter.

The truth of it is that is rubbish. That's building your brand. We've got completely away from solution based selling. If someone is going to come to you, they're hungry or they want beautiful food. They really don't, and it's hard to hear this, they really don't care about your restaurant or your brand or you. They care about the experience and the satisfaction at the end.

That's what we used to sell until we became narcissists. Now we want these fans, we want these vanity metrics. How many Facebook likes can I get, how many clicks can I get on that, how many followers on twitter do I have?

That's rubbish it doesn't mean anything, especially now with so few of your Facebook following for instance seeing your content unless you pay, that's one example. Coke, with a hundred million fans or you with a hundred fans can reach the same people with the same amount of money. It's all vanity and it is all smoke and mirrors and it is all about this is my brand, I'm the main character here.

Instead, we should be going back to what are we trying to sell, how are we going to do it? What is your problem, what is the solution? These boys on the Sunshine Coast just want to give the solution. They don't really want to build their brand so much. That's the first thing. The second thing is they do have two really great personal stories which they're itching to tell. They would never tell it and they would be like my Mum with the indigenous story crammed down inside her because she doesn't have that outlet if we didn't do it this way.

**Audience:** Business is not just about the brand and what you're selling. People want to be in your heart and soul of what you're doing. It's almost like everything has gone back to a boutique feel now.

**Nick:** Things like Etsy are growing through the roof, handmade products instead of off the production line things.

Question: Does that undo itself because it then becomes so big?





**Nick:** No, because there are more and more players in that market who are going to be pushing it. It's a great way to be able to stand out from all the noise, is to take yourself out of it completely.

So often in small businesses especially, we're trying to reach the same people with the same product for the same price. So there is a whole lot of noise. If you can just take yourself out of all that noise and say, do you want to eat really nice food that is paddock to plate and is organic and we really believe in it? Then here it is. Where do you work? Oh, then I'll tell you what it is.

You've hooked them with the experience. Your story has hooked them with the solution and the satisfaction and the joy and the love that comes from having that food in your belly, rather than I want to eat at Heston's place and pay \$650 a plate because that is what you do and it's cool. I just think those days are over.

**Audience:** You really just go totally against the grain of what everyone else is doing.

**Nick:** You disrupt it. Well, not totally against it. You still have a marketing imperative but I think there is a lot of value to come from disrupting if you're a café or if you're an electrician or you're a pizzeria. Just think about it differently. Tell your story differently.

Question: Does that depend on who your niche is and the age group? Do the younger ones coming through rather than the baby boomers react differently?

**Nick:** No and if you can wait 'til the fourth session, we'll talk a lot about that.

**Audience:** I'm really struggling with that because I look at thought leaders and the human need to connect. They want to be loved, they need to connect. Of course no one cares about your business, they care about their own outcome. But the vehicle that comes in, they want to belong to a tribe and a leader. So I'm really struggling.

**Nick:** I would disagree. I don't think they do. Coles and Woolies are the perfect example of this.

**Audience:** But they've put Curtis Stone and Jamie Oliver there.

**Nick:** No, that's thinking of them. I want to think about their market. If you want nappies at 2am and Coles is a little bit further away than Woolies, you'll go to Woolies. You have no brand affinity whatsoever.



**Audience:** I do

**Nick:** Not in that situation.

**Audience:** What you're saying is you just grab whatever is the closest.

**Nick:** Yes. That's a bad example but the problem you have is you want this product, whatever it is. It can be available at all sorts of places, but you just want the product. You want the end solution of having that product. So the un-branding of that is taking out whoever it might be because it is the same product at the same price.

**Audience:** What about your Apple I'm going to punch someone in the face if they don't love Apple, it's attached to Steve Jobs? I'm struggling with this.

**Nick:** I love Apple because of the solution. I love Apple because of how it looks, how it makes me feel. If it wasn't for my wife and kids, I would love my laptop more than anything in the world.

**Audience:** I love Apple too.

**Nick:** I hate myself saying that but it's true. That's the solution for me. The vanity metrics don't count right now, but everyone still thinks they do. There are a lot of different reasons chief marketing officers want their minions to go out and get a thousand more 'likes'. That's how they can prove their value or something but it is rubbish. You know very well that it doesn't matter how many Facebook fans you have or how many twitter fans you have.

It's personified in no better way than the fact that you can buy ten thousand fans for \$5. They do nothing, whether they're real or fake or bots. That's what I mean.

**Audience:** I want to share a story. I worked at Apple for ten years. Those people who buy Apple product and this is my experience from it, there were two types. There were those who just loved the technology because it gave them an end result that was easy to achieve. There were those people who were in love with Steve Jobs, iconic, worshipped the ground he walked on. Those people weren't the people you could call into an argument to debate Apple product.

At the end of the day, what sold their products was simplicity, ease of use. It wasn't the emotional connection with Steve Jobs and the aura that he brought; it was how the product worked. Those were the people at the end who got Apple through all the hardship they went through. Because those people who were so devoted to Steve Jobs ended up realizing that it wasn't enough to make a business function and compete.



**Nick:** Recently the story of Apple has shown that without Steve Jobs those people are no longer connected. But people like me who are connected to the design and Jony Ive rather than Steve Jobs are still connected to the brand because of the simplicity and the beauty and the hipster coolness.

**Audience:** I understand there are some people who have moved away from an Apple iPhone platform and gone to the alternatives because they don't like, not the Apple product, but they don't like the Steve Jobs' iconic world that he created.

**Nick:** I can make it even more confusing than that from a story telling point of view. I have a Samsung smartphone and I'll never go back to an iPhone. Yet I love Apple. It's all about the story telling and the uptake of that story and the connection you have with it. But it's not the product, it's the solution. That's what I think.

If you un-brand everything else, and especially if you're in a market like in a trade or a pizzeria, where there are a whole lot of brands that you can't necessarily compete with, if you just step back from all that and you sell the solution and the joy and the happiness and the love and the warm and fuzzy thing, then I think you will be well ahead. But we've turned into a marketing conference, and that wasn't what it was supposed to be.

The next session after the break will be Andrew talking about the written word and how to be better at that. Thank you guys for your attention.





## SESSION TWO

Let's get going folks. What I want to start off talking to you about before I get into storytelling, the written word, is my relationship to storytelling and what I see happening, what is going on? Most of you know what I do actually for a living. I do tell lots of stories. I've been a storyteller for many, many years in different ways, often not realizing it. I started tell stories in my first job. Ironically my first real job was with Nick and I was teaching people how to dive.



I always found when I was teaching people how to dive, when we communicate in the dive world, it was always through the use of sign language and hands and hand signals and shark. That was the key word. Whenever you wanted to get the room's attention, you just had to mention the word shark. It was always that one thing in the back of everyone's mind. You started to get a feel for the power of words and the power of fear, that concept that Nick raised earlier.

For me, I write books and that was certainly a game changer for me as many of you know. I'll talk a bit about perhaps why my books have been successful and the use of storytelling in that particular space too. Nowadays I write for magazines, I write lots of different articles. Most of those are 'how to' advice. For me a lot of that is always sharing stories and that is the environment in which I use it. I feel fairly fortunate that my material gets well read.

It's the same for writing for websites now. There isn't a huge amount of difference in some respects but in the same vein there is enormous difference in terms of how we write for blogs. I'm going to talk about that as well, writing for magazines, writing for blogs, what are the things that are different between those. Obviously I speak at events, do workshops, do training, do all kinds of things. I write promotional material, my own.

In the past I ran a marketing company for many years. I was one of those guys who used to write the formal x,y,z: 'My company was formed in 1927 and I'm going to do my utmost to make this statement as boring as I possibly can.' I was probably responsible for half the financial planning websites that you read that are all the same or all the accountants' websites that were all the same. Then I realized, after a gradual journey, how differently we can do this work. I



certainly see it now, whether it be coaching, even presenting, in the media, in whatever shape or format it is.

I do all those kinds of things on a regular basis. I have many different stories that I tell. But what I'm finding is every year, my content is more and more story based. Whether it is a five hundred word blog article, whether it is a fifty thousand word book, more and more I'm using stories, certainly in the presenting area. I talk about that after lunch.

I always say the time I became a good presenter was when I stopped trying to be one and I actually just started to be authentic and talk from the heart. That's the best bit of advice I'd give to anyone who wants to be a good presenter. Don't try to be a technically great presenter, be a great person, talk from the heart. Be open, wear it on the sleeve, admit your faults, your failings, your imperfections and everyone else will go with you. We'll talk about that in a bit more detail.

One of the stories I want to share with you is a video which some of you have already seen I know. It's humorous. This is a video which they call a micro documentary these days. This is just one element. This is a bit about my background put into a video format as a couple of stories. ("Cross Roads" video)



That was a hard move for me to do that because that is my corporate video. Now most speakers tend to have the traditional kind of videos and I've got those, where you're on stage running round. The audience is going yay, you're fabulous and all that kind of thing.

To be honest, I got tired of that kind of message. Every speaker has got the same dull, boring

video. For me, it was really about trying to do something different and tell a story about what I stand for, where I've come from, more of the emotive material which I think is the game changer in this. It's extraordinary, that has only been out for a few weeks, 20th September that came out and it's been very interesting for me to see the reaction of people, of clients.

There is no real corporate material in there. I'm not even talking about what I do, what I talk about, but there is authenticity and engagement. I can't believe the number of speaking enquiries and other general enquiries I've had based on that video. I tried to get to the element of what is it about it. Why are people reacting, why are people connecting? It's a little bit hard



to figure out but they just say I felt compelled, you're the person we want to come and talk at our event, at our workshop, at whatever it might be. So it was a bit of a brave move but sort of nice.

Of course it was only one story. We've all got many, many stories.

Question: I wanted to know who did you do your video with?

**Andrew:** Melbourne Video, the same guys who are filming today with Mike.

**Audience:** It's excellent.

**Andrew:** Thank you. They choreographed it and they put it all together. What they did which was interesting was they got my story. It didn't start off as Crossroads. They spent a few hours with me and I imagine this is what you do Jules in your space as well. You really get to know what the element is of that. It was they who came back to me and said, your key message is crossroads. You've had crossroads.

We actually had eight or nine that we filmed but no one really wants to watch a thirty minute documentary about me. I couldn't watch it, let alone expect anyone else to. They said, there are three or four key areas that are crossroads that are very powerful. Your video, micro documentary, should be called Crossroads and this is the reason and that's your big message.

I always remember the concept that life gives us two choices. That resonates with me. I saw a man on TV and he'd lost his son. His son had died and he was getting a tattoo of his son's face. His son had died ten years ago. He was a simple kind of a guy in terms of his language. But it was so powerful. He said well, you know bad things happen to all of us. Life gives us two choices. We can either get bitter about what's happened to us or we can get better. He said, my goal in life is to become better.

We hear those things from time to time and it still sends a shiver down my spine. I've seen over the years so many people who have chosen to get bitter. They're bitter about things that happened eighty long years ago. You think, when are you going to let it go? Who has won? Anyway, that is a part of my trip, without going on too far.

One other thing I'd like to point out about that video, it was the coldest day in Victorian history. There were 100 kilometer an hour winds, it was two degrees on my phone. I'm from Cairns. My





ears had frozen. We were filming down some back alleys doing the moody kind of shots and there were tiles falling down, smashing down.

These creative guys with cameras said, just walk along St. Kilda beach there. They wanted to go on the jetty. There were waves and boats washing up on the shore. I thought, this is just getting a little bit too much like it's going to turn into a horror story at this stage. I survived the shoot. I was completely saturated. But you've got to laugh.



We tell stories for a reason. That is the point I want to make out of that. I tell that story for a reason but I've got many other stories I tell people. I tell the story of my business, my early business, my existence, my realizations of businesses that I help nowadays. It might be a story about someone I've met, whatever it might be. We've all got that. We've all got many stories.

I believe every story we tell has one central theme or we want some kind of action out of it. This to me is the important part. We want people to do something as a result of that story being shared. What we want them to do can vary a little bit and can take many shapes and forms.

What do you think some of the things might be that we want people to do? Yes, a big outcome is we tell a story and we want someone to buy what we're selling. What else? Maybe build that trust, build engagement, build a sense of credibility. For me, that's very big. I tell a lot of my stories about establishing credibility for me. That's an important point.

Anything else? A way to connect, absolutely. To connect is another important part. We do that. Like I say to people, if you write a book and then you don't do any other form of communication with your audience, you've lost them straight away. Someone will read your book but then they want more of you, they want to build a bit of a connection. They want to have a relationship of sorts with you. That's how you connect. Actually how you build the relationship is not the book, but is the connection that happens afterwards. Those are the things that start to happen.



I think another form of action from storytelling is it makes us think differently. That will ultimately lead us to taking action. Maybe it challenges us. I think that is why I love Nick. The way that he works is often to be a bit contrarian, to challenge people.

That in its own right will have an outcome which is a good outcome. To be disturbing is just as good an outcome in some respects as selling someone something. There is a different reason for it.

I was very fortunate a couple of weeks ago to see Seth Godin. He's my man crush at the moment. Nick and I are comparing man crushes, which is a bit weird. I don't know if anyone else saw Seth when he came to Melbourne or Sydney. He was fabulous. The event in Sydney was a full day gig. He got up and spoke for ten minutes. It was 10 past 9 in the morning and he then said, the rest of the day is questions and answers. I thought, we're going through to 4 o'clock with questions and answers?

It was extraordinary. Does everyone know who Seth Godin is? He's a very famous author. He's got quite a stark, unusual look. He's as bald as a baby's bottom, quite a funny, strange looking guy. He's a marketing guy. He developed a company in New York and sold it to Yahoo! for \$30,000,000. He writes a lot of books, he's got a very famous blog, he has many people who read it.

He's also very famous for doing things differently. He wrote a book called Purple Cow. That's the one most people would know him from originally. Then he went on to write others. He speaks a lot about tribes and building audiences and building communities and all that kind of thing. He said a couple of things that really resonated with me. One of them was that we are all selling something now. We are obsessed with finding a tribe and then selling as much rubbish to them as humanly possible. We're just going to sell things to them.

His view is, better that you build a tribe with trust and authenticity and then you develop products that they actually need. That's how you do it for a longer period of time. Another thing he said that resonated with me was if we really want to connect and engage, people get tired of just hearing good things and light beige things. They need to be disturbed and challenged.

If people are walking out of your workshops, that is ok. That is a very alien thought for me. If people don't like what you've written, that's ok because it means you're telling stories or writing a bit at the edge. The edge is where good things happen. We play it safe in the middle and all we're doing is being that.



My writing was very much like that in the early days. I used to say, I'm a meat and potatoes writer. I give nice safe tips and ideas. Now I feel like I want to move away from that and be more controversial, more challenging and more opinionated. I want to get a few more death threats.

It's interesting, and that leads on to what I want to talk about which is the world is changing and the world has changed in so many different ways. I see this in the corporate space. I talk about this a lot in corporate environments. It is very interesting and applies a lot to what we're talking about today.



The world has changed in terms of connection, engagement. What has changed is the question. To me, a really simple way to describe what has changed is, everything has changed. In the last five or ten years, in the last two or three years, communication has changed so much. How we do business has changed so much.

There is a great term, and I'm stealing this one from Seth Godin. He pointed out and described wonderfully well the battle that we all have in doing what we do. We've all got limited time, we're all a little bit overwhelmed. As consumers we're completely bombarded with information, so much information, where do you get it from?

What we're trying to work out as consumers, if I'm going to read something that you've written or watch a video that you send or whatever it might be, what's my return on attention? This is a very powerful thought.

If I'm going to spend time reading anything, or watching, listening to or reviewing, what is my return on attention? I found that to be one of the most shattering thoughts I have had. We're all, or most of us, putting out a whole pile of material, more communication, there is a lot of content coming out. In some respects it's what's in it for me, but it is so much more than that. Will I watch this?

I do a lot of work with CBS. One of the things we've found or notice straight away is a nine minute video will have fifty percent more people watch it than a thirteen minute video, based on statistics. Research shows this. People say, will I spend thirteen minutes on this? TED Talks, eighteen minute talks, who thinks, don't quite know if I've got eighteen minutes for that. Jules



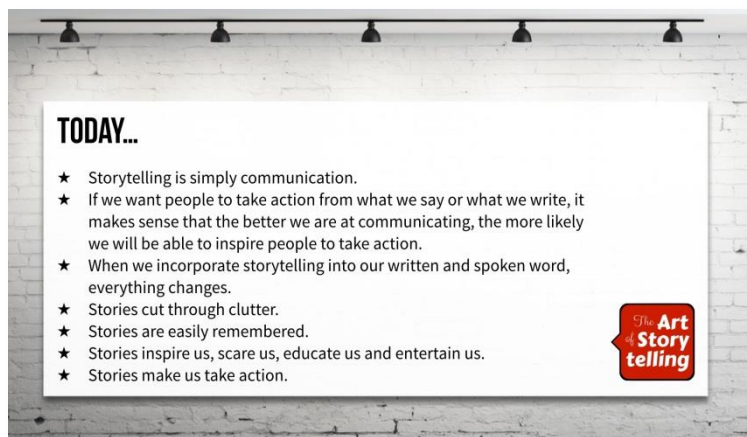


is busy and has the same thought. I'm exactly the same. I'm looking at the video and saying, have I got fifteen minutes for that or not? Will I give that my attention for fifteen minutes?

We can all find fifteen minutes. Let's be really honest. The busiest people in the world can find fifteen minutes. But it's that evaluation of is this worth me spending my time on? That's the first revolutionary kind of thought that I think we need to be clear on. If we don't give them a good enough reason, they're not going to listen, they're not going to read, they're not going to do anything that we're saying.

There are different kinds of ways of explaining how that return on attention works. On a book, it's the back cover that explains that. That's why the back cover of a book is so important. Or it is someone else writing about that book or a video about that book, or a brochure, whatever it might be.

Where does it start for most people? Most of the information you read on a website is all about the company. It's not about the person. I don't care about the company. What's in it for me? What's my return on attention? How does that work, how do we translate that?



That is our challenge and that's our opportunity. That's the way I look at this. I think there are a couple of things that we need to frame around the whole storytelling thing. For me, storytelling is simply communication. I'm not quite sure how over the line it got broken away. Storytelling is over there and communication is over there. They just go hand in hand and I can't see any reason it's just not a normal

part of what we're doing. That is what the story is.

If we want people to take action from what it is that we're saying, we've obviously got to be better at telling stories. That is the point I made earlier. It's as simple as that. We want to be able to inspire people to take action. I think the real power of storytelling comes from the fact it happens at such a limbic system. It happens at such a powerful system within our body.

When someone tells us a story, we think differently, we act differently, whether we're reading it, whether we're listening to it, whether we're sitting in an audience, whether we're listening to an interview with someone, everything changes. That to me was the second point.



When we incorporate storytelling into our written and spoken word everything changes. So whether we're a speaker presenting like this or whether we're writing, whatever it may be, the more we put storytelling in there, the more we get our message across and the more people are going to take action from what we're saying. That is the next one.

Stories are able to cut through clutter. We just said, if we can't cut through clutter, then we're not going to get heard. Clutter equals a limitation on return on attention. It's another one of the barriers in the way. People have got to be able to see what we're going to say and they've got to make that right decision; this story is going to work.

Stories are easily remembered. We all remember stories because we're programmed and built to remember them. I go to so many conferences, I'm presenting at conferences all the time and listening to presenters. There are two types. There are those who tell lots of stories and those who don't. Without a doubt, the ones who tell the stories are the ones who get the highest satisfaction rating but they're also the ones who get people doing things. They're the ones where people leave feeling inspired and energized and able to do what needs to be done.

Stories inspire us, they educate us, they entertain us, but most importantly of all, they cause us to take action.

Now of course a lot of people are starting to realize this, and I mentioned this in the opening. In the corporate space, I'm quite surprised to see how much this is starting to move through. There are a couple of different ways I'm seeing this start to happen. I have some great examples of a different way of communicating. Whether they're technically storytelling, it doesn't matter. It's a really good story.



decriminalized it.

Did anyone go to Seattle Hempfest? Darren of course, I would have expected you to have been there. What happened in Seattle is they changed the laws in 2012 about marijuana. They decriminalized marijuana. In true Pacific North West American style, you have a celebration around that called Hempfest. The idea is everyone is getting together and it is just a new law, they



I come from Queensland. If you had a Hempfest in Queensland, there would be five hundred police there with big batons, looking for a hippie to beat up. That is part of the rite of passage of being in Queensland. But the police in Seattle did something different and they did something very cool. I thought, this goes to show the laws have changed. Just because dope is decriminalized doesn't mean you can drive and do all this and have the usual kind of formal communication.

What they did was give everyone a packet of Doritos. They printed a great label on it. 'Hempsters, we thought you might be hungry. We also thought now might be a good time to introduce the dos and don'ts of this new law. The don'ts: don't drive when you're high, don't give, shell or shotgun weed to people under the age of twenty-one. Don't use pot in public. You could be fined, but hey, we'd much rather give you a warning.

The dos: do listen to the Dark Side of the Moon at a reasonable volume and do enjoy Hempfest.'

Who would have imagined a police department doing something like that, ten years ago, fifteen years ago, twenty years ago, thirty years ago? They wouldn't. This is now what is starting to change in the world. That is how you communicate to people, not a show of intimidation or a formal brochure which is: the rules and regulations of ISI290 regarding the decriminalization of marijuana. As a student of this kind of thing, I'm finding it fascinating to see how this is working.



I'm seeing it in things like books as well, communicating. All of these kinds of books are written about companies. I've read many corporate books in the past, the story of a company. They're normally paid for by the company and they're written in a hugely flattering way. It's just one long brochure but it is delivered in one long corporate gobbledygook where of course nothing goes

wrong and they're perfect.

These books are, by contrast, warts and all. You read Ice Cream Social and what I took out of that is Ben and Jerry are lunatics. They really are, these guys are insane. But they are extraordinary about social consciousness and making sure people get paid. They had a rule in the company, no one can earn more than three times the lowest salary. Fair trade for all suppliers, everyone gets paid a fair and reasonable amount and they negotiate, not what they





charge, what is a fair and reasonable amount. They've got all these extraordinary things in there.

Amongst that, they're lunatics. They had fights, board room stoushes. They sold the company for \$200,000.000 or whatever but they're still on the board and they have all these fights. But it was human, it was real.

That's another big part of telling our story. It's not about being perfect and in fact it's the opposite of that now. People want to know a bit about the warts and all. They want to know about the struggle, they want to know a bit more about how did you get to where you are today?

This one here is interesting. The New Gold Standard is written by a guy who writes about these kinds of companies. This is about the Ritz-Carlton Hotel which is a very nice hotel. There is an interesting little section in here that I want to read to you. Doesn't this feel like a book club now? This was written by a staff member of the Ritz-Carlton. So they could have written, we look after our staff and it's really important that we look after our staff. But they've incorporated this chap's story.

The bottom line is this guy was on the east coast and his family, his wife and two kids were flying over but they'd missed a plane and they had nowhere to stay. It was late and the family was quite distressed. This guy was feeling frustrated on the other side of the country. He didn't know what to do or how to help them. So one staff member relates what it was like to have his wife and children on the receiving end of a warm welcome.

'I got the call that no husband or father ever wants to get. My wife was crying frantically, the kids were crying because their mother was crying. I was on the other side of the country feeling absolutely helpless. She was traveling with our two little kids and missed a connection in Los Angeles. She was getting the typical runaround that airlines give. All I could think to tell her was get to a Ritz-Carlton, any Ritz-Carlton and everything will be ok.

I immediately called the Ritz-Carlton in Marina del Rey and explained the situation. I told them my family was on their way and had arrived and what the problem was. The manager was waiting outside to personally greet all three of them. Without even asking, he sent up to the room miso soup. I didn't request any of this, all I wanted was for them to be safe. My wife and kids are Japanese American so the miso soup to them is the best comfort food they could have received. It was perfect.

The next thing I got a call from my wife to say everything was ok. The girls were in their robes, all comfortable and they were safe. That's why I work for the Ritz-Carlton.'



I thought, wow, how powerful is that! This guy wasn't the General Manager. He was just one of the people who work in the company. He wasn't a VIP in the company or anything like that. But we look after our people. Is there a better message than that? We could say that 'til the cows come home but it doesn't have anywhere near the power of something like that. It's very cool and interesting to see how it's evolved there.

We're also seeing it now much more in the different types of stories about people which are coming out. This is happening there where there are seven hundred autobiographies, biographies about people from Richard Branson to Keith Richards. We're also getting stories that we are absolutely not interested in. Yet somehow they're still making their way out.

We're also seeing enormous scope for people to share stories with a purpose on the websites, in Inc. I'm a columnist for Inc. in the States. The articles that are read, the articles that get traction, the articles that people really resonate with are the ones where there is a story, there is a moral to it. It's not just a 'how to' thing, there is more depth to it than that. That for me is a nice little measurement of what is going on, what is happening, what people are resonating with.

Of course we're also being able to commentate anytime we like on our own blogs and our own sites. Who here blogs at the moment? I'm much more reinvigorated about blogging. I went through a period where I didn't do it as much. Now I'm finding I'm using it more and more. I'm writing better articles, writing stronger articles and more opinionated articles and bits and pieces as well. It's that platform between me and my readers or me and my followers, fans, my community. It is interesting how that is starting to evolve.

We're starting to see a lot more companies where even the CEOs are writing blogs on a regular basis. They are actually writing themselves, not just having someone else write it. They're doing vlogs as well, videos logs we're they're telling real stories that are more important and more genuine about what we've got wrong as much as what we've got right. I find that fascinating.

I was on a flight from Launceston to Melbourne a couple of weeks back. While sitting on this flight I was up the front of this Jetstar plane. A guy got on board the plane and he started talking to everyone, the hosties and the crew. It was all very lax. I thought you were supposed to keep people out of the cockpit.

This was a bit causal, how are you going everyone. He went and sat down. Once the plane took off he came up to the front of the plane, got the microphone and started talking. He was David Hall, the CEO of Jetstar.

It was really nice. I don't like Jetstar. I only fly Jetstar when I really have to. But my entire opinion changed. This guy got up, very meek and mild and said, 'Hi folks. Sorry to interrupt you.



My name is David, I'm the CEO of Jetstar. I want to say thank you very much for flying with Jetstar. I also want to say, we don't get it right, we get it wrong, I understand. I know there are horror stories about what we do. But you know what? We are so committed to getting it right.

He said, I'm in seat 12B. It's only a short flight but if you've got a story that you want to share, if you want to tell us, offer me some advice, whatever it might be, I'm there for the next fifteen minutes.'

He wouldn't have done it on a Sydney to Perth flight, I'm thinking. There were people lined up. I went and gave him a book of course, because that is what you do. I was really surprised how wonderfully engaging that was. I thought, to get up and tell the honest story and to be open and listen to other people, that changed everything.

That changed my opinion of Jetstar with that one act of one man. I would actually fly with them again now, based on that, only if he's on it and does that talk again. Then I'll be back to where I was. I thought, wow, how powerful that is. That sort of thing is starting to happen as well.



This is something that I read about recently: Why storytelling will be the biggest business skill in the next five years. There is an article written about that by a freelance journalist. I'm not going to read the whole thing. He basically talks through how there are now so many opportunities for us to tell stories on things like Kickstarter. Is anyone familiar with Kickstarter for a way to get a project off the

ground by crowd funding? I've got a video to show you about that later on when we start talking about how videos tie in.

It was all around the element of storytelling being brought in at management level, small business owners, corporations. Everyone around is finding that the old communication techniques are not working. If we've got to pitch ourselves, if we've got to try to raise money, if we've got to engage a group or an audience, we've got to bring out ways of telling stories to them. It's interesting when you think about all that.

We're seeing lots and lots of stories. Nick is going to share a great one about the people of New York a little bit later on.





What is the opportunity that this presents us as I see it? I see a few different areas in here. I think there is a huge amount of demand for that knowledge and information. Everyone wants all this data, everyone wants all that information that is out there. There are a lot of mediums to share it. The key is to write or obviously speak about what people want. Often they don't necessarily know what they want but our objective is to give them what we think they want.

People want to know about us, our businesses and what we do. This to me is the most important part of everything that we're doing. What I'm seeing comes back to that point about a boring accountant firm describing themselves in a boring, conventional way, the same as every other accountant.

Honestly, look at ten financial planning websites and I guarantee the same keywords will be used, the same buzz words will be used, the same descriptions will be used. There will be nothing to differentiate them. There will be the same stock photos of fake people doing fake things. It blends into nothingness. That kind of thing doesn't work anymore.

Question: But people need those keywords for SEO so that they get highly ranked?

**Andrew:** But are you writing for Google algorithms? If that's what you're writing for, then I don't agree with that, to be honest. My reasoning is, I push people to my websites. I don't rely on Google to get people to find my websites. For me, I'm much more proactive about it. I know if I make a great six minute corporate video called Crossroads, other people will share that and they will come to my website as a result of that. I guess there are two different strategies around that.

The problem is, what's the point of being found if they get there and there is no point of difference and it is just the same thing? It's the chicken and the egg. I hear where you're coming from and I hear that a lot. But if I look at ten financial planning websites and they're all the same, why? What's the benefit of it? That's the challenge.

I think if you can be more proactive and you've driving them there yourself, then you're going to get a better result. But we'll talk about that a bit later.

I think we need to be able to identify what the stories are that we can tell and what others will want to read. You've actually got a number of stories within your business to tell and it's knowing what they are. It's not just the story of your business for those of you who are here about the business side of things. There are a number of stories and I'll go over those for the written word and also for the spoken word. Good stories are always going to be read, we know that.



When we use the written or spoken word, there are a few things we need to know. We need to be clear about our why, why are we going to tell this story? I've got a great video to show you about that in a second. If you like rats, you're really going to love this one.

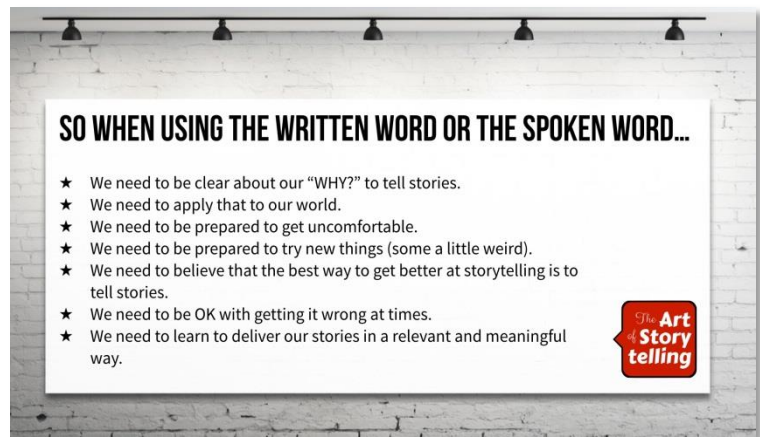
We need to apply it to our world of course, that's the next point. How does it work, and to their world, even more importantly. I do think we need to be prepared to get uncomfortable. I certainly found it very uncomfortable to talk about my own stories, my own personal experiences when I started being a presenter.

A game changer for me was when I did a presentation to two hundred business women in Cairns, Cairns Business Women's Club. They asked me to come along and talk and I got up and said, what do you want me to talk about? Do I talk about one of my books or marketing or customer service or what? No, they said. We want to know your story. We've asked around and no one really knows your story, no one knows your background.

I'm a Columbian drug lord who is on the run. I was living with that delusion for a while. That didn't really cut it. So I did. I got up and I just told them my story. I told them about growing up as an orphan. I told them about having a very violent upbringing. I told them about losing a dive shop. I had a partner in a dive shop and I went on a two week holiday. I came back and everything was gone. There was tumbleweed rolling across the floor. The guy had unbolted the kitchen sink. Everything was gone. I spent six months figuring out how to kill him.

I said all of these standard kinds of things and I just said it. My hassle was who really cares, no one really cares about my story. Who cares about any of our stories? It was extraordinary. It was hard because I knew these two hundred women. This was my town, it's a little town. There are only 203 people in Cairns. There was no one else left, they were girls like me. I had ladies hysterically crying and it was extraordinary and moving.

A friend of mine I'd known for twenty odd years happened to be there. He came up to me at the end of the lunch. He was really angry. He said, Andrew, I've known you for twenty years and I learnt more about you in the last forty-five minutes than I have in the last twenty years. That's terrible. He then stormed off.





That was obviously very powerful for me. My little light went on there. People do want to know our stories. They do want to know. Mine was quite an extreme story at that stage of the game. But the same relevance flies into whatever we're doing. As human beings, we're actually extraordinarily interested in what other people have to say. We are nosey by nature. Jump over that little hurdle and realize, people do want to know what it is we have to say. Kylie, you had a great piece in the newspaper.

**Kylie:** Yes, I had a half page spread in The Age, Sydney Morning Herald on Monday. I got contacted by Fairfax to say it was the most viewed and shared small business story of the year. I've never shared my personal story about living on the streets and so on. I've always made it about business. Yet on Monday I sold two hundred books from my website with notes saying we saw your personal story in the paper.

I've got two thousand emails I haven't responded to yet that all came from nothing to do with business and everything to do with my story. I thought are you kidding? I was embarrassed. I thought, this is icky, it doesn't feel right. Yet people are coming out everywhere. I've got media contacting me, all because I shared a personal story that people related to. Then they bought my business products as a result.

**Andrew:** Thanks for sharing that Kylie. I've had so many of those experiences that reinforce that fact. The moral to that story is whatever you're doing, and I know most of you and what your businesses are to some extent, people want to know about you as a business owner. They don't just want to know what your qualifications are, they don't just want to know all the fluff things that we talked about. They want some depth. That changes everything.

Question: What Kylie raised is really interesting. The people who resonate to your story and use that as an example, and who have then had a call to action and ordered your books or made contact with you via email, what are they buying? Are they buying your story, are they buying the book that you've created? I don't understand.

**Andrew:** Do you know what they will buy? They buy into the outcome. It's the same as mine. You look at me now. I look like I've probably had a private school background and am wealthy and whatever you want to think. We have that assumption. When we're shaken a little bit and say, oh, you came from that upbringing, like Kylie, people say, oh, it's a good story. You've overcome adversity.

Remember the stories that Nick told, the ten different types of stories? All non-fiction fit into one of those as well: tough life, good outcome, resonates. It inspires them. It makes them feel,





what am I complaining about? I have people come up to me and apologize because they had a great upbringing.

I say, please don't apologize. Oh, but you had such a hard life. I don't know if you've had that Kylie, but it is just that thing that resonates with people.

**Audience:** What they're buying is a connection with you, but not the product that has come out of your book.

**Andrew:** No. If I can add to that, we all speak in a line. We think, ok, this is my book. What I've got to do is promote that book. I must sell. I must tell everyone, you must buy my book about Great Customer Service or come to my gym because my gym is a great gym. Or buy my advice because then your dogs are going to live for a hundred years.

The reality is, we mostly have to go via there to get to here. That's a new strategy. So you get to C by going via B. You get to B by sharing an honest story by letting people know more about you, by building your integrity, by talking about your company. You do this in more than the plain terms like you'd read off the back of a Weetbix packet. There is no attachment to that, no engagement.

People read Kylie's article, and say, wow, that is a really inspiring story. They have an emotional connection to Kylie. Let's have a look and see what else there is. I must read Kylie's book because of it. Kylie just writing there about her book doesn't have the same connection.

**Audience:** I wanted to say when I first went to the KPI thing, the thing that resonated the most when I heard your story Darren, was you were dyslexic and your son said you'd never have a book in you. Look at you, you've got two. That really connected to me.

**Andrew:** It's not about the book, it's about you.

**Audience:** I understand that. But the disconnection for me is this. I want people to buy my book hopefully to engage them in boating. But if they don't have a connection with boating or a desire to get into it, my story at the start doesn't matter. I understand where you're coming from but no matter how good or unique or connecting or emotional that scenario is, they're not just going to buy my book to read my chapter about me and the seventy other chapters about boating.

**Andrew:** But what they'll do is engage. Not everyone is going to buy a boat. I live in Alice Springs, I'm not going to buy a boat. But it doesn't mean I'm not going to be inspired by your story. Not everyone is going to buy what it is we're selling. But you've created a story which is of interest.



The next time you write a book about getting the family off the couch, all of a sudden, oh, that's interesting. I went from small business writing to personal development. I'd built my credibility. I could write a book about barbeques now because it doesn't matter once you've established the credibility and authenticity and so on.

I don't want to get too bogged down in that one.

**Audience:** I'll give an example. Darren, when you walk down the street and you see a young kid busking, and you say, good on you mate and you throw a couple of coins into his hat or his bucket, you're not going to go out and buy his song or produce him as a singer/songwriter. But you're contributing 'good on you mate for doing that.'

People are going to buy your book and maybe never read it but their contributing to and acknowledging your success and saying good on you mate, irrespective of what is inside the book. Does that make a bit more sense?

**Andrew:** This is the point I'm making. That's why most of us are not brave enough to tell a true story in our business because we think that everyone wants to read: I run a gym. Our gym is open from 9am to 7pm and we help people lose weight because no gym does that. We help people get fitter because no gym does that. We help people do group exercise. We do Zumba, no gym does that. We've got machines, no gym has those. Do you know what I mean? We all are saying the same things.

That's a problem. If we're all saying the same things, then what is the point? No one is standing out from that.

**Audience:** I think you can't confuse the purchaser with the end user either.

**Andrew:** Yes, I think that is a very good point.

**Audience:** I've given away far more KPI books than I've read. I know you've made the connection, so social media. My so and so, they've got a business. They could use it. You've got to not just think the person who buys it is the end of the line.

**Andrew:** Absolutely, it's not a transaction, it's not that transactional. I don't believe that at all. Good point. Ok.

We need to be prepared to try new things when it comes to storytelling. For most of us, to talk about our business or even about ourselves is actually very uncomfortable. It's un-Australian to talk about yourself. There's a bit of that, if you talk about yourself too much, it's alright if you're a Kiwi. I think it's even worse in New Zealand probably.



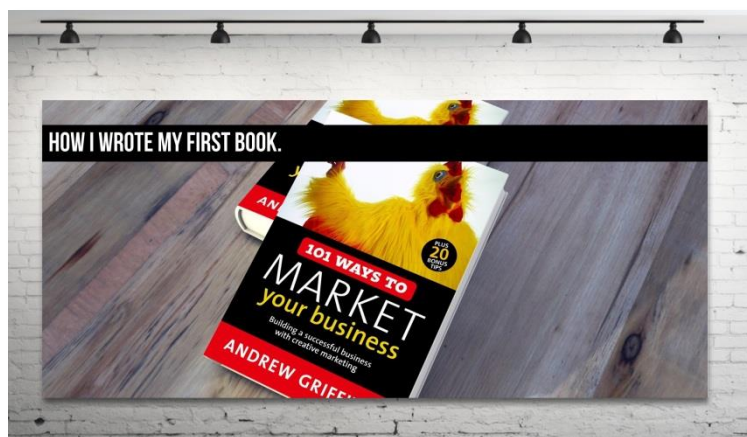
Someone from South Africa said to me in Brisbane at this course, that she thinks it is actually every nationality. The worst in the world I think are Swedish people. They have a term about it called lagom. You've just skied down Mt Everest and someone says, you're an extraordinary skier. You would turn around and say, no, no, I'm just average. I was just lucky. Lagom is a term they use because it is socially unacceptable to say woo-hoo. Imagine how most of us would go over there.

I love going to the US. You go to the US, just turn up and you get a standing ovation. All you've got to do is walk into a room and everybody says yay. I'm going to leave now before I mess it up.

We need to be prepared to try new things, get a little bit uncomfortable, get a little bit weird. We need to believe that the best way to get better at storytelling is to tell stories. That's what I'm going to go through: what kind of stories, how do we tell them, where do we start? That can sometimes be the challenge.

I think we need to be ok with getting it wrong. When we're telling the story of our business, we're not going to get it right all the time. When we're telling some of the other stories that I'm going to say we need to be able to write or talk about, we get it wrong. But the idea is you get better at it.

The first photo you took I'm sure Beth, was not your best work. Now down the line you do extraordinary photos. It is no different to me telling stories or writing or being a speaker or whatever. I know that might sound obvious but I think people are quite harsh on themselves when it comes to writing any kind of story to do with their business or their life or communication in any way. They think they've got to be Herman Melville – they've got to be writing Moby Dick kinds of stories.



I always remember when I wrote my first book. I always say I look at that and it looked like it was written by a drug addicted, dyslexic chimpanzee that was wearing a blindfold. It was horrible. But the content was good. The grammar was lousy, the way it was written was lousy. It was filled with typos, all that kind of thing, but the content was good. That is the essence of telling





a good story, having good content. We need to deliver our stories in a relevant and meaningful way.

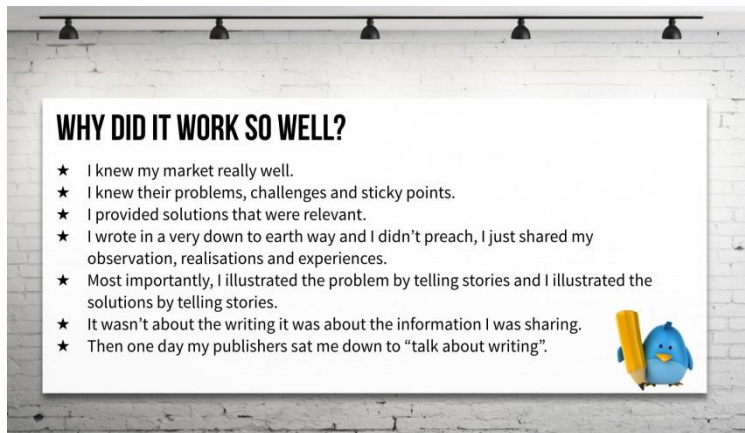


Let's talk a bit more about storytelling and the written word. To start this off, I want to show you a video which is cool. This guy is an American, Matt Chan, who is the brains behind a TV show called Hoarders. If anyone saw the Melbourne paper today, there were two pages, 8 and 9 dedicated to hoarders. If anyone in the room is a hoarder, you're going to get a kick out of this. He has a very good

message to share. (Matt Chan video)

The important points from that are knowing your audience and finding the shared experiences.

My first book, 101 Ways to Market Your Business was written about a thousand years ago, carved in stone. But without a doubt it ties into that concept of why this worked, why did it resonate. I wrote a book and I had no formal qualifications, I had no business degree, I didn't know anything, but I knew about small business because I had had a small business for most of my life. So that is what I wrote about.



It was interesting. Why did it work well? I knew my market really well. I knew what their problems were, I knew what their challenges were, I knew what their issues were because I had them all too. It wasn't that I had worked it all out and here I was commentating on it. I was going through them all. I was figuring out how to market my marketing company. As ironic as that may sound, it was like that a

bit for me. But I knew that.

I knew their problems, challenges and I knew their sticking points. I provided solutions that were relevant. All too often we're trying to provide solutions that our market doesn't want.

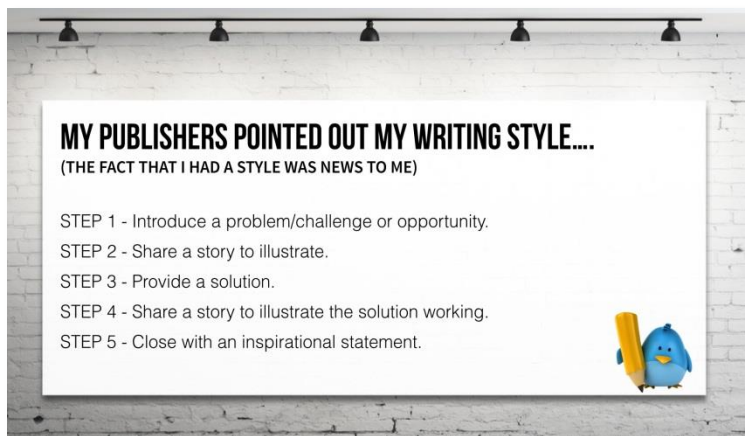


They don't even know they've got a problem half the time and that's where storytelling comes into that place. I wrote in very down to earth way and I didn't preach, I just shared my observations and realizations. I could relate to that audience and they could relate to me.

I illustrated the problems by telling stories. For example, this is a bad example but one that seems to come to mind. A client of mine had a butcher shop. They had a terrible problem which was the area in front of their shop got completely made over with new footpaths and so on. But it changed the flow of traffic and all of a sudden their business dropped by twenty-five percent. It was simply because people were going in a different direction. Psychologically, they didn't go into the butcher's shop, which is a quite a strange thing.

There could be all types of issues. The butcher's name is Bill and he had been in business for twenty-five years and this was a major problem in his business. By talking a bit about it and explaining it, I made it a bit more personal and I could define what the problem was. Then I could also bring in a solution at the end. I created a bit of emotional attachment to Bill the butcher by writing about him. Sharing those stories, sharing those examples was what resonated with people.

I told a lot of stories and I find I've done that in all of my writing to illustrate the points. I didn't worry too much about what I was writing. I was more concerned about sharing information, helping people, solving problems. I still believe anyone who solves people's problems will never go hungry in the world. You solve problems for people and the bigger problems you solve, the better car you'll drive. It's seems to be that's the status in many ways. That's what worked.



One day my publisher sat me down and said, Andrew, you don't realize a few things about what you're writing. They said I had a writing style. I don't actually know I had a writing style, so that was the first news. Number one, they said, this is what you do. You introduce a challenge, a problem or an opportunity. You share a story to illustrate, what that problem is. 'Sometimes there can be external

changes that impact our business. Let me tell you a story about a butcher shop who had this, blah, blah, blah.' Then I provide a solution.



The solution in this case was to get a really cool sign and have some fun with it. So we made one of those fun signs with different fun messages of the day and crazy facts and figures about legs of lamb and all types of things.

Number four, share a story to illustrate. We introduced this and the business went up, by not only the twenty-five percent they'd lost but it went up by another twenty-five percent. People were talking about it. The little notice board ended up in the newspaper. A very nice, gentle kind of story, nothing earth shattering, but it worked.

Then I'll close by an inspirational statement saying. Don't underestimate the impact of minor changes outside of you business in terms of what they could add. So go out the front of your business now and actually do something about it. That was my message. They said that was my style.



They said, when I write, I also write like I'm sitting having a cup of coffee with a reader. Ange, you've read all my books. Does it feel like I'm sitting there having a cup of coffee with you when you read my books?

Isn't it interesting? That's my point - it doesn't have to be overcomplicated, but it makes us think again. Know you audience, as

Matt was just talking about. If you don't know your audience really well, it can't equate. For me, telling that story at the beginning of an article or in my books is to get that connection happening straightaway. People will say, oh, that's the problem that I had. I can relate to that.

They might breeze across it because they haven't had that problem. That's ok, that doesn't matter. It's not about getting it right with every one. If you're trying to get it right with everyone, you won't do it. People will say, I have an online business. It has no relevance whatsoever to me. Doesn't it? Maybe it does. Maybe your website is your store front or your pavement ort your Now Open sign. That's a whole other conversation.

The light went on in my head when I had that pointed out to me. It made me realize and it reinforced the power of sharing stories to get people to take action and hopefully that action for me was read it, use the information and do something. Even more, it started to create that engagement, connection, building community by telling stories.





Most of the books that I had read previously in my space up to then were facts. You must do this, step one, do that. Step two, do this, step three do that. I think that is great, I think you've got to have that. But there is no reason to get excited about it. There is no bind, there is no engagement, there is none of that. That is the magical part of it. Being able to write stories enables us to better communicate with everyone. That is the story that I keep saying.



If we're going to talk about writing stories in the space where most of us are at, what are the stories that we want to be able to write? These are the ones. We need to be able to write our story, that is the first place. What is your story? Behind your business, who are you? I'll give you a breakdown on how this works, but everyone should have an Our Story done.

The second one is the story of your business. This would also be something that you would perhaps have on your website which is the About Your Business as opposed to the more normal formal type of material that we've spoken about a few times. It's about your business. I'm going to break these down into parts and say what each part needs to be, so don't worry if you're not sure about that.

The next one can be stories from our day to day work life. That can be observations, realizations, aha moments, just hey, look, we've done this. It could be blogging, the story of my work, again, my realization. So when I'm writing a blog post, what do you write a blog post about? For me, it's the easiest thing in the world to write, because I'm writing about what I've seen today, what I've realized today, something that I have a bee in my bonnet about today. What are my thoughts?

When I'm out and about and I'm keeping ideas and looking for ideas, there is so much to write about, I wish I had more time to write about it.

Promotional material within our business is what we do and why we do it, those kinds of things. Writing a book, you've figured out what the problems are, it would be nice to do that. Training others, what knowledge can I share is another way to be able to write information. There is writing for other blogs, websites, magazines and newspapers etc.



What I'm saying here is there are plenty of opportunities for us to write. I'm not saying you have to do all those, by any stretch of the imagination. What I am saying is that they are different types of opportunities for us to tell our stories. A couple are bigger than others of course. We'll come back to those in a few moments.

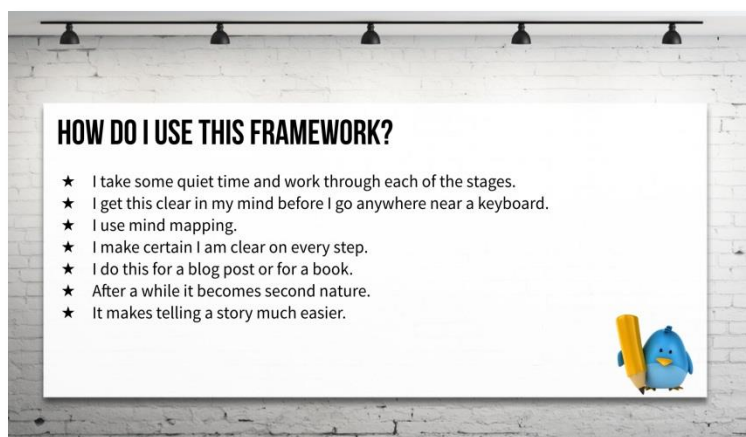


If we take another step forward, how do we incorporate storytelling into our writing? If you're going to write a bit about your business for example or whatever it might be, I've got a few structures you could use.

Before we do that, I always go back to the framework. Most of you know we're big framework people in this neck of the woods. Having a

framework to go on is always the greatest thing to be able to give us some idea clarity. For me, a storytelling framework is, why do I want to tell this story? Go back to that point. There's got to be a reason.

Authenticity, can I tell the story authentically? If you can't tell it authentically, you shouldn't be telling it, particularly when we get into the spoken word. Relevance, why is it relevant? Often you've got to frame the story. Why am I actually telling this story? I know we've got 'why' there, but the relevance has to fit into it. It has to be relevant to the forum or the format. I see a lot of people presenting and even writing and the story is not really relevant or they haven't actually told you how it's relevant, so it feels a little out of context.



Then you go to the essence. What do you want the message to be that they take away? What is the pathway, just dot point your story. What are the mechanisms you're going to use? Is this a blog story or a website story or is this a spoken story, whatever it might be and how will you know when it works?

Just use that as a guideline. That's all it is. Have that printed out. If I'm



going to write about the story of me, use that as a way to make sure to ask yourself those things. How do I use that framework?

All I do is take a little bit of quiet time to look through each of those stages to get my head together. I don't sit down with a blank screen and start typing an article. For me, I sit down and think about it. I'm writing an article for Flying Solo today. Why am I writing this article? What is it about? Follow through that. Take a few notes, maybe mind map it a bit. Get the thoughts together and then I go and write.

It's like writing a book. Everyone thinks you sit down and you start 'It was long, cold day in Hell's Kitchen'. As anyone who has done the KPI program knows, we spend two months, or six weeks at least talking about books before we go anywhere near writing.

So I get all that clear in my mind before I go anywhere near the keyboard. I do use mind mapping. Who here uses mind mapping, by any chance? A few. I find mind mapping is a great tool for that clarity factor. Many of you know I'm a big fan of mind mapping. I make sure I'm clear on every step. I do it all, whether it's for a blog post or for a magazine, whatever it might be. It gets easier. You start to use anecdotes all the time.

When my publishers told me, you tell stories really well in your books, that was the little positive affirmation that I needed to think, ok, that's important. But the real affirmation came from other people, readers who read my work. I got many emails and letters from readers saying I love reading your material because you tell lots of stories. It makes it really easy to learn. It got easier and easier, even though I didn't understand it.



Another point about writing stories to be incorporated or writing in general really, I'm a big fan of having the right working environment or right writing environment. The problems that stop people from writing a little bit more creatively and incorporating stories is they don't have the right space. They're writing from a too-large boardroom table or they're trying to write in environments that

are noisy, non-conductive, loud, obnoxious, whatever it might be.

For me, having a great writing space is important, whatever that may be. You've got to figure







I have all those on one Excel spreadsheet. I've broken that down and I've kept that list going for fifteen years now. So there are probably seven or eight hundred stories on there. It just needs one line. I know what it is, I don't need them in detail. I could tell you any of those now. Emceeing an event full of snakes. I've got a story I can tell you about when I was emceeing an event that was full of snakes.

It's an ongoing thing because I use them maybe in an article, maybe when I'm preparing a keynote presentation. It might be when I'm writing a blog post, it might be when I'm writing a book. I have all these articles, all these topics, some about personal things, my work. Some will be about customer service, examples that I've come across, bad experiences, good experiences, whatever it might be. It could be about marketing, working with people. I've got forty or fifty different categories.

It just makes it so much easier when you have access at your fingertips to your stories. It's one of those things that is a bit of a game changer.

The nice thing about stories is we don't need to write a lot, honestly. I look at all of those and I could just rattle on for five minutes pretty much about everything there and what it related to that story. We don't need to remember stories. We automatically remember them. That's why you can store a huge amount of information in a little space.

It's how comedians do it. It's why comedians tell great stories all the time because they just remember one word, one line, one example. Has anyone ever seen someone like Billy Connolly? On his wall, I couldn't understand him the first time I saw him, but I love him as a comedian. One of his backdrops would have just a handful of random words, seemingly unconnected words. It was all the memory jogger that he needed to share his stories. Comedians are the greatest storytellers, good comedians are extraordinary.

Think about the Seinfeld stories. Is anyone a Seinfeld fan? You can start off with this really complicated material and then it all ties up in a neat bow at the end. It's very formulaic, x, a problem happens, George makes a fool of himself and this happens. Finally it gets to the end and it all works. It is masterful writing.

There are a few other tricks of the trade that I talk about when I'm writing. This can apply to any kind of writing I guess. Multitasking, trying to do a whole pile of things at once just doesn't really work. We think it does, but our writing is really poorly affected generally if we are trying to multitask. Our brains don't really work that way.

I have a very clear picture of who I'm writing a story for. Going back to that video, about knowing your audience, I say to people, when I'm writing, in my mind I have a very clear picture of a physical person who is my target market. That is who I'm writing for.



I'm writing a small business piece, I've got two or three people in small business who I know who are friends of mine and who this is relevant for, that's who I'd be writing the article to. I visualize them. I find it's very handy when you're doing it, visualizing. It helps me get very clear on what I'm doing. I imagine they're sitting there and having that cup of tea with me.



Often posing a question is a great way to do it. 'Imagine if', 'what if' is a nice place to start sometimes for an article. I think some people like that. Yet the other part of it, if I'm writing an article with stories embedded in it, or examples, I don't start at the beginning and write it to the end. I think a lot of people feel you need to do that. Like writing a book, you start at the beginning and write to the end.

For me, if I'm writing a 500 word article, I actually write the anecdotes first. Then I go back and write that other material around it. It's like writing a book. I don't start at chapter one and write through to chapter thirty. I just look at the content page and write whatever chapter resonates with me today. I think that's a good way to do it.

I think a lot of people get stuck at the opening. That's what stops them writing any further because they can't get past the opening sentence. That's the key there. Well, don't let the opening sentence stop you, write the last sentence, write the last paragraph, write the last whatever it is. That can help the rest come together.

So I'm forever constructing and deconstructing anything that I'm writing as opposed to just sitting down and writing 'It was a long, cold night in Hell's Kitchen ...the end.' I'm surprised to know most writers are the same. I didn't really realize that until I started talking to other writers and authors.

Another couple of quick points are never publish anything without fresh eyes. You know that midnight kind of writing, you're writing and then you press 'send'. That is always an horrendous thing to do. You always need fresh eyes. I'm always writing with a view to reuse information as much as I can. Telling stories, writing information, writing an article, writing a blog post, where will I be able to use that again? What are other areas can I use?





A number of you who have worked with me in that space before will know I say, if I write a blog post today, I might republish that as an article in six months' time on Inc. In three months' time I might do it on Flying Solo or I might put it in somewhere else. Look at that as a couple of options.

Starting with a headline is also a great place to start. We all know the power of headlines these days. Remembering again, return on attention, what is my return on attention? If you don't get them with a headline, you probably won't get them.



This is a great little video just to illustrate that point. Has anyone seen the movie *The Shipping News*? You've read the book? It's a great book, wonderful. This is a great story. This guy has just got a job as a reporter. He's very nerdy. He's never written anything, he is a dorky kind of guy and it's not really going that well for him. ("The Shipping News" video)

As much as we laugh about that, it is kind of true, isn't it? It's that element that we are looking for that sensationalized theme in headlines. The problem with that also is headlines go through trends as what is trendy. At the moment, the hot trends in articles are things like 'Seven Ways To'. We're all groaning and saying, kill me now.

Writing for Inc., I get all these amazing statistics about the articles. 'Five Habits of' 'Three Strategies For This' and the numbered articles are hot. They are the ones people share and everyone loves and are what resonate. But that will go through its trend and people will go away from that. That is what always happens. For the time being they're there. They'll change and they'll want something else. It is quite interesting to watch and understand that. I don't know what the next trend is going to be but they still work and resonate quite well.

You've got to get attention, return on attention. The very start is you have to ask the harder question or you've got to be challenging or you've got to make sure that your headline is going to make people get a bit uncomfortable actually. Sometimes that is the way it works.

Another little trick I would talk about here, where people struggle in terms of writing stories is they leave out too much information. They just write a story so it is a little bit too bland. This is a really simple technique I use. Other people I know use it just for starting something simple.



Maybe you're going to start a paragraph and the concept is that knowing how to sell is hard. You've got a bit of a story you want to share around that. You just make it a little bit more detailed by saying 'I met a man who said that learning how to sell is hard.' Introducing a couple of little elements to that, makes it more engaging. Add another couple of elements. 'Recently I was presenting at a conference and a frustrated man shared his challenges about learning how to sell.' You just keep adding a little bit more.

'Recently I was presenting at a conference in New York and an accountant called Fred shared his feelings about the difficulty of learning to sell his services to his potential clients.' We've gone from the first statement to the last larger one, which is changing everything. From 'Knowing How to Sell is Hard' to a personal engagement of a man, that is the essence of storytelling. It is to be able to do that.

The added detail has really in some respects very little bearing on the story. Does it matter that I met a man while I was presenting at a conference? No. Does it matter that I was in New York? No. Does it matter that the guy's name was Fred? No. None of it really matters but what does it all do? It paints a picture, creates that connection in amongst us.

All of a sudden we feel more attachment and we visualize some guy at a conference, New York whatever it is that resonates with us and we turn it into more of an internal story. That's how we engage with people. It's quite fascinating.

There is an interesting point about that enabling us to paint a picture. I used to do a lot of work in the indigenous space, in places like the Northern Territory and outback Queensland and many different areas. It was always intriguing for me, whenever I watched the Aboriginal people get together. They'd spend the first five minutes figuring out where they were from. Where is your mob from and where is your mob from? They had that discussion because they were trying to find some form of connection.

Once they've got a connection, my mob is from there, your mob is from there, well I have an uncle who is over there. There is a one in seven thousand chance that they actually know each other, but it is that connection. It is a close enough connection that we are ok. Then now we know where we fit, we know who you are, I know where your people are from. Now we can have a connection, we can talk. We can have a discussion.

In a strange way, this is the same. By adding more detail, by adding more depth, we're creating more of a connection and that's how people engage.

**Audience:** It's a complete change in thought process from constantly over the last five years, people are tearing my work down, saying, too much information. What's that got to do with it? Everything in business is, let's get to the core. Don't fluff it up with all those other things, Ruth.



**Andrew:** But that is changing, thank goodness, isn't it? I know what you mean because I went through that as well. I was told, cut things down, cut things down. Just give us the facts.

**Audience:** So I was actually ahead of my time.

**Andrew:** That's all it translates to. Absolutely, learn to add detail, but don't go overboard. That's where the trial and error comes in. How much of your story do you tell? How much of your back story do you put in there? Is it a twenty-five page essay? Probably not. Remember still, overall, shorter is going to be better because that is just the way that we are going to be for the time being. There isn't really a definitive answer to that.

Turning dry information into a story with a message. I spoke a bit before about CBS and HP. I did a project for those guys where HP wanted me to write websites for small businesses in China, Korea, India, Singapore and a few other places. The whole idea was to write these websites to get small businesses to go and interact with them and for them to feel good about HP. They prescriptively gave me the topics that we had to write about.

In the first month they wanted me to write twenty-five articles about recycling consumables. You are all small business owners. Who is going to read twenty-five articles about consumables? Anyway, I wrote the articles. I somehow managed to do it because they weren't flexible about it. I managed to find twenty-five things to write about, apart from: Recyclables - They Are Good. Really, that's probably the end of the story, move along.

The whole project was a dismal failure in the first month. I said, you're never going to engage unless you start telling some decent stories. These are small business owners; whether they are in China, India, Korea, wherever they were, they have the same issues, the same problems, the same challenges. I get enough correspondence from readers of my books in those countries to know that.

I said, let me write some articles in my style. Just let me do it. Let me engage, let me share some stories. Let me talk about issues of doing business in Australia and see if people in China are saying that they've got the same problems about whatever it might be.

We did that. They let me do it for one month. The first week of that campaign we went from 400,000 unique visitors in China on one of the sites there to 10,000,000 unique visitors in the space of a week. Over the month it kept growing. We changed nothing else except the content of the stories. We made them stories, not technical pieces that were not relevant to the audience.

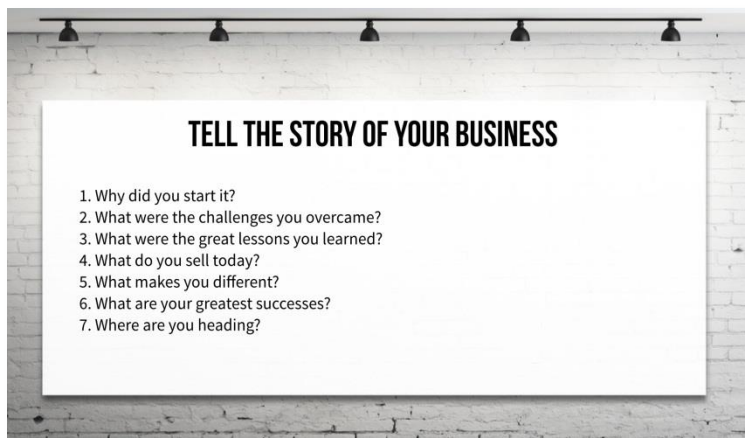
For starters no one cares in India about recycling. I knew that about India but their view was, we'll change their views. Great, ok, that will work well, won't it? We're going to lecture you and





tell you what you're not doing right. That will build connection because that is what we love to be told.

Other examples are, when you're delivering dry material, that is the point. Most dry material is dry because there isn't any color to it., there isn't any explanation, there isn't information. I seem to get stuck at engineering conferences around the world. It's so hard because they're so dry and technical. I'm not sure, I have no reason at all for them asking me to come back. I'm sure when I'm looking at the audience they cannot connect with me at all. So I just have to go to my little happy space and tell lots and lots of stories and I have a ball, but they don't.



What are the stories that we need to write? Let's get down to a few specifics here. The story of your business was one of the first ones. This is a format that you can follow for telling the story of your business. Number one, why did you start it? Number two, what were the challenges you overcame? Number three, what were the great lessons you've learned, number four, what do you sell

today, five what makes you different, six what are your greatest successes and seven where are you heading?

That is a really great format to follow for talking about your business. It has all the right elements in it. Why did you start it, well why? Now the audience is either going to connect or not straight away. If they don't connect with your 'why' straight upfront, then they're probably not your audience in some respects.

This is what I do. Whenever I'm sitting down with someone and I'm helping them write the story of their business, these are the seven steps that we follow. These are the seven things that you need to include. These are the seven outlines. You might be using this on your website. You might be using it in an awards entry. You might be using it in one of a million places, but you've got to have a great story around it. These are the emotional things. Why did you start it? Nick told his story. It followed this format exactly to the t.

I did a bit of research on this to try to come up with a video to illustrate it. Most of the videos around good storytelling I found out belong to booze companies. That certainly sends a message of some sort. This is a video I want to show you. It's from Jack Daniel's. I'm obviously



Jack Daniel's story? Why isn't it Lem Daniel's on the label? What were the challenges you overcame? Prohibition. That is a pretty big issue when you run a booze company for twenty-eight years and became a mule trader. Who knew?

What were your greatest lessons? What do you deliver today? What makes you different, the way you do it? What are your greatest successes? All that is in there. Where are you heading, the future. We're going to keep doing exactly what we do because that's our message. We've been doing it for hundreds of years and we're going to keep going. So telling the story of your business is around all of those kinds of things there.



not necessarily sponsoring that side of things. I know this is a verbal one, it's a video. But it follows those same elements that we are talking about. (Jack Daniels video)

Makes you want a glass of Jack Daniel's, doesn't it? But interesting, why did you start the story of the business about Lem? Who's ever heard of Lem with the

Tell the story about a business and this is the interesting part about this. It's sharing lots of little things. I mentioned before about that organic dairy, Mungalli Creek Dairy. It's an interesting one for me because I was working with these guys from the day they converted from a traditional dairy to an organic dairy.

It was interesting, we wrote the story about it and used it to get government grants, millions of dollars, \$20,000,000 worth of government grants. We got that by writing the story about this business.

It hasn't really come across so well on their website and bits and pieces. So if you're looking at their website, it doesn't really do it. But how they talk about it and how they've delivered it in some of the work that they've done around the actual business has been very effective.



The story of their business was they became the Purple Cow of the dairy industry. That was the heading we used. The idea of it was that they stood out from the crowd by being different. The owner, Robert Watson, was one man and he had a great passion. He wanted to change his world. He was very much organic and he was healthy and biodynamic. There was no product available in that part of the world, North Queensland that was organic and biodynamic.



He also saw the end of the industry. He saw the end of dairy farming. The industry was changing, the writing was on the wall. Most dairy farmers were still just selling milk and getting whatever they were given by the various farming co ops. Dairy farmers at the time; whatever they got, that was it, no control. He tried to get other farmers to buy in and say, let's all go organic and we can sell a better product. But they didn't want to do it because it was scary, it was change, it was costly, it was all those kinds of things. It certainly was, he couldn't get anyone else involved.

So he had to do it all without any money. He had a dream and he thought that people would buy organic milk but really that's all he had. He had to spend basically a year without any real income as well to convert the farm. So he drank a lot of milk and basically that was it. He couldn't use any chemicals so he had to go and invent things.

He invented a giant cow vacuum cleaner. He couldn't use chemicals to get the flies off the cows, so he made this giant vacuum cleaner. You walk the cows in, this thing comes down, sucks all the flies off them and the cow thinks, what was that? He made it so he collected all the flies and they used the dead flies as fertilizer. It was extreme. He is a young guy, he's only in his thirties. It's extraordinary.

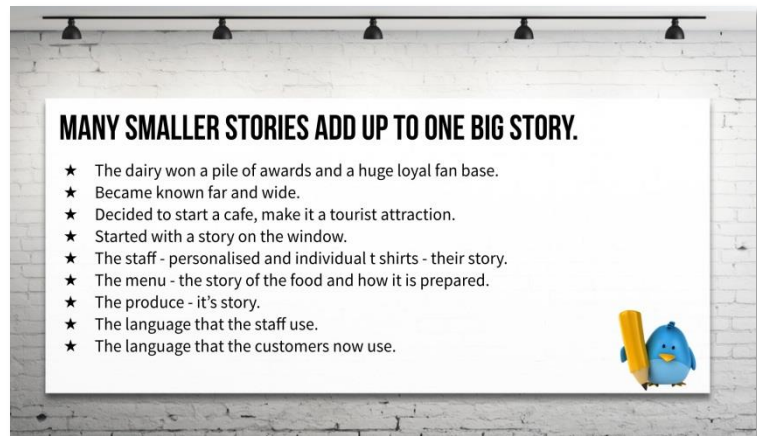
Then he had to convince people. When he finally got organic milk happening in a marketplace, he had to bottle it all by hand. He had to get the stainless steel and somehow do all that kind of thing and he made it all work. They came up with their hand drawn labels initially. They sold the milk at the local market for twice as much as the price of normal milk. His milk was \$5 for two liters back when it first came out. It might have even been six dollars.





If someone came to you with that as a business case, I would have said, I don't think you're going to do it mate, I don't think it's going to work. But he knew his customers really well, he knew his clients and there was a big market who wanted organic milk and that's what he did.

That is the story we told. It's exactly how we told it. But it goes on as well. Because the dairy was so successful, he also added a café. The dairy grew a café out the side because the dairy became a local attraction. His brand, Mungalli Creek Dairy, became really popular.



In passing, on that, the organic milk was very popular but he also saw that in the marketplace there was a gap. There is milk you can buy normally, normal milk we'll call it and organic milk. One is \$2.50 and one is \$5. There was a gap in the middle of the market there.

So he decided to also produce another farm kind of product, not organic, but Jersey milk. A lot of people like Jersey milk for some reason. I think it's good if you've got asthma and other things. So he introduced a second brand called Misty Mountain. So he introduced a second tier product in amongst this and now he's got organic eggs too. Everything is organic and from the region.

They grew a café out the side and they had lots of and lots of different little stories. The dairy won a pile of awards, so he started getting a huge fan base. He has won awards as Best Organic Cream, Yoghourt, Milk etc all over the place. He became known, so people were going looking for it. So it made sense to build a café and attach it to the dairy.

On top of that, they turned that into a tourist attraction. They started with a little story on the window. They fitted out the café with a little sign saying because everyone is saying such great things about our milk and our products, we feel bad that people come to the farm looking to buy things and they can't. So now we're going to open a café and he signed it with his own name. 'On behalf of all the cows of Mungalli Creek, we thank you.'

It was a bit corny but it was a bit of fun. Someone took a photo of it and it ended up on social media. The next thing this little sign is going around the world. Just telling that simple little story connected everywhere.



They did everything really nicely. Everything was personalized: individual t-shirts with My Story, who I am and the story about all the food. 'This cheese comes from Betsy who lives most of the time up in the top paddock.' There was such a huge degree of description about the food. Why? Because he knew his market, he knew what they wanted, he knew that people wanted to know more. It was right at the beginning of the emergence of paddock to plate really. People are talking about that. Now we're seeing more and more of that.

It was long, long story about him and his business and where he's come and moved everything through there. It's very, very powerful and obviously a great story. Everyone moved through that.

Just to show how that works, that description, I've seen restaurants where they've just changed the description of food on their menus. They've written a short story about their food and they've seen an increase in sales.

Now you don't go and buy a cup of coffee anymore. You go and buy a coffee where the coffee has been grown by Ethiopian farmers on a twenty-seven acre plot in the highlands. There's such a description around everything.

It also applies to personalities. This is again telling the story when we're writing about people. I worked with another restaurant, this one was in Port Douglas. We did something really simple. Where you go into the toilet in that restaurant, there was a big wall. We just got a picture of all the staff. We put them up on a board and we had four little questions they had to answer. I think it was where are they from, what brought them to Port Douglas because they were all from somewhere else, what is the worst job you have ever had and your most embarrassing moment. It was a bit of an insight into them.

The interesting thing that happened from was their tips went up by three hundred percent straight away, overnight. People had some emotional engagement with these people. They knew a little bit more about them. They had a story. It wasn't just some guy in a black t-shirt serving them; it was Bill from Ireland who used to clean out septic tanks. He got caught in a hotel lobby naked one night because his friends had locked him out of his room, or whatever it might have been. Engagement, engagement, engagement comes into it.

The other thing was their overall business went up by twenty-five percent as well. Whether it was related to that, who knows? There was probably a little pile of other things that were happening at the same time that as well for them. But it was telling the stories.

All I'm trying to illustrate is some of the ways we can tell these stories. A very good story about a very good business in that case, that's the example we're trying to give.



Then there is the story of your successes. One of the things I think we don't do well, and I touched on it before, is we don't tell great stories about our successes or past successes.

I came across a company that did this really well. They had done something interesting. This was a company in Townsville. They gave me a booklet and it was Our Ten Greatest Successes. They'd gone through and really told the story about this company. 'Bill, who owned a construction company, came to see us because he was really struggling to pay the bills. He had great quality work, he got good jobs but there was something that just wasn't quite right. He couldn't find the right staff.'



They went through the problems. This is what we did. We sat down with Bill and collectively we came up with a strategy. We said, we need to get more high value jobs. But we've got to see which jobs would make money. They went through and told the story. This was the outcome of that. Bill turned around, we grew the business. He is now in a position where he has sold the business for x dollars and they closed it with a testimonial from Bill.

They had ten of these wonderful, wonderful success stories. They weren't just 'I'm Bill Smith from such and such construction and these consultants did a really good job.' They told a story and I think that's a great lesson for any of us who are in an advisory space or want to talk about our successes.

Turn them into a story, share more of that story. How did they come to you? Why did they come to you? What did you do? What was the initial contact? Follow the structure, what were the challenges, what were the things that you overcame? All of that kind of thing fits in wonderfully well with that process. I've given a lot of illustrations of how powerful that point may be.

People do miss these opportunities. We write about them in a mechanical way. We need to be able to share our success stories whatever they may be. We think our successes speak for themselves. The problem is, return on attention, we've got to be comfortable telling our success stories. You can't assume other people are going to tell them for you. That was the example I used.





I think any of us have who has a customer or a success story can do that. I would offer some advice. If you follow that format though, make sure you get the customer whose success it is, engaged in that storytelling. Don't just write about them and the first thing they see is it's on the website. They might then say, I don't remember it that way and I hate you and I'm suing you. Oh, that didn't work out very well.



I saw another company which did that really well. It was PACK & SEND, a courier business. I don't know if anyone has used them. They say they will send anything, anywhere, anytime, one of those catchy lines. This booklet I saw somewhere and I grabbed it. I think it's Think Big, or something like that. It's just a book of all of their successes, these really unusual courier things. A giraffe had to be moved in Sydney and someone rang PACK & SEND. Wouldn't you just look in the Yellow Pages and find Acme Giraffe Moving, or something?

I noticed one from the guys who run it in Cairns. A guy bought two Harley Davidsons and they got shipped to Cairns instead of Darwin. So he rang the PACK& SEND guys and said, can you get these Harley Davidsons there by this time? There was a really short window of opportunity because they had to be put on a boat to Indonesia.

The owner of the PACK & SEND franchise got a buddy and they rode the bikes to Darwin. They hated every minute, they took no enjoyment in the ride at all. What a great story. What we did was we got on the bikes and we rode to Darwin to deliver them. That's a great story. We all hear about these kinds of things and you look at it and say wow. Isn't that a cool story?

One great success story that I remember is about a hotel in northern England. It was a very cold winter a couple years back. They had a promotion where they spoke a bit about good rates and so on. No one was traveling because it was a bitterly cold northern English winter, which is every winter. They said, stay at our hotels and you get a free bed warmer. The concept of that was fun.

Of course, what actually happened was when you checked into the hotel, they said what time do you want the bed warmer, 9.30? At 9.30 you get a knock on the door and someone came into your room in an eiderdown suit and got into your bed and warmed it for twenty minutes. Then they left.



Now that's got to be the worst job in the world, for starters. All you do all the time is get into cold beds. Can you imagine being on the phone talking to your sweetheart? Hi honey, how are you going? The bed warmer is just getting in. I'll give you a call back in twenty minutes.

Now sure, it was a gimmick, it was fun, it was hilarious. But they told it as a great story and everyone else started telling the story about the bed warmers at this holiday inn in Manchester in a fun kind of way. Being able to tell that kind of thing is also very cool.



Now successes. The third one is the story of you. It's the same thing. This is a format that I want to suggest there: what do you do today, where did you come from, what were the challenges you overcame, what were your greatest lessons, passion? What do you stand for, what are your greatest successes, what makes you different, where are you heading? We had nine points there we

should all write.

That is our About Us. That is the framework to be able to follow for that. We're often being asked about it, yet we tend to write those in the boring, dull way that really don't resonate with anyone. The first one is most important, what do you do today? Where are you today? Then people can have that term of reference. I've got to understand who you are and where you are so that my brain can pigeon hole. Then you want to shake the pigeon hole up by saying the rest of it and what you do.

There are really key elements in here. What do you stand for? What are you passionate about? They are the things that create that engagement, that connection, that element that people, I think, really want to hear about us. They don't want to hear the things like you've got a Bachelor of Science or this, that or the other that we see in most of the bios that are written like that. They are factual, but they're certainly not engaging. That becomes problematic.

We have those structures and formats that you can follow for writing about your business. My advice is to practice rewriting about your business. Practice writing about your story. Whatever you're doing, somewhere in there, someone is going to want to know your story. If you can't write a good story, you're going to miss people. They're not going to connect; they're not going to engage.

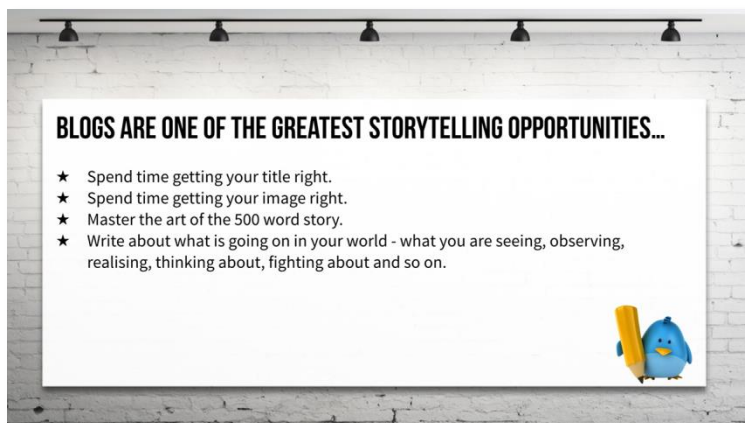


The next one, the last couple are just a few little tips more than anything when we're starting to tell our stories in other areas. Storytelling on blogs – blogs are great storytelling opportunities, I think. You've got to spend some time to get your title right. I think that's an important part. Make sure you get your image right. These days the image has got to work with anything you're going to put online. I probably spend more time finding the right image for a blog post than I actually do writing the article. You should get some statistics.



With Inc. again, what we often do is we post an article twice with different images and see what cuts through, which image gets clicked, which image resonates. I think that is a good thing to do as well and maybe change that.

Master the art of writing a five hundred word story. Whether it is a practical seven tips, seven steps, five whatever it might be that you have some anecdotes for, whatever it is, we've got to master writing a one page article. I actually think given another six months, twelve months, we'll have to master writing a three hundred word article to be honest because it is getting shorter and shorter. But like everything, it's cyclic, it trends. There will come a time when it will get longer again. I have no doubt at all. We'll want more information.



At the moment it is about shorter but that is the thing I realize, it's all trending. At the moment this is what people want but it doesn't mean they're always going to want that. Writing a great blog is that - writing a great title, a great image, a great five hundred word article. Just write about what is happening in front of you. Share a story about an example, something that is real that your audience can relate to.

Think back to Matt Chan. It's the same thing, what does your audience want, what are their challenges? How are you going to connect with them? If you're not writing about what is





happening on Port Phillip Bay, that is your audience Darren, one hundred percent, that would not be good. If you start wring about Ceduna on the ocean front, what is the relevance of that? Nothing.

Magazine articles need a little bit more info here. But it is the same kind of work really. Start with a great heading. I don't know if many of you are writing articles for magazines. If you're asked to write a feature article or something in a magazine or newspaper, introduce the story.

Provide your take on an article or topic. What do you mean? You write about something that has a relevance to it. You might want to start by sharing your story.

When it comes to writing longer things, we've just got to do what we call make our articles scalable. We need to say, maybe we can write a five hundred word, a thousand word or a fifteen hundred word article on that. All you do is tend to cut a bit of the detail out. But mastering five hundred words is probably more relevant to most of us these days, for anyone who is writing in the digital space. Even a five hundred word article is feeling a bit long I think, strangely enough. I'm not going to spend a long time on these ones because I think that they might not be so relevant.



Then there is writing your own book. All I did when I wrote my first book was just write about what I knew, sharing it. Matt mentioned that on that video, that whole concept. Write about the things you know. We get in our way by trying to think that we've got to write something highbrow. We've got to write some kind of mythical thing up there. The articles that get read, the articles

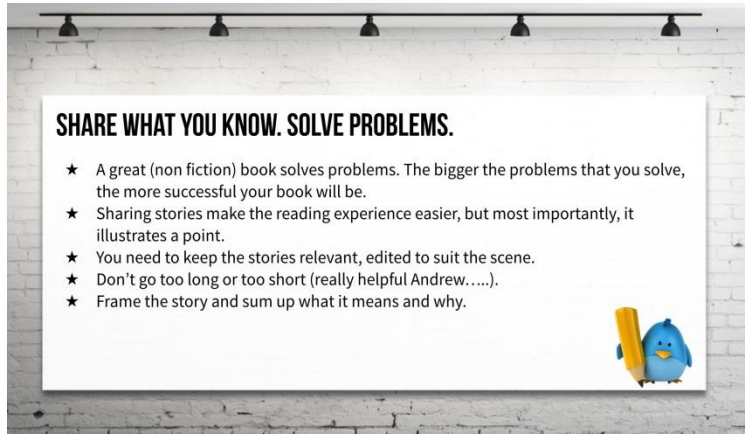
that resonate, the articles that cut through are what is happening now. Give me advice now that I can use. Give me advice now, practical, realistic information.

If you're writing an article for small business owners and you're writing about how difficult it is to get your Ferrari serviced in Melbourne, it is a problem. It's hard to find a good Ferrari dealer, it's expensive, we can all relate to that right? It's a real pain. That's when people say, oh well, that doesn't resonate, that doesn't connect.

You look at the people who are writing and connecting and building large followings, good and active followings; they write so that people connect. That's whether they're writing a five



hundred word article or a thousand word article or whatever it is. They're writing about things at this level, not I'm up here talking down to you. That is the element of you're writing at a horizontal level, not I'm an expert talking down to you. I think that's the same in anything.



Great non-fiction books solve great problems. The bigger the problem, the more powerful it will be. Sharing stories makes it easier for everyone, keeping stories relevant. All these things roll into the mix.

To wind it up, mastering the art of the written storytelling side of things, or storytelling using the word, there are a couple of things I would suggest. Use the framework

that we've provided. I think that is just a great way to get your ideas together. Use the framework when you've got to write a story.

Let's say you're going to sit down and write the story of your business. Sit with the framework for starters and get a bit of a feel for it. Then go back and look at the list that I gave you there for the story of your business and just start to write a few notes around it. Even mind map out a few key points around it. Start to add a bit of flesh to it. Don't feel you've got to sit down and just write about my business from zero to the end or from start to finish. Work on it a little bit more.

I think that is always the place to start. If you can master your own story, about you or your business or your successes, those three, or ideally all three, every other story becomes much easier. They are actually three hard ones to write because it is about us. It's always hard to write about yourself. It's like talking about yourself, it's hard. So master those, and you're right.

Know your market, which we said. Work out the best format to use, how is that written word going to be used? You might write the story of you and it might be ok to put into a brochure or into an award application or online. You might need to make it bigger or smaller. That's why we talk about making it scaleable. Half the time it's figuring out what do you take out and what do you keep?

Be organized. Create that right environment for writing. Be clear about different mediums. Be a great student of other people who are writing. I assume everyone here reads articles from time to time online. You might have favourite websites that you go to, or you might have magazines or newspapers that you read; does everyone do that? Has everyone got time these days to do



that kind of thing? Why? Why do you like what that person writes? What resonates for you? What do they do, how do they do it? Ask yourself that question.

Particularly when it comes to the spoken word, we'll go into quite a bit of detail about the importance of learning from other speakers who are telling stories. But I think it's exactly the same when it comes to writing. What do you like about that particular writer? For me, I read a lot. Ironically, I'm rarely reading these days for the content. I'm actually generally reading more for the structure, how do they write something? I find myself doing that more and more.

Why did I like that article by that person in that magazine or the newspaper? Start to break things down a bit. Look at when they introduce it. There's a lady whose articles I always read and she always starts off with a funny experience that happened to her that week. It's so real, totally like Matt Chan, totally relatable. You get it and for some strange reason I relate to her issues. You get it, you're in. You want to read the rest. How did it work out? What did it tell her? It's very funny and interesting to read. So we've got to be a student of what other people are writing as well.

Be prepared to get it wrong. You write something that didn't work, doesn't resonate, doesn't connect. You say, ah well, that's ok. That's good, that's a part of it. We think we've got to get it perfect but we don't. That's part of the joy of it.

I think I get more articles wrong these days than I get right. But that's ok, because I know that I've just got to keep trying and resonating. Take notice of that. You notice how people react and respond to your written stories, either good or bad. That is great information.

If it is all just nice and it is all just soft and fluffy, it's that point I made earlier on, where your writing is a bit beige. Beige slowly loses value over time and has very little return on attention for people. It's nice, it's safe, it's easy but it has a time limit. Seth Godin's point was the articles he likes to write the most are the ones that are the most unpopular. People don't share them. He's not caught up on the vanity metrics. That's a term Nick uses. He doesn't look at 'shares'. It's like on Amazon. He doesn't read the reader reviews because he doesn't care. You base too much of what you do on the number of shares or the number of reader reviews or whatever.

I know that's bit contradictory to what I'm saying. All I'm saying is that is how complicated and wonderful it all is. Write great stories, write them from the heart and be prepared to get it wrong from time to time. More importantly, follow the structure and you'll find good things will happen. Even when you get it wrong, good things happen.

**Audience:** I've been asked to write a few blogs for some magazines which I've done. I've actually never got a response from the audience or anybody. Should I be ringing up the publisher or the editor or whoever asked me to do it and ask for some feedback?





**Andrew:** Absolutely. For Inc what is really nice, every month we get a full on report of articles that we've written. We discover what the actual stats were, page views, shares and all that kind of thing, which is their matrix that they use. We also find out the 'amount of traffic that was created from the article', a term they use which I hadn't really come across before. What did it make people do? When were the social shares, when were the various things that it did, what came back? What did it lead people to do, to other articles? Did they lead on, did they read more and the matrix of it comes through.

None of that you would really know if you just looked at the site and said, the article is just there like most material. I always go back. Did you get any feedback? What was it like? What would you suggest, what would you change?

Question: Can you write an article or a blog or anything that creates a really strong negative impact on you as a brand or your business and how do you recover from that?

**Andrew:** That is a great question. That is a challenging one, isn't it? You get a bee in your bonnet and you write something and it is controversial perhaps. But it is so difficult to know what the limit on that is.

I wrote a letter to a newspaper last Christmas. I got a ticket, I went through a stop sign at five kilometers an hour, three days before Christmas. I live in the quietest street in Cairns. The next thing, there was a blue flashing light behind me. The guy pulled me over and I said, mate, really? He said, you didn't stop. I said I know I didn't stop. He gave me a \$300 fine.

I said, mate, surely the police could be somewhere better. Three days before Christmas, there has got to be someone murdering, raping, killing someone, not driving an Audi through a stop sign. Just as he was about to arrest me for being difficult, I realized I had better shut up.

I wrote a letter to the newspaper and said, this is terrible, this ridiculous. Surely our police could be doing better things. I became the Al Capone of Cairns. I became some rich guy who doesn't care about laws. You just break all the rules, you don't care about the fact you could have killed a child. I couldn't believe how much vitriol came my way.

I got letters in my letterbox saying, people like you are a danger. I drive like Miss Daisy's chauffeur. I've got a car that I've done 70,000 k in nine or ten years. I only drive it so that I drive it.

So I guess you've got to be careful and you've got to think it through a little bit. That's why you've got to not press 'send' at midnight. I think you also need a couple of mentors for a fresh



pair of eyes. I have a couple of people like that. I say, hey, tell me what you think about this. Is this going too far?

We get into it and sometimes when we're writing something like that, we get a bit committed. You think, I can't just negate it all now. I've started writing it, so I've got to send it and you can come unstuck. That is my little saving grace, a couple of friends who are my little escape valve just to stop me making a fool of myself.

You do want to be real, you do want to be genuine. You do want to be careful what you put out there. But you don't want to be so conservative that you do nothing. Or you play it safe all the time.

Nick is a prime example of that. We've talked a lot about this since we've been working together and in the past. We've spoken about not being afraid about ruffling a few feathers. I do agree with that.

I did learn a valuable lesson out of writing that letter to the newspaper. I am high profile in a little town. I should have known better. I was grumpy and if I'm grumpy I'm going to tell the world and I want to write a letter. My last letter to the paper, I'm becoming one of those people, was about people walking their dogs off leads. I'm one step away from going down to get the milk in my dressing gown. I'm so close to a tragedy waiting to happen. I'm winding down the window saying, turn your music down.

**Audience:** I have a challenge finding people who are going to give my good, constructive criticism. They're pulling it apart, they're losing it.

**Andrew:** Frame the response that you want. Be selective about who you choose. For me, the people I'm asking for feedback, I'm asking for feedback on the content. I know how to write an article. I'm not asking them to give me grammar lessons, I'm asking them to tell me is the content of this too difficult, too controversial, too off message for me? Sometimes people say, what on earth is this all about?

I think you've just got to frame how you want the feedback. If you have a grammar Nazi in your circle of friends, don't send them anything.

Question: Do you keep the same people?

**Andrew:** Yes because they know me and they know who I am and they know my brand. They know generally I'm coming from a good place. That article is just not what you should be saying,



they might say. I have three friends who I use. I use all of them at the same time. Rarely these days, because I'm a bit more intelligent I would hope, but they do say, that article is no good.

Normally I think about them when I've done an article that I wish I had sent to them. I think, I really wish I could recall that article.

After lunch we're going to talk about the spoken word. That is certainly something I'm pretty passionate about.





## SESSION THREE

As everyone is coming in, I'm going to move onto storytelling and the spoken word. If I go long, I've got Nick to answer to. There is a bit of a fear factor being built into this equation in the nicest possible way. Let me show you a video, probably a video that many of you have seen before. It's a very cool video in lots of different ways. It's about the Dollar Shave Club. We all had a discussion about this whether we use the Dollar Shave Club. Nick uses the cheapie version. He tells a good story and let me show it and we'll talk about it. (video)



There is something about it. I didn't realize it, but it took him a few days to film it. It looks like a great video where someone has just walked along and happened to do it. Isn't it a great story? As much as we all laugh and smile, and I think it is really hard to do funny videos like that, he does tell the whole story. He talks about what he stands for, the value. He gets that relatability, are you sick

of spending money? Do you do this, do you do this? Are you wasting money because you're sponsoring Roger Federer instead of blades? It's just a really good story and well put together.

For me, part of the storytelling gig is I'm always looking at videos now, saying, what is the story? How does it make me feel, why does it make me feel that way? Become students of stories that we're seeing, particularly in the video space now; there is so much going on. It isn't always about polished, high level videos. Sometimes we're seeing videos that just really have great content because someone is sharing something very personal, honest, whatever it might be. Or they're telling the story of their business in a different way.



My spoken storytelling story is, believe it or not, that I've been a professional speaker for years, in different ways telling stories all over the planet. Whether it is teaching people to dive or as I said, selling Queensland. I used to travel around and had to talk about Queensland.



I always remember going to places in America, going to Los Angeles. It was one of the first big trips I had ever done and I had to talk to a room of two or three hundred travel agents. I was talking about the joy of coming to the Great Barrier Reef. It was around the time Paul Hogan had just finished throwing shrimps on barbies. Does anyone remember that?

I just remember I was talking and telling the wonderful story about a day on the Great Barrier Reef to all these travel agents. As I was talking, everyone's head just started to tilt. I thought, that is strange. Everyone was tilted over.

I finished my forty minute story and the guy running the thing came up as everyone was clapping. He said, Andrew, I think I speak on behalf of everyone here. We have no idea what you just said, but we really liked it. Can you do it again? I said, sorry? He said, can you do that talk again? They didn't understand my accent. This was 1990, 1989.

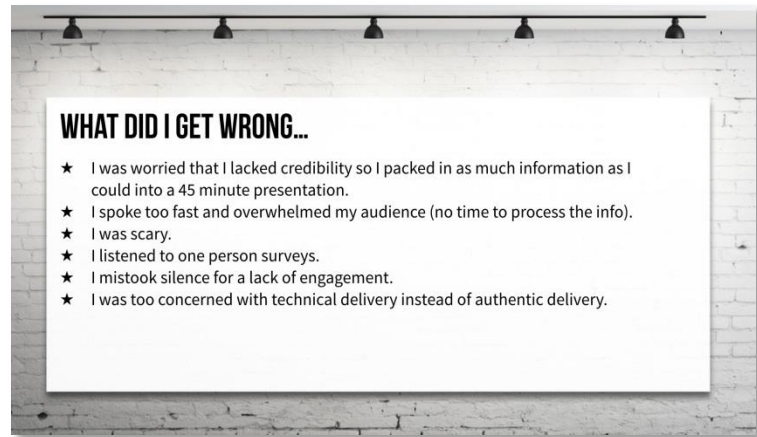
So I literally did the whole forty minute presentation again. The same thing happened. They all started to tilt over. They clapped furiously at the end. I don't know if that was great or terrible. There is lots of different storytelling.

What did I get wrong as a presenter, doing what I do now? I want to talk about that because it is interesting. The things that I got wrong were several. For me, when it came to being a presenter, in the early days, I did worry that I lacked credibility. So to me, if I gave lots of information, then that would make up for credibility. Can anyone relate to that? Does anyone understand what that means?

Many years ago, when I started presenting, I was a really young dive instructor. I was an eighteen year old kid. I had a dive shop, got a qualification. I didn't know the first thing about it. I think I learnt to be a dive instructor before I learnt to dive, in reality.



Then afterwards when I started talking about business and I even had my first book out, anyone else on the outside might think you look like an authority and so on, but deep down the little voice inside your head is saying, you're not good enough, you're not good enough, you're not really that clever, all those kinds of horrible things. I used piles and piles of information as a way I thought I could overcome that, to be honest.



The second thing, as part of that, I really spoke too fast. I would overwhelm my audience. If I had forty-five minutes, I wanted to fit in as much information as I could, so it was boom, boom, throwing all this information at people. I would notice people being overwhelmed and sitting back in their chairs by the end of it, wondering when is this lunatic going to stop? It was a little bit scary.

I think we all come from a different place, whether we're presenting, recording a video, whatever it might be, but when we're speaking in front of an audience, we have a very personal level of exposure. It's very real when you're telling a story or talking about anything.

When you're writing something, someone is going to go and read that somewhere else. They're going to read it on their computer or in their office, in their home, on their plane. It's different, you're not sitting there. But when you're in an audience like this, there is nowhere to hide, is there? You're nervousness, your fears, your insecurities can all run rampant. We have ways of overcoming that.

I also made another big mistake which is I listened to one person surveys. I touched on that earlier. An example of that was I was speaking at a Flying Solo conference. Is everyone familiar with Flying Solo, solo entrepreneurs? I spent the first twenty minutes talking about my challenges of doing business from eighteen through to forty. Then I said, these are the seven things I've worked out. This is my strategy, seven things that I think are essential to business success.

A chap came up to me at the end of it and said, Andrew, that was a good talk. But that first twenty minutes where you went on about your life, I don't think anyone really cares. I think we just want the seven facts. You should really just get straight to the information. I said, ok, fair enough.





So I went and changed my entire presentation. I didn't ever tell stories, it was just information. Of course, what was ironic, a year later, I caught up with Robert Gerrish who is one of the guys who owns Flying Solo. He said saw me present and he said,

Andrew, why didn't you tell any of your stories? That is the most interesting part. The rest everyone can figure out. But sharing your stories is what makes you unique. It was interesting. So I did take that one person's survey in that case and started to incorporate the stories again.

I think whenever we're in a presenting or a spoken word scenario, it's very easy just to be guided too much by what one person has to say. For me now, I will take people's advice on board, absolutely, but I'm not going to change something dramatically because one person says it, or one person thinks differently. That is a very important piece of information that I want to share with everyone.

Another interesting example of that which shows that sometimes people come from very strange places is this. I did a road show around Australia for ING. There were fourteen cities that we spoke at. I did the same presentation at each of the fourteen cities.

In one of my slides I had 'it's important to have attention to detail'. That was the message. I misspelled 'detail' and called it 'detial'. At every single event that I did, at the end, there is some creepy guy standing at the end of the stage who is there to tell me I made a typo in the attention to detail slide. This was at every single show. It was amazing. I thought, isn't that funny how that kind of thing happens?

Another mistake I made when presenting, and this is very relevant for storytelling, was I took silence or quiet as a bad sign. I thought, if people aren't reacting, and laughing and nodding their heads in agreement, and doing all that kind of thing, they're not engaged. I know that not to be the truth.

I was so much about piling on information, and being loud and perhaps being a bit aggressive almost in some respects to try to mask my own insecurities. People were trying to take in all this information and people just can't. We can't take in that information in those huge volumes in that area. So your brain is busy processing and you just keep pushing more and more in til either their head explodes or your head explodes, one or the other.

I was also really concerned and quite anally retentive about the technical elements, making sure everything was perfect, every slide was perfect, where I stood on stage, all of those kinds of things. That is what drove me rather than being able to give a better presentation. That all changed with some of the things I will talk about.



They were the main mistakes that made and I realized over a number of years, they are all the things I wanted to do. That's when storytelling and getting better at telling my stories helped

me change what it was, to deliver better, to connect better so that people take action from what I'm saying. As anyone who presents knows, that's what we want. We want people to take action.

Question: Just a quick question about credibility. When you're doing the same talk over and over again, does it get to a point where you feel it's lost any soul or credibility because you keep repeating the same talk? What do you do to turn that around?

**Andrew:** That's a great question. For me, I always try to change my presentations. Even if it feels like I'm presenting the same topic, I do try to change it. A really important thing for me to do is at the end of a presentation, and I'll do this, this afternoon when I finish up, is review today's presentation. Then I'll change it then and there. What would I do differently, what would I move around to come up with something that is different to keep it fresh in my own mind?

I do think you've got to be a bit careful about that. When you're presenting the same thing all the time, you just press 'play'. I will talk a bit about that in a second as well. I find you need to be reinventing it. I change the stories around. Stories are a great way to change it because you can introduce new stories, new ideas and trial them. That breaks it up as well. It keeps you interested as much as your audience.

The really big thing is, if I'm not passionate about a topic, I don't talk about it. I'm probably in a position where I can do that. If someone wants to contract me for a job to talk about something I'm not interested in, I will say no, I don't want to do it. That's a luxury I guess at this stage for me to be able to do that. Not everyone is in that spot. But I do believe you've got to be passionate to be able to talk about something effectively.

What do you guys think? Passion is everything, really, isn't it? One of the best presenters I have ever seen, this is extraordinary. This guy talks about Haulpak trucks. Does everyone know what Haulpak trucks are? They are big, yellow mining trucks. They're giants. Their tyres are three stories high. The wheels are enormous. They drive them out in the Pilbara and all those sorts of areas. This guy talks about changing Haulpak truck tyres. You think, alright! What a wild topic of conversation that would be.

It's awesome. He does this one hour conversation. The first fifteen slides are just absolute mayhem. There are cities destroyed, an airport destroyed. He shows these fifteen slides of

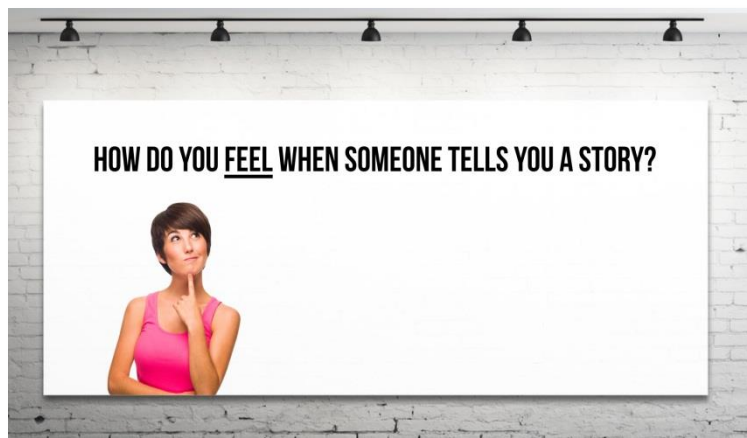


carnage. He says, that's what happens when you don't change your Haulpak tyre correctly. Of course everyone is riveted. As blokes, we're particularly excited by carnage. It is wonderful.

He is so passionate. He travels the world. All this guy does is travel the world talking about the importance of Haulpak truck safety. But because he is so good at what he does now, he goes to

mainstream conferences and presenting conferences and so on. It is a really boring topic but he is able to turn it around into something really interesting.

People often say, I talk about a really boring thing. I can't make it interesting. I think you can make any topic interesting. But you've got to be passionate about it, otherwise you can't.



The question we always want to ask ourselves is how do you feel when someone tells a story? When I'm telling a story, when Nick is telling a story, when you're seeing a video, whatever it is you're doing, we've always got to do that little bit of a stock analysis, and say how does that story make me feel? What am I feeling? This is that whole connection thing. When we're telling stories in

particular, extraordinary engagement happens. How does it feel?



The other side of that is how do I feel when I'm telling a story? That for me is an interesting point as well. As I said before, I initially felt a bit uncomfortable telling stories. I thought, no one wants to hear this. No one wants to know, I'm wasting time, one person surveys, all that kind of bad thing going on in there. I actually feel great now when I'm telling stories. It feels natural, it feels good, it feels

compelling.





More importantly, I don't have to worry have I forgotten something or any of that. We know our stories so wonderfully well that it is easy just to be able to share them. You can focus more on delivering it properly as opposed to thinking, I've got to remember that line goes there and so on. It is just so much easier to do that.

To go one step further, I think to become a great storyteller, you do have to become a student of storytelling. Just like writing, it's the same thing. If you want to learn how to write better stories and incorporate them into what you're doing, then you've got to read more and figure out what you like. It's the same with presenting. What do you like when someone is presenting to you, what resonates? If you're watching a video, what resonates, why does it resonate with you? There are people like you then. If it resonates with you, it will resonate with others. We've got to try to find that essence ourselves.

The hurdle for me to overcome was to believe that anyone wanted to hear anything that I had to say that was personal and wasn't a factual thing. When I did overcome that hurdle and I started to see other people doing it, I realized hey, this is really cool and this is really powerful.



For me storytelling heroes, these are some people who I really admire as storytellers. David T. Buckwald who I imagine no one here has ever heard of. Has anyone here ever heard of him? He is a financial planner. I had the great pleasure of working with him on that ING road show I was just talking about.

He gets up on stage, he has his notes which are that thick, handwritten, tattered because he's made two or three hundred presentations. He's used the same set of notes. If he lost his notes, he'd die. He is terrified of speaking. He's only in his thirties.

He puts his notes on the lectern, grasps one side of the lectern, grasps the other side and only un-presses his hands to turn the page to read his story. You think, how exhausting that must be as a presenter.

He's a financial planner and in America he insured a small company. Fifty out of fifty -one staff had life insurance with him and had had for a number of years. So he had got to know them.



He'd go into this company and knew everyone in there. There was just one stubborn hold-out who wouldn't buy life insurance from him.

September 11, everyone in that company was killed except one person. It wasn't that person who didn't have the policy. He recounts what it was like to lose everyone. It is an extraordinarily moving thing. I still get a shiver up my spine thinking about how powerful a story it is. He literally reads it. That for me was when I said, wow, it's not about delivering a technically perfect presentation, it's about having a big story.

He goes off on these tangents about a few of the people. That person had actually let their life insurance lapse and what did that translate to for that family? Of course, he is at a life insurance conference, he is there to talk about life insurance, and that is what he does. But you hear that and it's incredible.

I look at people from many different walks of life. That was interesting for me because he wasn't technically a great presenter and it didn't matter at all. You don't need to be a technically great presenter, you just need to have a good story to tell.

Another person I love a lot is a guy called Anthony Bourdain. If any of you know Kitchen Confidential, if you've read his book you'll never buy fish on a Monday morning in a restaurant. If you haven't read his book and buy fish on a Monday morning in a restaurant, you're in big trouble. He's a travel writer and he makes TV and does all kinds of things. He tells wonderful stories about countries, he writes books.

Zig Ziglar was one of my favorites. He has a great Texan drawl. I only mention these. What is more important, you have your own storytellers. I love Tony Robbins' style, TEDx, pretty much all of them for me are wonderful and powerful. I love them all. We all have to figure out who are our spoken word storytellers who we like to hear and what can you learn from them?

You learn interesting things. I think most of the time you learn things like timing, delivery, pausing, all those wonderful things that make a great story. I'd be interested, has anyone got any champion storytellers you'd like to share with us?

**Audience:** If you're interested, there are two talks on TED if you Google them on how to give good TED talks. If you're interested, you can get hold of me and I will send you the links. Of course there is an entire book on it now on how to give a TED talk.

**Andrew:** That is a great book. Malcolm Gladwell is great. Sandy McDonald's TED talk was great, I heard. I haven't seen it yet but I've heard fabulous things about it. Amy Cuddy, if anyone has



seen Amy's wonderful talk about body language and the power stance, that's great. We're all standing like that now, which is awesome.

We've got to go back to that point, it doesn't matter what people are actually talking about. That is just a nice bonus. But how are they delivering their message? I've got to say I find the ones that are the most inspiring are when I have absolutely no interest whatsoever in the topic. Yet I find myself watching the whole thing. I think, why did I watch all of that? Why did I spend the last eighteen minutes watching something about jellyfish of the Bahama trench in the New Hebrides?

**Audience:** There is a really good series of talks called Wisdom 2.0. One of the people on there is Eckhart Tolle, talking about presenting. He says you have to be present to present.

**Andrew:** That is a wonderful thing. I just find his voice really irritating though. That is an interesting point. One of the skills of presenting is you do have to be present. A lot of people aren't even present on a one on one meeting. To me that is presenting as well, one on one. If you're presenting whether it is a small group or whatever, it's that people aren't there, they're off somewhere else.

I remember going to a presentation with George Negus once. He was talking to a few hundred people and his phone rang during the presentation and he stops and starts talking. I thought, really? It was awkward, he was having a conversation, but he thought it was funny. We just thought he was ridiculous. It didn't really work.

It's the same thing with the spoken word. Follow the framework, however you've got to speak. Start with why, what is the story that I want to incorporate? I want to show you a couple of ways that we can do that. Why; can you tell it with authenticity?

Now, when it comes to speaking, if you can't tell a story with authenticity, this is where you'll come unstuck. We intuitively know when someone is not telling us the right thing, we feel it. As human beings we can tell when someone is not being authentic. You can't hide from this when you're using the spoken word when someone is in front of you. That's why this one is so important.

Use the framework just to get your ideas and your clarity right. I want to show you a couple of little diagrams on how you can use storytelling in your spoken word. There are three different models that I tend to use or recommend or teach people if I'm training people in speaking.





One is: the why might be you're telling the story and it might be a big purpose thing. With David Buckwald, the financial planner, as much as his story was, you should all have life insurance, his real, deeper story was the fact that life can change in a heartbeat. You never quite know what is going to happen. No one would have imagined that the twin towers would have been blown up with planes. His was really one long story that had a purpose. We are all familiar with that kind of concept.



Has anyone been to an event where a speaker has just told one long story? It's not necessarily very common these days. It used to be, but it is less common now. I remember seeing an extraordinary lady from South Africa, Alison Botha. She had a horrendous story about how she'd been raped and left for dead with her throat cut on the side of the road. Do you remember that story? She managed to somehow survive that and get on with her life and she's written about it, she's an extraordinary woman. That is that one long story. The purpose is very much an inspirational story.



The second style or format which is quite common is what I would do call a narrative. It's got stories throughout it. This is how I tend to present and this is how most presenters present. You might have a story, you might open with a story, information, information, introduce another story, information, story. We put stories through that to illustrate the information that we're sharing. It's

very easy but it is nice to see it in a format like this.

The third one is the narrative with one long story but it is broken up by information. So what this is, you've got the story, a go-to from here to there but you're breaking it up with



information along the way. The story is continued – story part 1, story part 2, story part 3. These are very effective in bringing it back.

Think back to Matt Chan, the guy who was talking, the Hoarders guy. Remember his story? Remember he was talking about the irritating guy at the party and how he brought him back into the equation a couple of times - story arcs. That starts to come together a little bit now when we talk about that. This is a very effective model. You have one long story and you break it up. These utilize that whole story arc concept.



This works in a training environment, it works in a mentoring environment, it works when making a video, it works when doing a talk. It works in any situation where you're speaking to people. I think these three formats help as well when you're thinking about the framework, what kind of story do I want to tell?

Ideally, as a great storyteller, it's good if we can use all three. Darren, in your situation, I see as a prime example for you, it's probably the second type. For you, you'd be talking about a story where you got into boating, some information around that, practical things, that's the feeder.

The problem is, too many of us, and that is what I was talking about, for me it was all just information, information, information. You want to intersperse the stories because it gives us a break. It lets our brain absorb what is going on and we learn better. That ultimately means we will take more action. So we pick the narrative that works for us.

This is the one I'm working at the moment that I'm really enjoying. I've got one long story and the one I'm working on at the moment is my early days in business and breaking it down into a two year period. What did I learn, what did I learn in that period? I even bring that into a book ironically. I'm writing a book called Someone has Got to Be the Most Expensive, It May as Well Be You. If you're going to be the most expensive, you've got to be the best. My aim is to cure small business poverty forever.

It is the idea of bringing that story around my own experience with undervaluing myself, self-worth and not charging enough and so on. Then I say, what do I see now information wise in business? How does that relate? The continuation of that, the second time of not charging enough and not valuing myself entered my life. What did it mean, what did it translate to? This is how I worked it out.



Can everyone see how we're putting that together? Is that a helpful kind of tool? It's very good. I find this helped personally, when I broke it down into that, otherwise it is all random. When you've got a style to follow, life becomes a little bit easier.



What are some of the spoken stories we need to be able to tell? There are a few, like we had with the written stories, that are good to be able to tell.. Again, I think we need to be able to tell our story. Who are you, what is your story? People want to know who they're dealing with. Often if you're doing business, you're maybe going to get asked to come along and talk at something. Can you tell us a bit

about who you are, what do you do? Sometimes if you're pitching something, people will want to know a bit more about who you are and what you do as well.

The second story of course is the story of your business. Can you tell us about your business? It's a lot more than pitching. The story of your business has a lot more depth to it I believe. It's not just pitching. It might be the story of a product or a service. Products have a story, or they can have a story, in fact they should have a story. I'm going to show you a video about that soon.

Stories can be about what we've observed or what we've figured out. You remember I mentioned the story list for my writing? They all apply equally to writing as they do to speaking. So I have a list of all my spoken stories. There are the stories from our past, our success stories, our passion stories. Our success stories, how many of us are really good at being able to talk about our greatest successes?

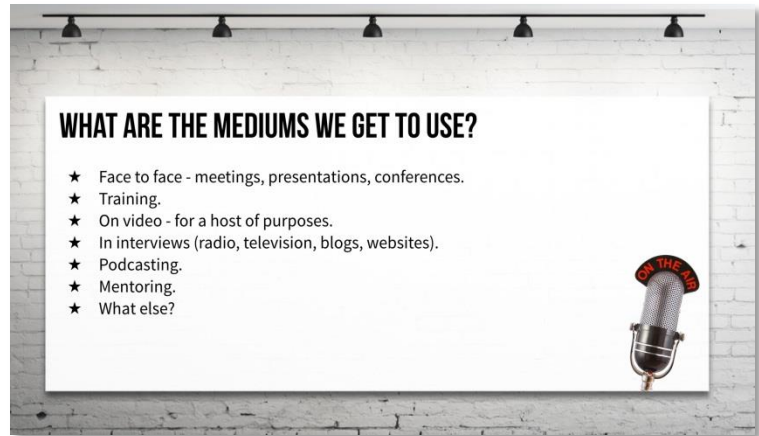
'I worked with a client and this was their problem,' just like I mentioned, the written story of a success, be able to talk it through in a spoken way. What is going to illustrate a point better? If you said to someone, this is what I do: I do this, this and this. We all say, yes, everyone does this and this and this. Or I could say, the best way I could tell you about what I do is let me share a story with you about someone who came to see me and this was their problem.

You'd probably be a little bit more specific about it. This was their challenge, this was their issue and this was what I was able to do for them. By doing this, this is what the result was. By being able to tell a story like that, you cut through so many other things.





So they're the stories that we need to be able to tell. What are the mediums we get to use these days with the spoken word? It's everything really. There are face to face meetings, training, on video for lot so of different things. There are interview. Does anyone here get interviewed by the media at all? There is a great chance there to do some telling stories. I find more and more for the interviews I'm doing in the media they want to ask more about me and my stories.



There is podcasting. Podcasting is a great way to tell stories. There is mentoring and so on. There are all these different areas and arenas where the spoken word comes into it. Not everyone is going to use all of them, I get that. Find which ones resonate with you and which ones are effective for you.

I find now there are so many different ways where people are talking. It's like webinars. You listen to so many webinars that are really boring. You listen to so many podcasts that are really boring, videos that are really boring. Why? Even at speakers' conferences they are boring, which means people aren't listening which means people aren't taking action. It's as simple as that. We've got to keep coming back to that point, that we've got to be more engaging as a storyteller because we want people to take action with our stories.

The next thing that Nick touched on earlier, was the point about framing a story or introducing a story. I find this interesting. I think that people often do waste stories in a couple of ways because they don't explain the story. I'm talking to you today and every once in a while I throw in a story. The key behind it is exactly as we're talking about. It's to illustrate the point, let you think about it, let you learn from the story. You'll remember the story, all the things that I'm saying is to try to illustrate that point.

People waste great stories in a number of ways, mainly because they don't frame the story. They don't give perspective. They assume that people know what it is there for but they don't really explain it. That's a waste.

To go back a step, what often happens is people will tell a story just out of the blue but don't put a bow on the end of it, they don't bring it to a close. I mention this story because... You can't assume that everyone understands it or everyone gets it or everyone knows.



Just like yours there, Todd. At lunchtime I was looking at some of Todd's extraordinary artworks, sculptures. What is the story of it? You said, what does it mean to you? It is hard for me to say what that piece meant to me, the assumption is there. That is why you've got to explain it and not assume that everyone gets it.

Introduce the story: I want to tell you a story about this. I'd like to share a story with you about this. You can say, I'll talk about it when I finish it or I'm explaining this because of this. That little bit of explanation is ok. I don't think you need to go too kindergarten about it.

You would tell your story and when you finish you have to pause. This is a process to follow. Often I see a lot of speakers tell a story and just keep going into the next part. You've moved on there. You've got to stop when you finish a story to give people time to think, ok, yes the story has finished. My brain says, got that, click and it gets put wherever it needs to get put in the brain. Everyone moves on with their life. If you don't stop and don't let it end and don't pause, they don't get the chance to do that and the story is wasted. It rolls into the next part.

Explain the key point. How does it relate? What is the key message? Out of that, what is the key thing you take out of that? It is this. Ideally if you can, relate it back to the rest of the story, depending on which of those models you might want to use. Is it relevant to repeat that, do you need to? You don't want it to be too irritating for people.



Storytelling with conviction in the spoken word is important. That is like that passion, isn't it? When you tell stories, you do want to have conviction I think a lot of the time. It's also about telling your story with confidence. That was that hurdle for me, to overcome the fact of why does anyone want to hear this story. Then I realized, telling stories is not about me, it's an observation or a realization. It's

like the Hempfest conference, telling those stories about other things. It's the same thing, you need to be able to tell it with confidence, otherwise people doubt the story. If you're not doing it confidently, they don't believe you.

Be careful of the ums and ahs. I don't think it has to be delivered pitch perfect. I don't think anyone is going to kill you if you do a few ums and ahs. I certainly do them. But it can't be too uncertain. You're pensively telling your story and your body language changes and you say, 'I



will tell you a story about a guy who maybe kind of, I don't know, I think he was a life insurance guy.' People will not believe you.

With two different audiences, something that I find straight away, is men are far more cynical than women about any stories. Women will be more believing because they're more attuned to body language. Blokes tend to sit there with their arms crossed saying, what is this guy going to tell me? I'll decide whether or not I believe him. That's why I prefer to talk to women.

Know the details, use the details. Remember that point about adding a few extra details to make the story more relatable? I met a man in New York, at a conference. He was an accountant. What was his name? Fred. Know some details when you're telling stories. Slow it down. Tell your stories slowly, you don't need to rush them.

Look at people. If you don't make eye contact when you're telling stories, what does everyone think? You're telling a porky pie. Tell it slowly. Now when you're telling a story, you should actually talk slower than you would normally. It feels normal, it doesn't feel wrong. But on the inside, you're thinking, why am I sounding like an idiot and talking slowly. But you do need to talk a little bit slower when you're telling stories, but our brain is conditioned to not really notice that.

If you looked at a TED Talk for example, an eighteen minute talk, people are actually talking really slowly. The number of words per minute is much slower on a talk in that space than it is if we're sitting down just having a conversation. But our brain is tuned in to understand that is ok because someone is saying something or sharing a story, it will be slower and we'll absorb it.

What I did in my notes and had on my computer when I do work, I have a little message that comes up and says, slow down, slow down. In key parts of my notes I would have slow down, slow down because I was a fast talker, still am a fast talker. But I'm trying to be a slower talker.

Use the pause, of course, that pregnant pause is a powerful one. Don't overuse it either. I think we find those kinds of speakers who use it too much are a bit irritating. They use pauses that are too long. Pauses work really well but not if you abuse them is my philosophy. Be nice with your pauses but don't abuse them to the point where everything is melodramatic. Like: good morning....it's good that you're here... I saw one guy like that and thought, this is going to be the longest hour of my life. It was.

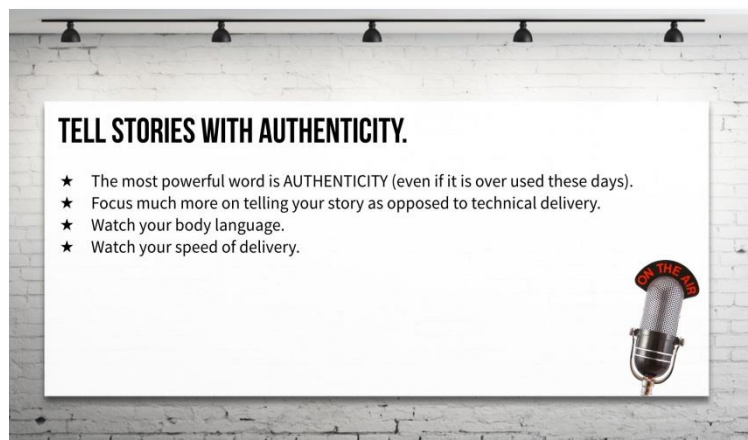
If you talk nonsense, the audience will know. We know that these days. Authenticity is a word that is used and abused way too much unfortunately. But it is such a powerful word. As I've said, I became a good speaker when I stopped trying to be one. I just started to learn to be authentic.





If I make a mistake, I just laugh at myself. If something goes wrong, I just laugh. Everything goes wrong when you're a presenter, such as projectors blowing up. The number of times I have been presenting to an audience and all of a sudden there is no screen. It has disappeared and you've just started two minutes into your one hour talk. You've just got to learn to laugh and go with it and not be too serious. Just be authentic.

I think also be a bit vulnerable, be a bit human, open up. Tell people honestly how you're feeling, your own faults and failings. I think we resonate with that far more than we do with someone who gets on stage and has all the answers. They get on stage and the first thing they say is, gosh, it's hard to get your Ferrari serviced in Melbourne. We say, yes, it's a problem, we understand.



Focus much more on telling your story than technical delivery is really what that translates to. Watch your body language. If you haven't seen that Amy Cuddy video about the power stance, please watch it. It's a wonderful video not about other people's body language, it's about your body language and how it affects your mood.

I think it's a good thing. Before you go out and talk at places, there is a lot of discussion among professional speakers about getting into the right state, being present, being energetic and so on. I just love the way she talks about how you stand and your body language affects your state of mind and your confidence. So anyone who lacks a little confidence, in fact everyone, should watch the Amy Cuddy video I think. I think it is the most popular talk on TED. I think 18,000,000 have watched. It's extraordinary.

It's almost up there with the talks we do in terms of the number of people who watch them.

Watch your speed of delivery, I've spoken about that. Not too fast, and just make sure you do slow it down a little bit.

Another point here is sometimes when we're telling stories, you'll notice Nick and I used a lot of videos today to illustrate our points. We do that for obvious reasons. It makes it easier for you as an audience. You don't have to listen to me hour after hour for starters. It does also give our



brain a break. When we tell a story, that lets your brain stop and absorb things. When we show a video, the same thing happens. You don't have to think, you can just watch the video.

One thing we're very good at as human beings is we've been very well trained to watch TV and to go into our little zone where we're watching and we'll take it in or not. Videos are a great way to reinforce your story, reinforce your message. I think that is the key way to use them.

Some people say, if I'm showing another video, does that take away from my story? It won't if it's the right video. It should enhance your story.



Further to that, I want to show you one. It is Willem Dafoe. This is a great story but it's got a bit of a disappointing end. That is just to frame it and get the disappointment upfront, to get that out of the way. This is a great story about choices. I was talking about crossroads before. Link back to a story, my personal story. If I was talking about crossroads in a presentation, I would show this

video to illustrate that in terms of choices that we have at crossroads. This is a way of framing the video. (Willem Dafoe video)

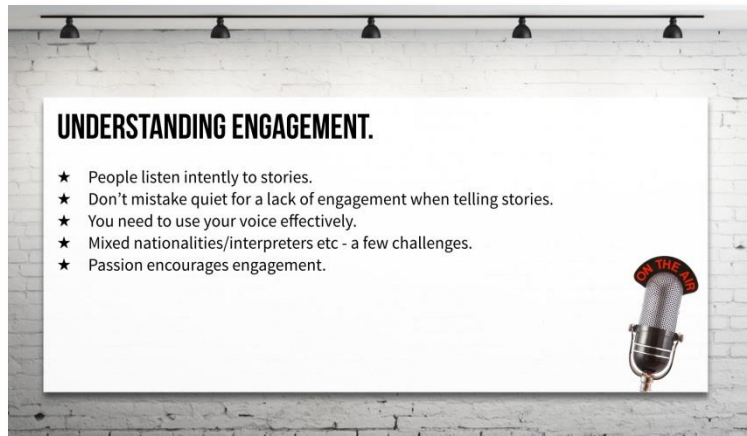
What is that all about? Between Jim Beam and Jack Daniel's! What a great story, it would have cost them a squillion dollars. Then for some reason, a bit of brand association there with that idea, do we think any better about it? What a great story, oh how disappointing and deflating. I think that is a fail. What do you think?

If you drink Jim Beam, you're going to get a private jet. There is no doubt about it. That's the point, which one, New York or Milwaukee? I think if you drink Jim Beam, you're picking up elephant poop for a long time is probably the moral to the story.

Reading the room, understanding engagement is another thing when it comes to storytelling. It's a big part of it. I think that point I made earlier about me mistaking sometimes if people aren't being all demonstrative that they're not engaged. That was a really big lesson for me. I certainly changed the way that I delivered. I used to be worried if people weren't engaged and reacting and laughing and whatever, that I wasn't doing a good job as a speaker.



I think you can be entertaining as a speaker or you can be effective as a speaker. It's great if you are entertaining, but you know what? You get invited to an event once. If you're effective as a speaker and you get your message across and people take action, you get invited back time and time again I find. We want people to take action.



People do listen intently to stories. That's the key. It's very cool when you present a story and you can hear a pin drop and they forgive a lot of things. I was talking at a conference in Sydney.

It was a First Nations conference. We had Maoris, we had Native Americans, Canadians, Americans from the USA, we had Inuits. All these first nations came to Sydney

for this extraordinary conference. We were talking about issues in first nations around the world.

I was the last speaker of the day to talk. My job was to talk about entrepreneurialism in these communities, what do you need to do to foster an entrepreneurial environment. The chap speaking before me was a man by the name of Chief Louis. He was the leader of a Canadian tribe. We all had twenty minutes. Chief Louis went on at twenty past five; I was going on at twenty to six and would finish at six.

There were eight hundred people and everyone leaves today, it was a beautiful day. Chief Louis went on at twenty past five and spoke for two hours on a Friday night. There were a handful of people, who left, but most people didn't, they stayed in this room. It was extraordinary.

He told this amazing story about how they had changed their tribe and what their problems were. He went through the whole storyline about where they are today. It is amazing, two billion dollars in funds managed; they have two thousand people employed. It was just a fantastic story but then this is what it was like twenty years ago. We had drugs; we had the highest rate of heart disease in North America in our tribe. It was an amazing story. You could hear a pin drop. You think, how powerful a story is.

On a Friday when half these people have got to fly places and so on, people wouldn't leave this thing. What a difficult job I had to do to get on stage after that and somehow compete with that at almost 8 o'clock on a Friday night. It was amazing. People will listen.





Don't mistake that lack of engagement. When you're telling stories in whatever format, don't mistake that they're not interested. I think it's easy to do that.

We've also got to learn to use our voice effectively. That can be a challenge can come sometimes for people. It's not about being loud and obnoxious and in your face. I don't think that being an effective storyteller speaker is about that. It is more about using your voice well.

Sometimes it can be speed as I've spoken about, but also inflexion. This isn't really a whole speaking kind of workshop, but I do a lot of work around that, using your voice, projecting your voice when you can. Speeding it up, slowing it down, making it louder, making it quieter when you're telling stories.

To be honest, to get really good at that, I think you've got to practice doing those kinds of things. I certainly wasn't good at it. I probably just told a story at one speed. Speed was my issue rather than anything else. I didn't really use that speed. A nice thing is the more you start to tell stories, if you're telling the same stories again, it's a great opportunity to try delivering them a little bit differently. Use different tone, use different voice, pause in a different spot. Just see how it works.

It's just like writing an article. You've got to try things and say, did that work, didn't it? Did that work or didn't it when I delivered that as a presentation? You know yourself what worked and what didn't.

Question: How do you gauge what part of your story is worth telling? For example, what you might think is really interesting, people think is boring and vice versa. I'll give you a quick example. Beth said, are you coming out for drinks after? No, I said, you won't believe what I've got to do when I leave here. I told her what it was and she said, how grouse is that? It's setting up sheep yards at the farm before it gets dark.

**Andrew:** I'm hooked straight away.

Question: I wouldn't even think that would be interesting, yet it so different and someone wants to know about it. How do you work that out? Then it sounds like it's all about me, all about me.

**Andrew:** I remember a friend of Nick's was talking about glow in the dark scaffolding. It's a start up called Fluro Scaffold. It is exactly what it sounds like, a safety measure. This guy was talking about this as an idea and everyone in the room said, that is really interesting. How did you design that, how did you develop that?



I think you've got to look for a few clues around your topic. I know exactly what you're saying there. For me, I think who wants to know this? Who cares about me being an orphan? Who cares about me having a dive shop? Who cares? That's where you do need to know your audience.

I was in the same spot. I didn't really think anyone was interested, but there were clues. There were people who came up to me when I finished and said, wow, I really love your story. I really loved your example there about the restaurant. I really loved what you said about that. You start to take that on board. You get that feedback from people.

So it's not something you get right from day one. I think you've got to get it wrong a few times. The reality is, look also, when you're listening to other presenters, to what they're saying and see how it makes you feel. If someone was talking about their own background, we're generally very interested in the most minute of details. As human beings, we do have a fascination with other people. Hence there's a TV show called Hoarders and so on.

The material that you consider mundane, I look at every one of my books and I just assume that everyone knows all these things. I still for the life of me can't believe anyone would buy one, let alone read one, because everyone knows this. But they don't.

Question: So the guy who is at the funeral is talking about something he thinks is really interesting and it is revolting. So it is just really understanding who you're talking to.

**Andrew:** Go back to that. If you know your market, what are people interested in? There are clues. The paddock to plate concept for example, just to use that, is such a big topic. But also your story about what you're doing, you have people saying, it's a really interesting story. I know your back story and how you've got to where you are, it's really interesting. I'm not the first person to say that. So you're looking for clues.

People say how did you get into what you're doing? Helen, I asked you that. You're interested in wellbeing for dogs, you want to help people help their dogs live longer, healthier, happier lives. How on earth did you get into that? We are interested in that. We're more interested if we want to buy something from you.

I think the world has changed but now we want to know the Mark Zuckerbergs of the world because they're accessible. We can't walk up and shake their hand, but their story is accessible. So that is why we're a little bit intrigued by it all. That is something that has changed. Before, these companies were all faceless. We didn't need to know who ran them, we didn't want to know who ran them. That was just discussed in big board rooms with oversized tables around the place. At the end of the day it wasn't relevant.



The reality of it is that people are interested in all the details that you can share and you'll be surprised. You might get it wrong from time to time, but they'll engage more if there's a point, if there is something they can take out of that. What you've done is a very brave kind of thing to do. The more human you are in telling your stories, the more people will connect with them.

I think we don't like the person who gets up and tells you they've got all the answers as much as we like the person who says, I've got all the problems. You name it and this is what I've messed up and these are the mistakes I've made, but this is what I've figured out. We relate to that.

You know who the hottest speaker in Australia is at the moment? Steven Bradbury.

**Audience:** I've heard him. He's amazing.

**Andrew:** He's the guy who won the gold medal on ice skates, the last man standing when everyone else had fallen down. Now that was many years ago, at least twelve years ago at the

Sydney Olympics. He got a gold medal because everyone else fell over. How could it be, in 2014, he is the hottest speaker on the circuit? He did three hundred speaking jobs this year. That's unbelievable. It's the same thing; he tells a great story about not just everyone else fell over and I won a gold medal. People were very dismissive of him and he talks about that, how it is. How it feels to be told, you didn't win the gold medal, everyone else lost it.

He says, ok, I spent twenty years of my life training to be an Olympic athlete at great cost to my parents. It's not a sob story but that is what it took.

A friend of mine has only one arm. He climbed Mount Everest twice. The first time he only got within two hundred meters of the summit and his lungs started filling up with blood and he had to turn around because he was afraid. Two hundred meters, hop up there! Anyway, he had to go back and do it again, to prove it to himself.

That's his story. This one-armed guy climbed Mount Everest, how amazing. He says, that's not my story, that's what I'm known for. My story is I was a three week old baby and the doctor picked me up and felt a lump under my arm and they chopped my arm off that day.

I had to grow up. I was at school and who gets picked first when you're in school? He said, I'm with the fat kid, the kid with the glasses, the kid who is probably questionable in so many different ways. I am the one-armed gimp. I was the king of the un cool kids. He talks about this story that he was a martial arts black belt instructor. He used to ride a 1100 cc motorbike through the streets of Sydney as a courier with one arm. He says, by the way I climbed Mount Everest twice.





You think wow. That kind of thing to me is just so wonderful. Why? We're shocked, we're surprised, we think it's about climbing Mount Everest. We get from A to B, to get to C and that is the power of a great story.

Question: Can I make one super quick comment? At TED Melbourne, the first speaker was Di McGrath. She was talking about the fact she was one of the short listed women to go to Mars. I can't get my head around this. They're there for seven months and they die there.

I took my son to TEDx and I said, I can't get my head around this. It turns out I went to school with her. I went up and introduced myself to her and she is thinking, why are you introducing yourself to me? I've known you for twenty years. The thing about her story is that she's got a really massive story to tell if she gets there but she doesn't actually get to enjoy the accolades of the story after it's done.

It's a one way trip. They set up this whole little infrastructure and they go and do not come back.

**Andrew:** There is no chance it will end in tears at all.

Question: Well, I don't know how they can actually do it. It's donating yourself for human experimentation. It goes down in history but she never gets to benefit.

**Andrew:** Two hundred and fifty thousand people applied for it though, or some ridiculous figure like that. It's extraordinary, like kamikaze pilots and so on.

Similar to that, when it comes to telling our stories and doing other things, I think we can also come up with stories based on interpretations of other things we're reading or other things we're hearing about or other things that we're seeing. For example, I'm putting a keynote presentation together at the moment based on a book called No Mercy. This book, if you haven't read it, is quite an extraordinary book.

Two Australian ladies have written it. The story is they've gone back in history and looked at some of the greatest disasters in the world where people have ended up eating each other and what happens? Shipwrecks have gone down, there is a raft and four hundred survivors, five hundred years ago. What happened? What happened as a result of that? What human behavior resulted from that? I find it fascinating. Or there is a plane in the side of the hill and how do people work out what to do? What are the typical things?



Does everyone know The Lord of the Flies book? In America they actually did that as an experiment in the sixties, the Lord of the Flies which was what the book was based around. They got a whole pile of little boys and they put them in a camp area and they hid away and filmed them from remote areas. They saw how it degraded and turned into quite a violent and horrible scene. Only in America. Now it's called Big Brother.

This book No Mercy is amazing. It just has great realizations and observations about what happens. So we're an isolated group, we're trapped in here, within a matter of minutes, we have all figured out who the weakest person in the room is. Our brain is thinking, we might have to eat them.

The irony is the weakest person in the room also knows they're the weakest person in the room. They think uh oh. Now I can't sleep, bad things happen when you sleep and there is a pile of people in the room trapped in here who know you're the weakest person in the room.

They bring in all these other extensions about what alcohol does, what lack of leadership does. They wrote this great book and they list twelve things. If you're ever caught in a survival situation with other people, this is what you must do. It's great, it's about people in Antarctica and so on.

I'm using that to do a keynote presentation around corporate survival in tough times. I'm going to write about, you will start to eat each other when this happens. This is a sign. Alcohol, this is what is going to happen when you bring alcohol into the mix.

So you can tell stories around other areas that you're doing. This to me opened up so much of a door for me to be able to read other things, share that information and say, how can I turn that into something to tell a story around that? You can build so much onto that. It's extraordinary.

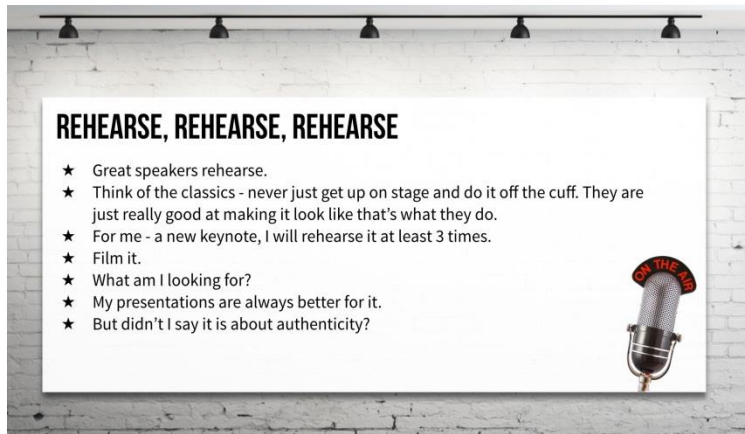
Understanding, engagement. Other things, mixed nationalities, interpreters can sometimes be a bit of a challenge. Not a huge challenge, but it can add a bit of complexity. Sometimes people don't understand you as well. I won't spend too much time on this. Does anyone here speak to people with translators or anything? A little bit.

Let's say you're presenting internationally to people. I did one show in America and down the back there were nine little booths. There were people with nine different languages who were translating. You have another guy who is an adjudicator. Most in the room have headsets for the translation.

It just throws you out a little bit because when you tell your story, there is a five or six second delay, I think it is. So you tell a joke, no one laughs and you keep going. Then they all start laughing. On top of that, the booths have a little light. If you're going too fast, the light goes on



and they're telling you to slow down. You're trying to tell your story, no one is laughing, the lights come on and you're slowing down. You're talking about something and everyone bursts out laughing and they're not supposed to. It's like your head is going to explode. There's no real relevance but just a bit fun. Passion of course is also that engagement.



Rehearsing is another big part for me. I talked about authenticity, spontaneity and so on when it comes to speaking, presenting, storytelling. But I'll say the same thing, I'm a big believer in rehearsing. I'll rehearse a presentation, a brand new keynote. I'll rehearse three times at least, probably more before I'll do that and deliver it. The whole idea is once you know it enough, you

can calm down, you can relax. You're not as stressed about what you're delivering. You can actually then deliver it much better.

If anyone gets nervous in the presenting space, rehearse. Honestly, that's for me. Some people work in a different way, but that's what I find very helpful for anyone who is a nervous presenter.

Lala, my little pooch, sits there and listens to me attentively for forty-five minutes while I'm talking. It's really cool. She could run businesses, she could speak, she could write books, she could do just about anything. She's an extraordinary dog.

All the people we know of who are really great presenters who look like they just jog up on stage and do this amazing thing, Steve Jobs, when Al Gore was doing The Inconvenient Truth, Martin Luther King, I Have a Dream, all those people rehearsed, hundreds of times often. Steve Jobs was a control freak. His talks, where he looked like he put on a turtleneck, got up on stage and wandered off were rehearsed, rehearsed, rehearsed.

**Audience:** Just on those TED Talks, we recommend a twenty hour to fifty hour rehearsal per talk. When you look at the TED Talks online, don't be intimidated. I really recommend that if you can go to a TEDx event locally, please do. They all say, um, they all say ah, they mix it up, they mess it up. We heavily edit them so they all look absolutely fabulous but they are quite natural and do miss things as well. Don't look at them and think, I can never be that good.





**Andrew:** Yes, the fix-all is rehearse, rehearse, rehearse.

**Audience:** I think one of the best pieces of advice I ever got about rehearsing for anything, especially if you're nervous is the sense of familiarity allows you to be more present. You can maybe find something humorous so that you're not concentrating on the core of what you're going to be delivering. Other things that are able to polish it are able to come about.

That was the best piece of advice, because before I used to think, wow, everybody just gets up there and does that so beautifully.

**Andrew:** Yes, what is wrong with me?

**Audience:** When I started rehearsing, rehearsing and rehearsing, it did come true.

**Andrew:** That's the thing. I find when you're rehearsing telling stories, you get better at it. Comedians rehearse. Who thought that? I hadn't ever realized that. I'm friends with Anh Do. He tells me about the rehearsal that he does. Really? You just get up there and say really funny things. He says, yes, each time I do a one hour gig, there are probably three or four hours' at least of prep that I do. I try it, move things around, change it. I say, wow. We don't imagine that.



Filming it is a great thing to do as well whenever you're rehearsing, to see your sins. It's a good thing. I normally film it. Look at your body language. When you're telling stories in particular, look at the body language you're using when you're telling your stories, how you're telling them. Is it too fast, are you going to quick, are you slowing it down, are you not? The only way you can really get that

and see improvement I think is through filming it. That's what I'm looking at for that.

Rehearsing helps us. When it comes to videos, obviously videos is a huge topic. I'll just whip through these last little areas. We're all recording videos and that is a big topic these days. It's a whole workshop in itself and people far smarter than me, Jules for one are big on being able to do that kind of thing.



Here are a couple of little tips that I would have, when it comes to recording videos, we do go into a bit of a different head space. Sometimes it makes us look silly, I think. We get that funny 'I'm recording in front of a camera' kind of voice. I think the greatest advice I can offer is to record a lot.

The more you do, the more relaxed you start to become. You can actually start to just to ignore the camera as opposed to face the camera and that awkwardness of saying something and looking like an idiot. That is the best advice there.

The same rules apply though. A great story will capture the audience. I see no reason why whatever you're recording, whether it's hey, I want to tell you about my business, let me share a story, whatever it might be, it's still telling a story. Tell your story, tell your business story, whatever it might happen to be.

Obviously you've got limited time in a video, more so even than in a written article these days because we're very selective. We're all YouTube junkies, so we're quick to go buy a video now. So you've got to get their attention fast, otherwise you're in trouble.

Keep your stories short, succinct and learn to deliver your stories with a bit of engagement.



This is really interesting one. This is a Kickstarter video about an esky. It's nice because this is a video about a product. I thought interesting. If you want to put a project on Kickstarter, you've got to make a video about it and it's got to be quite compelling. This one really resonated with me because it tells a great story about making a product better. I think that's what I liked about it. (video)

Just to let you in on a few things there, every man in the room wants one. It's pretty corny. Who wants one of those? I joined the Kickstarter program to buy that. Who cares, you've just got to have one.

What is really interesting and intriguing about that, even though it is just a video about a product, it ticks all of the boxes of telling a good story. He went from bad, solved problems, bit



of a personal story, our philosophy, only the best parts, which means it is getting made in China, really cheap and so on. Yet it is a really good story.

I believe that Kickstarter campaign raised over \$1,000,000. It was one of the most successful Kickstarter campaigns of all time, simply around that video which is a bit corny and clichéd. But for whatever reason, it just resonated and most of us have looked at it and said, I've got to have that. At that stage, you're wondering, what else can they fit into this thing? I'm a bit disappointed there isn't a TV in there.



Moving onto interviews. When you're doing them, you can tell stories when you're being interviewed. Has anyone listened to Richard Fidler, on the Conversation Hour on the ABC? I don't know if it is a Victorian thing or a national thing. He just interviews people to get their story out of them. You can go onto the ABC site and you can download The Conversation Hour with Richard

Fidler. He's one of the best interviewers I've ever seen in the world.

If you interview people for podcasts or your own thing, if you're interviewing people in any shape or form, listen to The Conversation Hour and see how he does it. He's very good at getting people to tell their story.

Also an interesting way to do that is to reverse engineer it a bit and say, if I was on that show, how would I answer some of those kinds of questions, even though they're very specific about individuals. It's a part of getting comfortable about telling your story. Sometimes getting comfortable about asking other people about their story is a great way to do that. I find that a bit intriguing.

There are great opportunities around that. It's a very cool way of enhancing what you're trying to tell or what you're trying to share by actually sharing someone else's story. Just like the video, the example before or being able to share someone else's story. If you're writing about it, you're interviewing them as well.

**Audience:** The Coolest Cooler, they were after \$50,000 and they've got \$13,285,226 pledged.





**Andrew:** So anyone who thinks a good video like that doesn't work, think again. I think it worked because we could all relate to the problems. I think it worked because it wasn't overly fun. It wasn't like Dollar Shave Club. I thought it was a bit cheesy but it was: these are the mistakes, this is the solution, this is what we stand for.



On top of that it's just a really good idea. The esky hasn't actually changed. We've all had that problem of soggy sandwiches, getting cold trying to find your beer, trying to find a bottle opener. That's a prime example of luminescent scaffolding. Someone has just made something better.

It's not a lot of money. I would have paid \$1000. I might buy more

now. Can I still join?

The last little point I want to make is mastering the art of spoken storytelling. Make an internal commitment to get better at telling stories. That's where you've got to start, whatever that means for you. If you don't say, I'm going to get better at telling stories, my story, my business' story, other people's stories, you won't. It is very easy to hide away from this.

The second thing is you've got to learn from those you admire and you look up to. Say what do I like? Become more of an observer of other storytellers. Ask, why do I like the way that person said that, why did I like that video, why did I like that Ted Talk, why did I like that? That to me is important.

Get really good at framing your stories so you can give them maximum impact. Don't waste a story, don't waste a great story by not framing it enough or summarizing it or bringing it back to why you're actually telling that story.

Focus more on that delivery with authenticity. I'll keep saying that until the cows come home. I just want a better word than authenticity now. Rehearsing, rehearsing, rehearsing is my little trip, something I believe in. I think that's important.



## SESSION FOUR

**Nick:** We're onto the final leg of both today and this tour of ours. The last session we want to run through is how it all fits together and how you bring it all together and then inject it into the digital experience of both your customers and yourself. So we want to cover a few different things today and I want to finish with something around gamifying your story, round the gamification of your storytelling.



This session is pretty full on in terms of material given to you. I make it go fairly quickly for a reason. There are a few videos in here. Don't worry, you'll get the presentation and the videos. At the start, Andrew said it's important you have a bit of an open mind about this. For some of these things that I'm going to show you now, you need a very open mind just to take it on and believe this is happening now. This is how people are communicating now.



We're going to talk about who your online audience is, what platforms are available for you to tell your story on and what might be the best ones. How do you use more than one platform? If you are going to use them, which ones work well with each other and which ones do not work well with each other? How you pay for a wider audience is getting more and more important now for your story. Then,

what is the future?

The thing about the digital space is that it is very content heavy already. There is a lot of content out there. So if you are a builder, or you're in pet food or if you're an electrician or you're a travel agent, there is a lot of content already being produced. So much so that the noise that comes from this content is becoming greater and greater.



We're all content creators, we're all journalists, we're all producers, we're all content marketers, whether we think we are or not. So the amount of material that happened prior to 2003 was like this and now we're really exploding. You're part of this. You're part of the noise that is out there now. So how do you set yourself apart from the rest of the noise when something as scary as that is true?

**EVERY SINGLE DAY WE  
PRODUCE MORE CONTENT  
THAN FROM THE BEGINNING  
OF TIME TO 2003.**

Another thing you have to think about is who the market is. Globally now more than half the humans on earth are under thirty years old. If you're telling a story to them or not, you have to think about how they're going to consume it and how the rest of the world is consuming it too. It's no longer one size fits all. In social, there is no longer one size fits all. You can't just be Facebook, you can't just be twitter or just LinkedIn or whatever.

You also have to think about people consuming it via Viber or WhatsApp or Snapchat or whatever it might be. This is important, because the Gen Y Millennial group are not like Gen X or Boomers. If you miss with your storytelling with Gen X or Boomers, or if they complain about something and you don't listen to them, they just complain and go to someone else. But Gen Y or Millennials become someone else.

From a customer service angle, if you don't listen and take on board something a Gen Y or Millennial says to you, they will create a competitor to beat you that does fit those things. That's very different to Gen X or Baby boomers. Think about how you're telling the story to these guys and how they're consuming it.

One in six people on the planet log into Facebook every single month, and 85% of those every single day. That is a lot of people on a platform at once. It's amazing how Facebook has a very good rate of uptime. There are very few breakages in that supply when you consider how many people use the platform and how big it is.

When I first started the social speaking schtick, I used to say, pretty soon, Facebook is going to be the fourth biggest population on earth. There was China, India, the USA ahead of it and then there was Facebook.





The reality is now six of the top global populations are not countries, they're platforms. That is a large collection of people who are united behind a brand, who are using a brand every day or every month. It means to infiltrate that group or to make that group work for you is so much easier on the one hand and so much more difficult on the other. You've really got to put your message in front of the right people at the right time. That is kind of scary.



Tencent is a Chinese aggregating data company. They own a few social networks and a few games. WhatsApp is a messaging service that Facebook recently bought for a ton of money. It's like Viber except with Viber you can actually talk. It uses your data capacity to send SMSs rather than your signal capacity.

When you're a Facebook employee, all your communication with other Facebook employees on chat is monitored and recorded. So we used to use WhatsApp to talk about things that you had to talk about. Then Facebook bought WhatsApp, I'm sure just to stop that.

LinkedIn is a massive success story considering what it is and what it's supposed to do. LinkedIn gets two new members signed up every second of every day. But that is not the best part. The best part about LinkedIn is they have just lowered the minimum age for entrepreneurial people and professional people down to thirteen years old. Think about it. These are the guys who are building your competitors, who are building platforms to compete with LinkedIn or whatever it is.

I've researched this is a bit to make sure it is true. I can't quite believe this is true. There are lots of buzz words around. The amount of content and the change, the shifting sands are such that one in five things that people type into Google has never been typed in before.

It used to be Facebook is moving too quickly or social media is moving too quickly. Now the world is moving too quickly for the biggest aggregator of content and indexer of meanings of content to keep up with. That is scary on one hand and really cool on the other hand. If you've never heard of something before, WhatsApp or whatever, then that doesn't mean you're behind the eight ball. It's just that the eight ball is miles away. The eight ball is rolling at two hundred miles an hour in front of you.

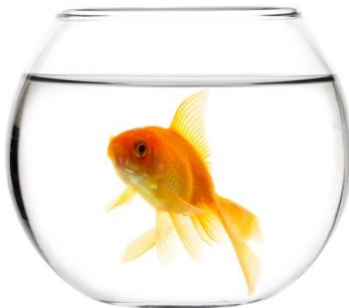


The largest growing demographic on both Facebook and Twitter is grandparents. That's mostly because they're stalking their children or their children's children, their grandchildren. It's also because they've become very digitally savvy. They've become really good as ecommerce clickers.

It used to be that people who were sixty-five plus would never in a million years buy something online. You had to put your credit card on there and the Russians would get it and it was a drama. Now they've become really good clickers on ads and they've become very good and very loyal ecommerce people. That's mostly because their situation dictates that's how they need to shop. It's also because people are pitching and marketing very well to this group of people. You might not think that is your target market there, but they're there too.

**THE AVERAGE PERSON HAS  
AN ATTENTION SPAN  
OF 7 SECONDS.**

**THE AVERAGE GOLDFISH  
HAS AN ATTENTION SPAN  
OF 8 SECONDS.**



In terms of attention and grabbing attention, the average human has a fairly decent span of attention of seven seconds. You've got about three of that to make a real impact with your website or with your initial message. People compare it to the goldfish though, and they've really got us. People are getting dumb.

People are getting quick and dumbed down all the time, and not just in politics but in everyday life. Think about how you craft your message. That initial part of your story is the bait you've thrown out. You've got three seconds to grab them or they've moved onto something else.

The next part of that is, if you do grab them, how do you keep them engaged for the next bit of content you're going to put to them, or the next or the next? That's the challenge. In some ways it's much easier to grab someone's attention in three seconds with a great headline as Andrew said or whatever. But to keep them on board and keep them referring work to you or keep them buying your product or service is a bigger challenge.

Something that has helped with that is the mobile phone. The mobile phone has changed the way that everybody does business, including the big tech giants. It completely changed in the two and half years I was at Facebook. It completely changed how that business operated. At the start, we didn't really care about the mobile version or the mobile experience at all.



### THE ULTIMATE STORYTELLING VEHICLE: THE MOBILE PHONE.

- ★ More people own a mobile device than a toothbrush.



Then we became mobile first and we were going to build everything for mobile first. Then we shifted it again to where it was mobile only. We really had to think about making just a good mobile experience.

In the old days, you had to make sure that your website looked half decent on a mobile phone or an iPad. But now that's completely

changed. Now you have to make sure your mobile website looks ok on a desktop or a laptop computer. The truth of the matter is that sixteen year olds living in this country will never own a laptop or desktop computer, never. I don't have one. I'm not sixteen.

You need to think about how your message is going to be sent to the greater population now, whether they're sixteen or not, and further, how that is going to be shared by them and engaged with. That is how it is going to happen. It's going to happen on the most intimate device we have. It's an extension of us now. That's really sad, but kind of cool.

You used to think, where are my keys, where is my wallet, out the door. Now it's where's my phone, now my wallet and keys. If I forget my phone, I have to dash straight back, obviously. But worse than that, if my phone runs out of battery, that's bad. A couple of weeks ago I was about an hour from home and my phone went flat.

But I was only ten minutes away from a JB Hi-Fi. So I went to buy a charger and charged it in store rather than go forty-five minutes without it. That is really sad.

That really shows how much it is an extension of ourselves. It's our watch now. It's next to our head when we sleep, so it's an alarm clock. So if you want to put your message and your brand in the most intimate thing that we have on our body or in our purse, this is the way to do it.

It's taken over the world so much that more people own a mobile device than own a toothbrush. If you want to out yourself as a not very present person, there is a free app you can get on your phone. It's called Checky. It tells you in the preceding twenty-four hours how many times you've unlocked your phone. On average, Australians unlock their phones a hundred and ten times a day. Worse than that, more than fifty percent of that time, it's not to even look at anything. It's just to open it and feel it in our hands.





As a parent of toddlers and small children, it's shameful. You really feel bad about yourself. With this Checky, you don't do it. It's even worse when they grab it from you and unlock it themselves.

More about the mobile experience is, the big storytellers, the big message givers are thinking about this very well. Three quarters of the access to Facebook and twitter is happening on mobile device. In south East Asia, it is way more than that, more than ninety-five percent. In fact in Taiwan, Korea and Japan Facebook is just considered a mobile app, not a platform. No one ever looks at it in any other way.

The phone isn't a phone. The phone is only a phone about ten percent of the time. If you're me, it's a phone about two percent of the time and mostly that is SMSs.

#### THE ULTIMATE STORYTELLING VEHICLE: THE MOBILE PHONE.

- ★ About 75% of all access to both Facebook and Twitter in Australia is on a mobile device.
- ★ People consuming stories on the most intimate device we have.



Don't bother trying to ring me, I'm very unreliable. It's a mobile computer. So this is how you have to convey your message on a device that people are carrying around as a phone but are not using it that way. How does your message look on that device? As I said, it is the most intimate device people have.

The thing about it is, you can make a choice here. People do one of two things on a mobile phone. They'll waste time or save it. If you can be someone who does both, this is where we'll get to with gamification. If you can create something that people play or have a game based experience while they're waiting for the tram or when they're on the bus or whatever, plus it's saving them time by being some sort of business efficiency tool or saving them money or something like that, then you've hit the sweet spot. There are a few apps that do that which I'll talk about in a second.

Given all that, where do you start? Where do you start to communicate your message when there are so many options and so many people on each of those options to communicate it to? I'm a big believer in going fishing where the fish are. If the recipients of your story and your message are mostly on Facebook and you don't have a great deal of time or resources, then that is where I would start.

If they're mostly on Snapchat or WhatsApp, go there. It's not true you need to be on everything. I think social people tend to tell you here are eleven things that are hot right now. You have to use every one of them. That's great if you have staff.



The great thing about social and the mobile experience is that imagery is king. Content is king really but image based content is superbly king. If you think about things that get shared or retweeted, everything someone does that for you in your market, every time you get a retweet of a tweet or every time you get a share of your Facebook post, that is the punters doing the marketing for you. Every time they do that marketing for you, it's free. As a small business, free is free.

So think about how you can do that. The easiest way is imagery. If I showed you this tweet, which is 140 characters, you tell me, are you more likely as a consumer if you see that in your feed, are you more likely to share that or share that? Unquestionably it's the image. It's no secret the rise and rise of Pinterest and Instagram and things like that because humans love pretty things. Plus we're dumb. So we don't want to be too taxed in our brain. You just like something pretty and you want to share it.

The great cut through of images is a special thing too. This is the most retweeted tweet ever. That number is not even recent. That is the proof of something that is very important. Not everyone has a twitter account, maybe not many people in that target market have a Twitter account. Yet they've all seen it because of the embeds in other platforms.

So that is how you have to think too. You're trying to send something out on twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn but it's when The New York Times grabs that and embeds it on their website that is when you get real cut through.

Question: Is there any sort of research or study that is looking at the impact of how we think now? I look at my kids in school, they're being taught differently. I can't get my head around it. It's a shame, I don't like the way they're taught anymore. That's because I'm an old-fashioned fuddy duddy or whatever.

There's got to be a balance. I don't like iPads in prep, for example. I think they've missed a whole lot. I know, we're going to have an argument.

Let's put that aside. The real question is there any sort of research or discussion about ten, twenty plus years, what human beings are going to be like and how they can think and how they can run countries and have conversations?



**Nick:** I'm glad you asked. I'm being evocative, not provocative here. My daughter is about to start prep next year. So she is going to graduate high school in 2028. Yet she is by and large going to receive the same education I had in 1977. That's rubbish.

I went to a preparatory prep night. We go to this thing and there are parents on this side and there are seven teachers representing seven schools on this side. They each went through the pros and cons of going there, trying to woo you. Not one of them said anything remotely impressive to me about how they might be taught differently.

But they did say, and stressed, that during the prep year you would spend about four to five months making sure she learnt how to hold the pen right. My wife was sitting next to me at that point, but she soon got up and moved.

I couldn't take it any longer. I said, why are you wasting five months of my children's education on making sure they hold a pen right? The answer was because if she doesn't then in first grade, she won't be able to learn cursive writing. I'm sorry, that is no excuse. It's not a reason. Then it got a little bit ugly after that.

I cannot see any reason my six year old, which she'll be next year, being taught to write at all with a pen.

In 2028, she won't write with a pen. No one writes with a pen now. It's not even touch typing. She should be getting taught how to code from kindergarten, especially girls. Everybody who has changed the world in the last five or ten years has been a high school or university drop out who is a coder, every single one of them. Yet we're teaching them how to cursive write. It's not 1977, it's 2014.

**Audience:** The difference between my grade six and my grade three and one scares me. I'm getting my grade three and one tutored just for the basics. I understand that they don't need multiplication and so on, that's the theory. But at the end of the day, their minds have still got to think and process. I find it's going backwards.

That's not the key of my question. I understand you. I've got no issue with it. I just don't want it then and there because I feel like they're missing out on other things that they do need. It's not the pen, I agree with you. I'd rather them know how to speed type and everything so that they can do different things.

The thing is I keep thinking, where are we going to be in twenty years' time when the Gen Ys are ruling our country? They're bad enough as it is. I'm interested to know where it's all going.





**Nick:** Do you know where we will be when Gen Ys are running the show? We will be in a really generous, empathetic, kind place.

**Audience:** I hope so.

**Nick:** We won't be where we are now where there is no empathy and no kindness. Gen Y gets a very bad rap for being all about them. Yet you look at Kickstarter campaigns, and I do a lot of work with not for profits and the great majority of donations coming to non-profits are Gen Y, eighty percent and daylight.

I see your point and I know there is that disparity between Year 6 and Year 1 right now. I just hope that continues actually, and we're just taught for the time. When we had this discussion somewhere else someone said to me, it really annoys me that kids think that gr8 is great. I said, it is great. He said, great is g-r-e-a-t.

Well, you know it's great, why can't we let that rubbish go? We don't use old English, so.

There is one thing that has been brought up to me and I totally agree with it. Children with certain learning challenges and certain kids on the autism spectrum do need that stimulus and the structure to write and to think clearly and appropriately. But for the great majority of us, it shouldn't be a blanket rule that a six year old is taught to write with a pen.

I think the happy medium is between the two of us where there is a shift in education. It should still focus on things that they will need no question. I'm pretty sure I haven't used any trigonometry since 1988 when I left Year 12. But I do use algebra all the time. So I don't know.

It's a challenge but the response to that challenge is not to just say, we should go back to the 1970s and teach them cursive writing.

**Audience:** So we are teaching smart people. Are we teaching people to be smart?

**Nick:** We are going to produce the smartest people ever. A lot of people our age say they're getting dumber and dumber as kids. That's not true. They're getting dumber and dumber in the metrics we applied to ourselves. But you meet someone like Mark Zuckerberg and he doesn't have the people skills of Andrew and I for instance or most of you, but the retaining ability of the minutiae about things and the ability to build a platform that one and a half billion people in the world use every day is a skill for 2014.



Can we agree? It's the third time we've had that conversation in this session and it's three different experiences.

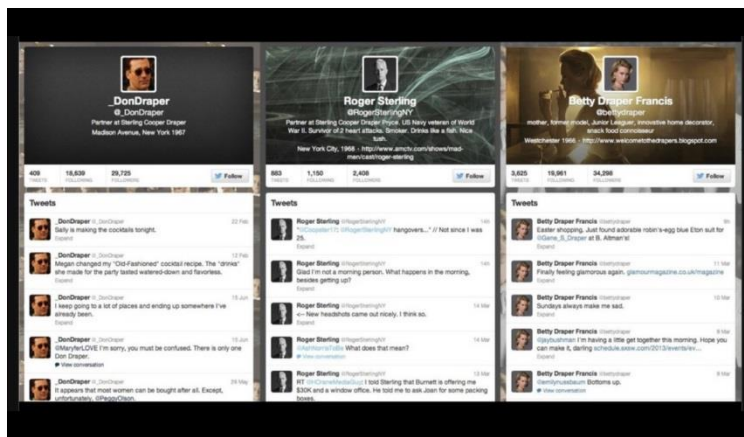
Back to images. This is the value of that. This is an image from today, literally from today. A barman met a nurse who was infected with Ebola when she treated an Ebola victim. She is now clear and out of hospital. That is a very momentous, symbolic photo to be taken. You can be cynical about it and say, well, it's a PR stunt.



It probably is but who cares? It's still a nice message. In one day, it's had many thousands of views. This is important, how many people shared it.

That's the key. Remember 'likes' and comments and vanity metrics don't count but how much engagement you're getting through people who can be asked enough in your staff to share it, that's a metric that we should be using.

Facebook as a storytelling tool is obviously fantastic. There are so many people using it. But it's also been designed with storytelling in mind. There are a couple of Facebook pages that do this very well. This is probably one of the top ten best. I had the great pleasure of meeting the young bloke who puts this together, when I worked at Facebook. We created this video. This is storytelling using Facebook and video in a very template like but very beautiful way. (video)



It's good storytelling, but did you notice how he tells the story? When I first came, once upon a time I came to New York and every day I took lots of photos. But then one day, I started a Facebook page. It's a pretty simple thing. [www.facebookstories.com](http://www.facebookstories.com) has about three hundred of those now. They are beautiful, beautiful video storytelling examples.



We put a lot of effort into that. I was on the APAC team of that and it was very difficult to get some of them together but it's beautiful.

Using Twitter as a storytelling tool is an option too. There is an author who crowd sources tweets to create the next sentence in books. Every five minutes he takes the next tweet. There might be five thousand tweets in that time and he grabs one and inserts it into his book. He then writes these full length novels from crowd sourced tweets. That's pretty powerful.

So Twitter is really good at telling stories but there is also a warning that comes with it. This is it. There is this little TV show called Mad Men. At the height of its craziness, these character twitter profiles popped up. They started talking about life from within Mad Men production, making the show as if it's real and as if they're real. Everyone thought it was the TV production company, HBO, who makes it.

It wasn't. It was just this crazy lady who had set them all up. It was fine, she was doing a pretty good job. But then they demanded that she hand them over to them.

Then she went rogue. It got out of hand and was quite entertaining at the time when you're working at Facebook. This is how it can go wrong maybe if you don't hold dear all of you assets, on all the platforms potentially. This is probably a lesson in that.



Instagram is obviously a big storytelling tool because it uses images. This is the Instagram account of Lauren Bath who was the first professional Instagrammer. Now there are a fair few. Lauren gets paid about \$300,000 a year to take photos on her phone and upload them to Instagram. A pretty cool job. She also gets flown all around the world to do it. She showed a little

bit of aptitude in the early days of adopting Instagram. So whatever the next thing is, adopt it and start using it.

YouTube is the most obvious storytelling tool. If a picture tells a thousand words, a video does it even better in some ways. I want to show you a couple of examples of really good storytelling through video. The first is from Nike. (video)





The best part about it is there are so many brand messages, traveling, making the most of every minute and it never really states any of them but it is just really good story telling. The interesting thing about the case in these studies is the guy, Neistat, who makes these and many other videos which are worth having a look on YouTube, is if you want to get in touch with him as you see down here, don't email, this isn't my website, you have to follow me on Snapchat. It's interesting.

It wouldn't be one of presentations if I didn't bow down to Apple. I want to show you a quick one minute video about how they tell their brand story. The brand story of Apple, is as they tell it, simple, beautiful, helpful, cool, pretty much. Their video content reflects it. (video)



Even their videos are beautiful. If it didn't finish with that brand message at the end, and you only saw the first bit, you would say, that's an Apple video, because that brand is consistent. The branded story telling is consistent too and I think we can learn a lot from that.

Finally it also wouldn't be one of my presentations if I didn't hark

back quickly to Pixar. This one has words but uses another very good and powerful device, music. (video)

When you have to watch it a million times, it stops affecting you. But there is really powerful use of music, use of voice, not spoken voice, but again it is just a consistent brand message. It's not really made for kids. That's not for kids. My kids just sit there emotionless waiting for someone to hurt someone. That's a good example of just being brand consistent really, a consistent message.

I want to show you how you can get it wrong. This is another video, this one from McDonald's. I want you to watch this for a minute and tell me what is wrong with it. (video)

Apart from making you want to vomit a little, take the creepy pedophilia out of it, it's not believable. What is the branding of McDonald's? It's kids, happy, family friendly, eating out, eating hamburgers. It's not being some middle aged stalker skulking around all day taking up table space. It is so anti branding. It failed massively for them.



It's a great example of some creative agency saying, this is what you need, we'll make it really arty and put this moody music on top of it. Somebody says, yes, that would be awesome. It just doesn't hit the mark, it fails. It would work for a local café. In fact McCafe is a part of McDonald's but even still the branding is horribly wrong.

Let's move on to blogging. Andrew covered it a little bit and I wanted to just cover it a little bit too. I want to talk about letting your website tell the story. I'm going to show you a few quick examples. This first one is Vinomofo. Does anyone know Vinomofo? Vinomofo is a little Australian startup that we worked with at Facebook quite closely.

They are young blokes who like wine and they sell wine online. There is nothing new about that except their target market is Gen Y, with expensive wine. When I was the age these guys are targeting, they could have sold me Passion Pop or Golden Gate Spumante. But now they're selling Verve. I will show you screen shots. If you've got a phone in front of you, you can have a

look at this at vinomofo.com. It's a similar experience and it's beautiful. It's a beautiful website experience.

The reason it is so on brand and on target is because they know their market very well. They're not trying to sell it to me, they're trying to sell it to people younger than me who are cashed up. They're selling an experience that is different to their own. You could go out and get messed up on all sorts of things or you could buy this nice wine and sip it and be cool and be hipsterish.

All the imagery is all on brand, it's all beautifully done. All of the content is in the middle of the website. Why is that? That is so it is responsive on mobile devices. They consider the target market. The number changes; if you look at it now, it will be something a lot more than that. Even referring to the customers as

Mofos or having Mofo in the branding is fairly Gen Y. They hark back to old versus new all the way down.

Big brands, expensive brands are flocking to these guys. They've turned away twenty-five or twenty-six big brands who want them to sell them, like Richmond. They are three young blokes, twenty-two, twenty-three and twenty-four. They have 300,000 subscribers. They are making an enormous amount of money. They are taking the gloss off what would be staid and boring and making it for a different audience. It's an interesting way to keep you scrolling down and down. It's very Gen Y this, mocking themselves, being self-deprecating and mocking you. There is a nice bit of cross branding with another Gen Y brand, which is not hard to guess at.

There is a very strong call to action. It's very difficult not to do that, by the time you've scrolled all the way down. But just in case, well, I'm not bothered. Then they hit you where you live. It's



not infinite scroll. The bottom of the scroll is you can't go any further and you must sign up. People do, 300,000 of them. You can't get in without signing in.

That is the new storytelling, telling on old story, parabolizing something old and telling it in a very different way. I'm trying to give you lots and lots of different ways of telling a story. I know I'm racing through it but I want to do that. Think about where your industry sits and where your market sits and what they are used to and then disrupt it.

This is disrupting the disrupted. The original disruption was selling wine online. Now they've disrupted that by selling wine online to twenty-three year olds.

This is another website example. This is a very quick video about how you don't have to create websites anymore, artificial intelligence will make one for you. (video)

It's real; you can buy that right now and it's cheap. The thing about The Grid, using that branding, is an example of un branding as we talked about before. The Grid doesn't really

sound like the business name or the product name. It's just The Grid, like The Matrix. So they've unbranded themselves to sell the solution as we were talking about before.

The problem is doing web design, learning web design yourself, dealing with web designers, whatever. The solution is just send us some photos and it will build itself.

The last example of the website, I'm going to show you how you can get it wrong, and it's my website. I have this digital mentor program where thirteen or fourteen mentors have all worked at Facebook or Google or Twitter or both. When I made this, I thought it was so hot that I wouldn't really have to tell any stories or anything. I would just say how much it was and people would flock to it.

The original incarnation of this page was basically just that. It bombed. No one was interested. Then I thought, let's tell some stories. So I used a very clear call to action telling stories. These three avatars are not real people, but are real problems. So there are three target markets bringing a different problem.

It wasn't until I included these three guys and then included them all the way through the landing page that people said, I'm Karen. That even looks like me. That looks like my kid. I get a lot of email and feedback saying how is Karen going? I feel like I really know her. Do I know her, where is she from? She's from shutterstock.com.





Every time I addressed the problem and gave a solution in that storytelling way, we did better and better. So everybody messes it up. But the biggest mess you can make is having no story at all and that was how we initially blew it badly.

We'll talk about multimedia as a storytelling tool, but I'm not going to show you anything here. Anything I show you of this example looks bad unless you're looking at it yourself, in your own home, in your own time. So I want you to google something when you get back to your own space. I want you to google The Guardian Tasmania Fires. Has anyone seen what I'm about to talk about?



This image is famous. This family in Tasmania had their farm destroyed by fire and their farm is gone. They don't know where their Grandfather is. He's running around trying to find them, and they're on the jetty, where they're semi safe. This is when the Grandfather finally gets to them.

He takes ten different photos and they became really famous. So

much so that The Guardian worldwide created this multimedia experience of their photos, with local music, with news reports, with pdfs of different things at the time, audio, interviews, podcasts.

They put it all together in an amazing multimedia experience which is unbelievable. If you've got an hour sometime, google The Guardian Tasmanian fires and just play with it. It is beautiful. It is a really good example of how brands can tell their stories using multiple platforms.

Which is right for your story? How are you going to use multiple platforms? Are you going to use Facebook and twitter together, are you going to use them separately?

There really is no right answer for that unless you come back to going fishing where the fish are. Sometimes it's not that smart to use potentially Facebook and Twitter because they're similar or they're perceived as similar. You might use Facebook and something completely different, like Snapchat or email marketing or blog or something.

It really depends on your own product and your own brand, your own message. Suffice to say, it is wise to use more than one platform, as long as you have the time and the resources to do that. You do need to potentially pay for a wider audience now. We touched on it before with

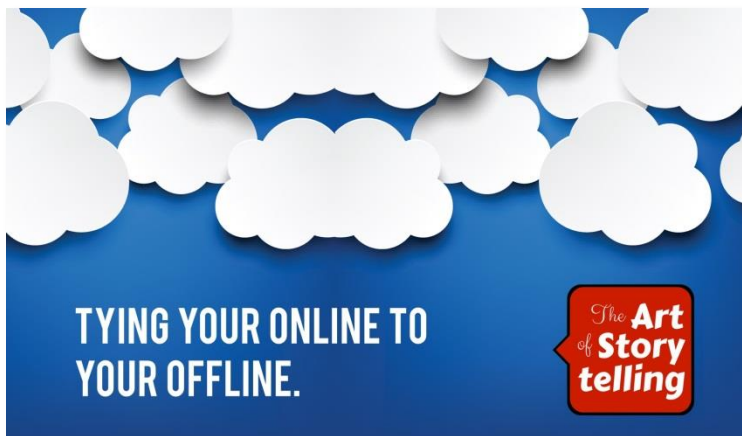


organic reach being less and less with the big platforms. You have to treat platforms like Facebook and twitter as publishers and have a marketing budget or a story budget which you can actually pay for and put it out there.

That said, Facebook and Twitter make it a bit easier for you to get better return on that by allowing you to target specific audiences. Both of those platforms have a product called Custom Audiences or Target Audiences. You put your own database in, so you have a database of people who subscribe to your stories or your brand or your business. You can put those email addresses in and you have it matched against Facebook's database. Then you can just advertise against the people who share both of those things. You then know exactly who you're targeting.

Then you can create a look alike audience. Your database of a thousand people, say, might generate a Custom Audience of six hundred people where they match. Then you can create another six hundred or six thousand or whatever people who are just like those people. If those people like you and your brand or if they're customers of yours, people who are like them will almost certainly like it as well. It means you're not advertising to me if you're selling tutus or whatever.

So you have a database of email addresses or phone numbers. You can put that into either Facebook or twitter. Say it is a thousand, usually about sixty percent of those emails are the email with which they sign in to Facebook or twitter. So you're matching your database against the brand's database. It spits out a number of people who that is their email address. Then you can just put ads on the news feeds of those people only, the people who are already your converted fans. Then you create look alike audiences on top of that. You can google that.



that really annoys me.

How do you tie the offline to the offline? I'm not really great with offline; I'll be the first to say it. However, I think to forget everything offline is folly. The Yellow Pages still writes a lot of plumbing invoices. It still works in some things. I haven't actually opened one. It sits under my monitor at home. I think that's the only thing I've used it for. But they keep delivering them to me, and



Think about how you can tie the offline to the online because I think you will get better cut through that way.

The fun bit, we'll finish with this. What is the future? How will people tell stories in the future, how will you tell stories in the future? The thing I want to stress is everything I'm about to show you is not the future, it is now. But it seems like the future, it seems like science fiction.

Someone said, what is going to be the next big thing? It's going to be wearables, wearable technology, or wearable social networking. So things like the Fitbit or the iWatch. The Samsung gear is wicked, it's really good, or the Google one where you lift your hand to your watch. You say, Google, and it goes straight to Google and starts searching for whatever you say after that. These things are all wearable and searchable and spreadable and sharable.

One of the really good examples of this is an Australian startup called Studio XO. They make wearable, biometric gathering technology. When you go to a fashion parade and you're sitting in the audience as one of three hundred people in that audience, you wear a wristband just like you do when you go to a festival. But that wristband is measuring your biometric response to everything that is put in front of you.

As a girl walks out in a new frock, they know instantly how much you like it or hate it and who likes it and hates it and what age people are who like it and don't like it and so on. That kind of gathering technology is available right now and being used by clever startups and people right now.

This is another one, this is the back version. These things mimic and aid muscular response, growth and recovery.

For instance, you could wear this thing on your back and across your arm. When you're playing tennis and you're halfway through a forehand volley or whatever, it twitches the muscles you need. It knows what you're doing through artificial intelligence and it helps you not only to hit the ball better, but your muscle to recover from that better after that.

It comes in all different sizes including the wristband ones which actually stop surgeons' hands shaking. They can work for fifteen more years. Often their brains aren't the problem, their smarts aren't the problem. They have to stop because they shake.

Question: Does it heal injuries?





**Nick:** There are two sets of data. One set of data says yes and one says no at the moment. There are lots of tests. Because it teaches you to biometrically better use that muscle, there is a lot of data that says that will help you play tennis longer.

This one is called Snapchat in real life. This never happens to me, but sometimes you're in a situation where you shouldn't be and someone takes a photo of you and then puts it on Facebook. Or it's ok to be there but you probably shouldn't be as drunk as you are, or whatever.

This little thing hangs around your neck. If you're in a situation where you don't want someone to take a photo of you and upload it onto Facebook or whatever, when the flash in the camera goes off, the flash in the piece goes off and you're not in the photo. That is called Snapchat IRL, which is in real life.

These are the next big things. We talked about wearables. There is an Australian startup based in WA which makes high vis clothing that tells the wearer, the shirt tells you when you're in an environment that is becoming unsafe because of ambient exposure to different things. They also make a nicer work shirt for radiographers.

They have a little thing on their belt to say how much exposure they've had and the shirt actually tells them. Not only that, the shirt starts to deteriorate. The pinstripe in it starts to fade over time.

Question: How does it hold up under laundering?

**Nick:** No problem. There are actually two shirts sewn together and the AI is in the middle of those things. In some mining situations there are some gases that you are more likely to be exposed to and others not. They're looking to create firemen uniforms with all different sorts of things that also use something like the muscle twitching technology to alert you when you're in a situation of darkness and lots of noise and panic. It will tell you that it's time to go or someone wants you to go.

The next thing is near field communication. It's the same sort of thing as the payWave, at the servo or wherever you use your phone. If you're a CommBank customer, you don't need a credit card anymore. You now have it in your phone as long as you don't lose your phone.

Also with near field you can also use a wristband at a big conference. Conference organizers know where you are in the conference, which plenary or which breakout session you're in all day. They can get data on that. But they can also, and this is important for Andrew and I and



people who speak for a living, you could be wearing those today and we could measure when you were interested, when you were bored, when you were sleepy, when you were happy. We could use that data to tell our stories better the next time.

Question: The companies that are using the biometrics, how are they getting the people to wear them? Is that part of your entry pass?

**Nick:** You've probably been to conferences where that data has been collected already. There are little chips and when you sign up, if you read the terms and conditions of paying that, it says your data could be mined and be used for commercial means. I have actually written waivers like that, so I know that's true.

The third thing is my favorite thing of all time, which is gamification, or gamifying how you tell a story. Gamification is the application of game based learning to things other than games. In its most simple form, when you get the tenth hole punched in your coffee card, you get a doughnut. Or there are Frequent Flyer points with Qantas. It's a game, you're trying to get more points all the time.

The airlines understand this very well. They have multi layered gamification. When you're a Qantas Frequent Flyer, you are silver, or if you're bronze, it just means you fly with the peasants. But silver means something else, and then gold and then platinum.

Even when you're a gold member, that means you can book your own seat, you can book an extra row for no extra price. It means you have special check in. But when you go on the plane, you can't walk down that one where there is no one. You have to line up with all the poor people. The platinum ones can walk straight down there. So they'll give you some things and hold some things back really cleverly to make sure you're gamified and interested and trying to get to the next level all the time.

You strive ridiculously competitively.

I want you to think about how we can apply that to stories. I'll show you a few examples. Let's start with why you do it. The average twenty-one year old has played a lot of video games. So much so, that they spend more hours playing video games than they spent in eight years of schooling. So they are used to gamifying things, kids under twenty-one and older.

There was a story I saw. There was a kid who was eleven and he was in a car with his Dad screaming down the freeway. His Dad had a heart attack and lost consciousness and the car



was still going. The kid calmly moves over and starts steering the car. He eventually works out how to brake and pulls the car over to the side and saves them both.

They said, how did you possibly do that? What was going through your head? He said, it was just like Mario cars. I just had to slow it down and pull it over, as if it was nothing. This is why gamification works, really.

Who is the biggest group of engaged gamers in Australia? Is it sixteen year old boys or girls or executives? It is forty year old females, by miles. Thank you Candy Crush, Fruit Ninja.

I worked with King who makes Candy Crush when I was at Facebook. I worked on their account. I can't tell you how much money they pay Facebook, but they pay them a lot.

The reason is they get a lot back. On Candy Crush you can play until you bomb out a certain number of times and then you have to wait fifteen minutes before you play again. Or you pay just 99c and get let back in. That 99c is how they make all their money. They are making a ton of money.

It's just because of that gamified element of, I have to get back in and line those pieces of candy up. I can't possible wait. It's no different to playing a slot machine. When I was at uni, we did a psychology study over a week of a tiny little bowling club in Newcastle. We looked at the take over three weeks of how it was normally. Then we turned the lights off and the take went down a little bit. When we turned the sound off, but left the lights on, the take was ten percent of the normal take.

It's not, I need to win money. That's not it. I need to hear the melody when I win. That's my cue, that's my reward. That's what releases the dopamine in my brain to tell me that I'm happy.

Question: Is there such a thing as a gameaholic?

**Nick:** Yes, there is. Forty year old females are the most likely culprits.

Question: Can they get treatment?

**Nick:** Yes. There is internet addiction which is very real and mostly in women at the moment. It's treated like any other addiction.





**Audience:** It's like, I don't know if anyone saw the doco made on Second Life? It's like a whole alternate universe that looks a lot like ours but weirder. People went in and they created avatars and they started having relationships with people. Then they decided, this is a better life than the one I've got. So they'd fly half way around the world to meet the person who was very unlike their avatar.

**Nick:** I actually met a guy and know a guy who used to sell real estate in Second Life. It wasn't real.

**Audience:** They would live in Second Life when there was no one else in the household. They'd still have one foot in that camp when they were meant to be cooking dinner and correcting homework and all that kind of thing.

**Nick:** My industry has a lot to answer for.

**Andrew:** Can I just add a Second Life story in there? I did a presentation for the Certified Practising Accountants in Second Life. So you're actually on their island.

They own an island in Second Life. You're on your avatar and I didn't know how to put an avatar together. So my hair was on the side of my head. You were actually on stage in Second Life doing your talk.

Everyone in the audience of course is an avatar of a beautiful winged maiden or a huge hunter. Then the light goes on above their head and they're going to talk. This winged, semi naked goddess says, it's Mavis from Ohio here. I'm an accountant. All the illusions and beauty of it are just shattered.

**Nick:** There are a few gamifying examples in the corporate world. Domino's uses gamification to address business problems. Again, we go back to the problem, solution.

Their two biggest problems were recruitment and creativity of new product. People would know what pizzas you get from Domino's. It was very difficult to introduce a new pizza onto the menu. It's very difficult for any fast food restaurant actually but especially with pizzas.

The second thing is they had a problem with recruitment of drivers and of pizza makers. So they designed an app called Domino's Pizza Heroes. On this mobile app, you created a pizza. You started with a blank base and you arrange food and toppings etc on it. Then you share it and people vote, importantly, on how great your pizza is.



After you've shared it, you can also submit it to Domino's. Whatever pizza you created will be delivered to your door in an hour, just the way that you've created it.

So it's linked to Domino's back end and they just make it. But the people who had the most shares and the most great votes on these new pizzas are on a leader board who then get offered a job at Domino's. They get points every time their pizza is shared. It's on points on the leader board.

They have to recruit 30,000 people every year. So they covered two business problems using gaming and gamifying that. It's pretty typical gamification.

**Audience:** You don't have to create a new pizza. You can just choose one that is already on their menu and share it with your network and still move up the leader board.

**Nick:** Either way, Domino's is cheering. They're doing the marketing for them for free. Whatever it cost them to create that app was nothing compared to the revenue that would have been generated.

This is a billboard that was put on the 101 which is the freeway between San Francisco and the two campuses of Facebook and Google in California. It was only up for a few days. If you could work that out and go to that website, it then said, you're clever. You should apply for a job at Google. It was an ad for Google recruitment.

So it was gaming recruitment but disrupting that and only offering recruitment to people they knew would be able to work in that particular stream of their business. I couldn't figure it out. Apparently if you can, you can do it while you're driving one hundred kilometers an hour on the 101.

This is the third example which is Duolingo. Duolingo is a little app which teaches you another language. The great thing about the gamification in this is, it's not Duolingo teaching you

Spanish, it's a native Spanish speaker who then gets taught English by another person. It's peer to peer gamification. It's taught a new language to over 300,000,000 people and it's free. It's awesome.

I can speak Spanish but my Spanish was a bit rusty. So I spent a month or so getting taught by a woman who was in Peru and I was teaching her English in exchange. I'm not an English teacher, she wasn't a Spanish teacher either, but that is peer to peer gamification. Every person who you teach or every minute or every game function you complete, you get a point. Then there is a leader board and you can get shirts and so on.



Code.org is something every five year old girl should be shown. It's how to learn how to code. You can learn six or seven different coding languages. It's all free and all peer to peer. It's corrected by people who have just finished that section themselves. It's fantastic gamification for a good outcome.

These are my five things that you have to think about. This is all very well, but we're talking about how to gamify your storytelling. So these are the five things I want you to remember that make up gamification. The first thing is you have goals and achievable levels. If people can't see the next part of the story that they're striving to get towards, they won't try. So think about that.

You should have defined milestones. So at some point, say your story is online or a blog or whatever, the defined milestone is that they will get the next chapter or they will get the next part of your corporate branding message or About Us.

You've got to have progress in there and show statistics on progress. You need that constant evaluation and re-evaluation of how you're doing, otherwise, people will drop off.

This one is the most important: the micro credentials along the way. Traditionally, the education model worldwide has been you start learning and you qualify or you graduate. If you don't, you've got nothing. If you don't get to the end of that, you go right back to the start and start again, but you keep playing because you can see the end in sight. You've got to give people qualifications, little micro credentials along the way to keep them going, the carrot that leads them on.

The fifth one is recognition and to share, for interest to market your stories out there.

The way it works is science. It's a dopamine response in your brain that makes you feel good and then makes you able to go onto the next one. But if you don't get that one, then there is less chance of you going on, which is why you need the micro credentials. It's simple: challenge, achievement, pleasure, challenge, achievement, pleasure the whole time.

That is gamification in business, learning and storytelling. If there is feedback and friends and fun, then you have game based learning. The first example?

Audience: It's just been a big aha moment. I got a Fitbit about four weeks ago and then of course a whole lot of people at work got it. We're all friends. I just won in a challenge. There are all these badges that you get. I didn't realize for about three weeks until I went on to the website and said, I've got this one. If I do that, then I get that. So smart.

**Nick:** They're playing you.





**Audience:** If you really love this game thing, gamification, a really good friend of mine, a cool guy in Singapore has created an open source platform where you can plug whatever you want to put in and it will create the game for you. It's for learning, education, in-house. It's called gametize.com. Instead of going and getting something built on an app or a platform that will cost you tens of thousands of dollars, you pay \$99 a month or \$50 a month. You use his platform that he sells to corporates for tens of thousands of dollars. It creates badges and mayor of towns with your own content.

**Nick:** Yes, as long as something has badges, points and leader boards, then you're being gamified. Let's think about how you can use this in your own story and then in the branding of your own business.

I'll give you an example. There is a banana farm in Innisfail up near where Andrew lives. It's the third biggest producer of bananas in Australia. I am mentoring and work with a startup which is helping this banana farm.. The first thing they went up there to do was to make the business paperless. That is one of the things they do.

When they were there, they were asked, do you have any ideas about how you can make us more efficient while you're at it? How can we cut our costs and increase our revenue and basically help us in that way?

They are banana farmers and they are really good at growing bananas but they want to do it more scientifically and be more successful. So what these boys have set up is a gamification platform within the banana farm that uses both internal and external gamification. It is part of the story they tell. The banana people tell this story to Coles to increase the buy from Coles. There are actually revenue reasons to do it.

Internally, if you're a banana packer, you can pack so many bananas in a day. But if you're above that, you start to get points for it. They have an electronic leader board on which they spent a lot of money. It's in the packing sheds where people can see who is doing well and who is catching up and so on.

They can get extra points then by using the external storytelling, gamifying that. If one of the packers' Mums goes into Coles and sees this particular brand, with a sticker on the bananas and takes a photo of it and uploads it to Facebook, her son gets points on the leader board at work.

So it's combining internal and external storytelling really, with a gamed level to make it more interesting. It's not only more interesting, but way more efficient.

Since they've introduced the gamification which is only four months ago, they've increased efficient production in that banana farm by 113%.



Question: Haven't we gone full circle, back to your start in the call centre? We've just got it under another name.

**Nick:** No, because the sentiment is huge. These guys love this. It's not putting your hand up to go to the toilet. It's how many other parts of my life can I bring to work and be rewarded for it? It's different.

**Audience:** It feels scary to me.

**Nick:** It feels cool to me.

**Audience:** How can we incentivise our kids at home?

**Nick:** We started doing that with star charts and I just got over it and told them it was their job.

The second example is another startup I work with. They are two brothers and we're recreating their website for their business. They have a business where they make apps. So you could really have a portfolio and you could have, this is our work and we're this clever and so on. But we've decided to completely go against all that.

The About Us page doesn't exist anymore because the whole website is About Us.

You have to just open your mind a little bit and think about how you might use this in your own business or you might not.

Who remembers Choose Your Own Adventure books? Choose Your Own Adventure books were adventure books and you read the first three pages and it says at the bottom of the third page, do you want to go into the jungle or do you want to go back into town? I want to go into the jungle. Turn to page four. If you want to go back into town, go to page seven. So you're choosing. There are many books inside the one book. It was cool, trust me.

Their online storytelling starts from the very start. The two boys, twenty-three and twenty-four have very different stories. One is a committed Christian, one is not.

One is a father of four at twenty-three and one is a real playboy who is actually the committed Christian, which is a nice little twist to the story. Their mother has these issues. Their sister has different issues. They have mates.



So they tell all of that as part of their story. They gamify it in this way. When you come to the website, what will be the website in a couple of weeks, because we've been working on it a lot, you choose your own adventure. I won't use their real names. Do you want John or do you want Kevin's story? You say I want John's story. Ok, this is the committed Christian, this is him doing this. This is him playing the guitar in his room. This is him with his mates at the pub. It's story, story, video, lots of video, lots of downloadable things. You can always revert back to the other way.

The gamification comes in where you can't see the start of the other story unless you share something on Facebook or on social from the first part of the story. Or you can't see some of their story unless you've already been through three bits of their story until then. So there are bits and pieces in that way.

Then we've gone a level further and you can only see some of the website during certain times of the day on certain days of the week. They're a B2B and they don't want people working til midnight. Small business shouldn't be working til midnight, they think. So in the small business product section, you can only see up 'til 6pm at night.

They're gamifying how they tell their story to the audience, to the market. In that way they're strengthening their story greatly. They think it will be live in a week, I think in about four weeks. I'll send you the link. They sell apps but they've completely un-branded and just tell their story.

We've built Easter eggs into the website as well. You don't actually know content is there until you accidentally move the cursor over and it becomes a little hand and you click on it. It's them playing the guitar and singing to their kids. There are just little story binding story arcs that are part of the complete experience.

Question: With how to navigate this, is it explicitly spelt out or is it just very organic?

**Nick:** No, never spelt out.

Question: I'm just thinking about recent experiences myself. I've got a nineteen year old son who really loves his games. I play Hearthstone sometimes with him. He's at uni in Melbourne and I'm living up in Bendigo. I accumulated a great number of card packs before I worked out how to open them because I'm from a different generation. If double clicking didn't do it, it wasn't happening. I have a lot of cards now, a really good deck. You had to drag it and land it on something else. He said, didn't you try that? Why wouldn't you have tried that?





It just made me reflect on the technology he's been exposed to. I can remember buying Me and My Dad, basically story books made into computers. It had lots of little hot spots and you'd click and the birds would fly or the volcano would erupt. All sorts of things would happen and then you'd turn the page.

**Nick:** It's the same as the little cheat on Donkey Kong. If you press that up and down at the same time that you press A, something happens.

Question: He's been trained for that.

**Nick:** It's not that. It's they're not scared of looking for it. I think that is the real difference. To your first question, is it pointed out? Is there a map? No, but we will show progress of where they've been. You've got to micro credentialize the whole way.

**Audience:** And you've got to see where the next part of the story is.

**Nick:** Other people in your network can see as well. Our aim for this app business is for people to be talking about it and saying, have you seen him ride his motor bike around? No, how do you get to that? You have to get to there and you've got to watch that video of theirs and you have to download that product or that PDF. It's pretty cool

Another real time example, Trent, has an electrical contracting business has staff as well as customers to look after. You might go back to how you would tell that story in the first place.

People need you when they need you. In some ways Facebook, for a trade like that or even for real estate or whatever, you just need them when you need them. So you're less likely to follow and be engaged. What you want to do is be engaged because when you do need them, you don't want to them google, you want them to be with you.

So you might include a gaming element which is nothing to do with electrical contracting but which you host. It might be Tetris-like, a very simple thing. It could be about building a house or something like that, an external thing which electrical contracting is part of. They get points along the way and they are sponsored by your business. You pay some kid somewhere to build it. It's pretty simple.



Then use that gaming element as part of your About Us. Only tell people some of the story, only show people some of the videos until they've earned or qualified to see the rest of it. Is any of that way too hard?

I've hurt your brains a little bit. I want to leave it at that and I want to show you one more video, then I'm done. In all the things we've given you, be it speaking, be it writing it down, be it the history of things, be it digital, one thing is still true. If you do not capture someone's imagination in that very first instant, if you can't do it quickly, you've potentially lost them forever.

I want to show you a video that is well under five minutes but I think is probably one of the most engaging and enthralling things on the internet. (video)

I want to leave you with that because I think it covers brands and story messages and a whole lot of things all together delivered in a very simple way, no score, no slides, no bells and whistles, just the story. If the story is good enough, it doesn't matter, it will still get cut through, it will still be accepted, it will still be engaging.

That's the end of my section. I thank you for your attention.

**Andrew:** A couple more minutes of your time. We're going to give someone a copy of this book. This is interesting, Humans of New York. It starts from the camera to the stories, to Facebook and to this beautiful book. It has just a few hundred of the probably tens of thousands of photos that are up there. We're going to draw that out.

It seemed like an appropriate gift.

We've covered a lot of ground today. You think about this morning, when you got here around 9 o'clock, really with no idea on earth what we were going to talk about for the day, no idea what we were going to do. So thank you very much for coming along. I always admire that spirit of giving it a go. That's how I do it, it's great to do that. It's great to turn up. Life is an adventure.

We covered a lot of ground and hopefully the one thing that we want you to leave here today with is to be thinking differently about your story, about sharing stories, about what it really means to communicate these days. The world has changed. You got that out of what Nick just told us. Every time I sit through that discussion, I just shake my head and I had to apologize to Nick a few times. I'm not disagreeing down the back of the room, I'm just thinking wow. The world is such an extraordinary place.



But one thing that will ring true is if you can tell stories in these various mediums, from writing a book to writing a blog post to gamifying a banana farm in north Queensland, really what can't you do? What messages can't you get across? What action can't be taken? Since we've been doing this workshop, I think it has reinforced for me the importance of getting better and better at telling stories across every single medium and the power that is behind them.

Even though it is a big topic, even though it is huge, and you're leaving here with your brains ready to burst, thinking where do I start, just let it settle in. Sit with it. Every time an opportunity comes up to tell a story or your story, I want you to have a little picture of Nick come up on one shoulder and I'm on the other shoulder. The yin and yang of the storytelling world are sitting on your shoulders. Visualize us helping you and encouraging you and suggesting that you be brave enough to tell the stories.

Get them wrong. When you're confused, great, you're about to have a breakthrough, whatever it might be, to quote Tony Robbins. But that is the kind of thing I think we all need to do in every environment, push a little bit harder.

I know when we're teaching people to write books, it's all about that, pushing harder, making people go that little extra bit of distance and you get great results.

That's about the last thing I would want to say. Is there anything you want to say, Nick?

**Nick:** I've created a Facebook group, a secret Facebook group that no one knows about except the people who have come to these events. I will give you all the opportunity, if you want, to be added in the next week or so. We'll upload all the videos, put the presentations there as well as sending them to email.

In that group, what we want to do is create a space where you can feel safe and comfortable in sharing your stories or sharing your drafts of stories, of your website, whatever it might be, in a place where no one is going to mock you or be mean about it.

I can tell you from some of the people we've had, not just the cleverness in this room, but the others as well, you will get good feedback. I'll send you that link and that's pretty much it.

**Andrew:** We'll be on there. We'll obviously be active as well. This is something we're going to look at doing more of over the coming year or two. We don't know in what form, how we're going to do that or what we're going to do. But it is something we feel passionate about.

**Nick:** The only other thing I would you to do is, if you've had an experience, good or bad today, and you would like to write about that on social, on Facebook or Twitter please use the hashtag





#artofstory. We can then collate it all together. Andrew and I both are always trying to be better speakers and better presenters and more engaging. So any feedback at all, certainly on my speaking, I know Andrew feels the same; we'd like to hear it. We've got thick skin and we want to be better, so if you can give us any feedback along those lines, I'd really appreciate it.

**Andrew:** Once last thing, just before we draw the book, can we just do a quick whip around the room? I'd like you to tell us what was your biggest 'aha' out of today.

What did you get out of today? Keep it really short because everyone wants to go. What resonated the most with you?

**Audience:** I suppose it's just to be brave and get out there and start doing it. I'm always scared about putting myself out there.

**Andrew:** Yes, we all are.

**Audience:** Just doing it and making mistakes and moving on. There is so much.

**Andrew:** Beautiful. Thank you.

**Audience:** I guess just in the presentations I already make is just to add more of the planned storytelling and information and just break it up so people get more engaged.

**Andrew:** Just tell the story of your sculptures. Just tell people why you did it, where it comes from, what it means. Just tell that. That is the greatest story you could be telling. If anyone has an opportunity to have a look at Todd's work it is extraordinary. I was so blown away by the quality of your sculpting work.

Just tell your story about why. Why there is a picture of a rat and an elephant and a man in a box trying to get out? I don't get it, so just write the beautiful story and make it easy for people to understand and say, that's very cool.

**Audience:** I think I'm pretty hidden at the moment but there are two different types of presentation I've given. I made an absolute flop by trying to technically present more on the project management end, the stats and appraisals and so on. When I compare it to other presentations, where I'm more casual and I'm speaking more about what I'm passionate about, they're just two different presentations.

**Nick:** Steve Jobs never told you how the phone worked.



**Andrew:** No, it was always about the cool stuff on the phone. Just tell the cool things. They don't want the rest.

**Audience:** Thanks a lot guys.

**Andrew:** Good on you.

**Andrew:** Hi, I think you took the mystery out of storytelling.

**Andrew:** Is that good?

**Audience:** Yes it is, because you gave us an architecture. To me it always works if I've got some steps I can start plugging things in. It helps me sit down and say, this is the story I want to tell. This is a really good way to deliver it. I think I spent a lot of time prior to this wasting time thinking, how am I going to do it?

I'd write it and I'd throw it away. Now I'll start putting it into your architecture.

**Andrew:** Thank you.

**Audience:** I've got nearly half a pad of notes. I was so excited about coming to this. Three minutes ago I had a massive light bulb and my heart is beating at a hundred miles an hour to do a Humans of Scarvelli. You can make a book out of that and you can have your customers buy that book. So I am absolutely over the moon about today.

Thank you both, it was great.

**Andrew:** Our pleasure. That Humans of New York is one of the most extraordinary things. I didn't know about it. I've lived in a strange world. When Nick first told us about it, I just found it overwhelmingly beautiful.

**Audience:** He's just recently traveled the world, hasn't he? He's done one around the world.

**Nick:** The second time.

**Audience:** The stories are mind blowing, in war-torn countries.

**Nick:** The material about Afghanistan and Iraq is amazing.

**Audience:** It's incredible, absolutely incredible. It's a simple concept; it's just about people, isn't it?



**Andrew:** We've just got to get out of our own way and just talk it and tell it. Thank you.

**Audience:** You'll have amazing stories in Scarvelli too, in your own microcosm People will have escaped things and they will have conquered things and overcome.

**Andrew:** If you ask someone and listen to what they say, everyone has an extraordinary story. I've yet to meet anyone who hasn't.

**Audience:** After this, I will show you a picture we got the other day in our café. It was a grandmother and granddaughter, sitting at the table on the same side with iPads next to each other, propped up exactly the same way, both reading them. It was just beautiful.

**Andrew:** Eighty years apart, yes. What did you get out of today? What was your big moment?

**Audience:** My big moment came in the closing quarter with the gamification. I've done the KPI program and I'm a pharmacist. A lot of my work is information based. I connect with patients in a way that other pharmacists don't. They don't teach the communication skills and the storytelling in universities.

So I've struggled all along with how to make money out of that skill. I've gone off in various directions and marked time quite a bit trying to monetize it. I've had long conversations with Mike Reid about the fact we're not in an information age, we're in an implementation age.

I can see with gamification, you can go outside of the university and create a learning game that has certification throughout it. That will improve counseling skills, particularly for young pharmacists.

**Nick:** Micro qualifications are super important.

**Audience:** Yes, you've got your micro qualifications and at the end, you've got a qualification.

**Andrew:** If you can do that gamification of a banana farm in Innisfail, what can't you gamify? That's the thing that I take out of that.

Gamification in a gym environment is one of the greatest opportunities on the face of the planet for overachievers who want to push and challenge.

**Audience:** Yes, so for me, everything else for was validation of a skills set I've already got. The last bit was kapow!





**Audience:** I would say the same, gamifying the stories, that last section. I am quite heavily involved in business automation for my processes. I really see that I could gamify that automation process where clients do everything themselves down to pretty much quote themselves. You could turn that into a game where they get points. The more points, there is a certain cost for the job. If they want to knock down the cost of the job, then they can take points off and do it themselves. That will just spit out a quote.



**Audience:** That's a really good idea.

**Nick:** That just reminded me of another guy I'm working with in Adelaide who is a Personal Trainer. We're gamifying that. He's not gamifying how many reps you can do, how much weight you lose. His clientele is women only, aged 30 to 40. They're gamifying themselves on being able to rate how happy they are, how satisfied they are with their life, how good they are at being a Mum, all those things, the internal, inherent metrics.

For you, I think you can also then look deeper and say, how can you gamify yourself as a boss?

**Audience:** Even staff, preferred times and things like that in the automation process where they book their own time in. You say, if you want a more convenient time, like or share this page and then I'll give you another tradesman who can fit right into that time or something like that. It's a state of abundance. You really want this time now, so share something, give me something back and I'll give you that time. That is opposed to the desperation that marketers think it is like out there.

**Andrew:** Very true. Good on you mate. Thank you.

**Audience:** I think I can tell a pretty good story and I've got a good story in how I got to where I've got to. I actually don't share it enough because, for whatever reason, I've just bypassed that whole thing. I feel if I bring that into the equation, I think I can make a bigger difference than I already am. That is pretty encouraging. Thanks guys.

**Andrew:** Great.



**Audience:** Thank you for today. I've been holding off adding my story in more dimension on my website because I've been thinking about how to do that. I think my story is relevant to that. I've also been thinking about my book and it will have a new addition to it sometime in the next twelve months.

I was thinking about getting industry testimonials for the book, key players in my industry, like Andrew Griffiths said blah, blah, blah about my book. I'm thinking, no, what I actually need to do is put in ten reader stories. I got some gold ones already on my Amazon page. I thought that was good to tie it back. That would be more relevant because it speaks to the reader, not to me in that context.

**Andrew:** Nice.

**Audience:** I guess my epiphany today was I was already storytelling and didn't acknowledge the fact that I was. But I don't do it for myself, I do it for everybody else. I turn all of my clients' messages into videos and I do it through telling stories most of the time. I do it more for some clients than others. I say to them, do you want to go down the storytelling route or the fact route? Ninety percent will go down the fact route. Every so often I get a client who goes down the other route.

For me, now I have a structure to do it with, which I didn't have. Before, I used my business whereas this is a proper storytelling structure. So I'm going to use it a lot more for my clients but also for myself. I can't get over this, telling my story. That's a big thing for me, it's going to take a while.

**Andrew:** I'm forty-eight and it's taken me forty years, so I hear you.

**Audience:** My takeaway was something you said from Seth Godin. Unfortunately when he was here I was in Bali. It was the return on attention. That was really huge. What are you going to give me for the five minutes I'm going to give you? There was also the un-branding concept.

**Andrew:** Nice, thank you.

**Audience:** My 'aha' moment actually came from both of you and it is really around giving the story a personality. You talked about how you presented on your website the problems and solutions with a story. It ties in when you were talking about Fred in New York. Even when I'm reading stories authors always point out something about their characters that is visual. They comment on their hair colour or how tall they are. Now I understand why they do that.

**Andrew:** Thank you.



**Audience:** I think I took away from it a couple of things. Probably the most discomforting was the talk about kids and apps and iPads and the future and education. That is quite challenging for me at the moment. The first words out my eighteen months old's mouth are 'peppe pad', which is Peppa Pig for iPad. That is what she says to me in the morning every morning.

That completely aside, I think the thing that I did take away was that issue of credibility and authenticity. I don't have a formal building qualification. I've written thousands of building inspection reports, typing them on behalf of my husband. So my knowledge is accidental, but it is fairly extensive. So I think for me it is being able to situate myself in that credibility and accept that and just start to have those conversations about the knowledge I do have.

**Andrew:** Gamification I would have thought could work quite well in your job.

**Audience:** Thanks guys, we really appreciate you unpacking that knowledge like that. . It's awesome. I got a few things, epiphanies, really great things to take away, apart from ten pages of notes. 'Once upon a time', I love that, in the way that you can use that as just such a beautiful, easy storytelling technique. I really loved it. The ROA, I've got it highlighted and asterisked.

I think the other thing was that, and what I came for, was that information about unpacking your own story and making it human and real. I think for me, I sanitize my story. I take out the struggle and the hard bits and how long I've been at it and so on. I try to brush over it and suddenly I thought why? It's a very real and raw story and it's about the passion that drives me trying to achieve what I'm trying to achieve which is to change quite fundamental attitudes. Hopefully I'll walk out of here with more courage.

**Andrew:** I hope you do. The interesting thing there too is for anyone who still struggles a bit with telling their own story, for whatever reason, if you think, is it too much? If you tell it with authenticity and you tell it from the heart, it is never too much. It is always ok. We pick up on it and we have that genuine connection, this person is opening up and telling us something. It is very personal, very intimate, very real. It's more real than ninety-nine percent of the rubbish we talk about on a day to day basis and people respond unbelievably well to that.

You've got to remember anyone watching you, reading you, they really want you to succeed, they want to see those good things come out. So just believe that one.

**Audience:** Thank you both. I came here for inspiration and I got that. That is the one thing I got. I got lots out of it, just so much I can't pick one thing. I came here to meet Andrew. I've got all





his books. I write a good story and I want to be able to tell it even better and I have told some stories. Today it was awesome. I flew from New Zealand, that was bad enough.

**Andrew:** Very nice to meet you. Thank you. Let's hear the last person and then we're going to draw the book.



**Audience:** I love the gamification because that is an area I really want to focus on myself with my clients. Some of the examples that Nick used just took me to another level. I obviously use stories as a presenter and in writing but to incorporate it into gamification I think was a really big moment for me. It's always a pleasure to hang out with two such amazingly generous and gifted presenters.

You are two of the most hunky, gorgeous men on the planet. I also want to say it is lovely to be in a room full of people who are all on the same journey and have got high intent for each other. Feeling the love today also helps with the inspiration, so thanks to the audience and thanks to the presenters, thanks to the cameramen, thanks to everyone. It was a great day.

**Andrew:** Let's draw the book. Suzanne. I hope you enjoy it, it is a really beautiful book. Thanks folks. It's been so cool for me to spend the day with so many people I know, to meet some people who I didn't know, to meet some new people altogether. I got to learn a little bit more about each of you. Thanks, it's been an absolute joy to work with you. We did well. Thank you very much guys.