

ACT3 STORYTELLING PROCESS

THIS FIVE-PHASE STORYTELLING PROCESS IS DESIGNED BY ACT3 TO GET TO THE CORE OF YOUR STORY AND TELL IT IN A WAY THAT WILL CONNECT IT WITH YOUR DESIRED AUDIENCE.

Investigative Reporting

Great stories aren't invented—they're revealed. To discover the heart of your story, we begin with investigation, so we can thoroughly understand you and what you have to offer. That means learning about your history and evolution, what matters most to you, your goals and objectives, your philosophy, and your personality. We don't create the story for you, we find it in you.

Audience Exploration

In order to reach—and captivate—an audience with your story, **we need to understand what matters to that audience.** We'll examine the attitudes and behaviors of your most loyal fans, members of your ideal audience who aren't yet fans, and the environment and context in which they all live. This phase includes interviews, media and literature exploration, and observation of your audience in action.

Constructing the Narrative

Once we've gathered the critical information—about you, your offering, your current and ideal audiences, and your environment—we're ready to construct a narrative about you and your offering. **We will evaluate what we've learned and develop the first draft of the script, including back story,** character development, and the beginnings of a plot. We'll then get your input and approval on the first draft before moving to the next phase.

Second-Wave Investigation

Once we've built the basic outline for the story and identified the essential story elements, we're ready to see what people think. We'll go back to members of your current and ideal audiences and gather feedback on the narrative we've constructed so far. **The information we gather at this stage helps identify what connects with your audiences,** how to best tell the story, and strategies to spread the story.

Crafting the Story

Once we learn how your audiences respond to the initial narrative, we craft that narrative into a polished story that will connect with those audiences, and develop a strategy to facilitate that connection. No matter what strategy we recommend—advertising, viral marketing, targeted distribution, giving away your work in the public square—**you will have a great story to tell, and a story others will enthusiastically tell for you.**

PHASE ONE :INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING

Great stories aren't invented—they're revealed. To discover the heart of your story, we begin with investigation, so we can thoroughly understand you and what you have to offer. That means learning about your history and evolution, what matters most to you, your goals and objectives, your philosophy, and your personality. We don't create the story for you, we find it in you.

This phase includes:

Interview with Principals

About the offering

About the principals

About the process

About the organization

About your objectives

PHASE TWO : AUDIENCE EXPLORATION

In order to reach—and captivate—an audience with your story, **we need to understand what matters to that audience**. We'll examine the attitudes and behaviors of your most loyal fans, members of your ideal audience who aren't yet fans, and the environment and context in which they all live. This phase includes interviews, media and literature exploration, and observation of your audience in action.

In this phase, we examine:

Current Audience

Who are they?
What sort of feedback do they provide?
Do they spread the word for you?

Ideal Audience

Who are they?
What is their current awareness of your offering?
What do they care about?
Do they prefer a competitor?

Context and Environment

What knowledge is essential for competing in this market?
What are the industry/market assumptions?
What is the status quo?
Who are the market leaders, if any?
Are we the market leader?

PHASE THREE : CONSTRUCTING THE NARRATIVE

Once we've gathered the critical information—about you, your offering, your current and ideal audiences, and your environment—we're ready to construct a narrative about you and your offering. **We will evaluate what we've learned and develop the first draft of the script, including back story**, character development, and the beginnings of a plot. We'll then get your input and approval on the first draft before moving to the next phase.

With the information gathered, our next steps are:

Extracting the Essence

What's important?
About the offering?
About you/your organization?
What's remarkable?
About the offering?
About you/your organization?
What narrative can be drawn from the information?

Connecting the Story

What do current audiences feel about your offering?
About you?
What do ideal audiences feel about your offering? About you?
What about you/your offering is most likely to connect?

Developing the Structure

What is the core of the story?
Is it about the offering?
About the background/process/production/philosophy/ethic?
Is it about you?
What we want the audience to know about what the offering?
How does the story position the offering in the environment?

PHASE FOUR :SECOND-WAVE INVESTIGATION

Once we've built the basic outline for the story and identified the essential story elements, we're ready see what people think. We'll go back to members of your current and ideal audiences and gather feedback on the narrative we've constructed so far. **The information we gather at this stage helps identify what connects with your audiences**, how to best tell the story, and strategies to spread the story.

In this phase, we present the basic narrative to your:

Current Audience

Is this story true to their experience with the offering? How?
Does this story teach them something new about the offering?
Does this affect their interest in the offering? How?
Does it affect their loyalty to the offering? How?
Is this story simple and easy to share with others?
Would they share? Why/why not?
Who would they share with?
Who should we be sharing this story with?

Ideal Audience

What is their perception of story?
What about the story is appealing?
What about the story doesn't work/doesn't seem authentic?
Do they exhibit interest in the offering after hearing story?
If previously aware of offering, does this increase interest?
Are they likely to buy/hire/see/etc.?
Are they likely to share story? Why/why not?

PHASE FIVE :CRAFTING THE STORY

Once we learn how your audiences respond to the initial narrative, we craft that narrative into a polished story that will connect with those audiences, and develop a strategy to facilitate that connection. No matter what strategy we recommend—advertising, viral marketing, targeted distribution, giving away your work in the public square—**you will have a great story to tell, and a story others will enthusiastically tell for you.**

In this phase, we bring it all together and present you with:

The Story

What's the headline? What's the 3-second version?
What's the subhead? What's the 10-second version?
What's the body copy?
What do interested readers, listeners or tellers discover?
What makes it so simple?
What makes it effective?
What makes it tellable?

Storytelling Strategy

Who needs to hear the story first?
What will make them most receptive?
How do we get them to hear it?
How do we get them to spread it?
How to spread the story?
Where to spread the story?
When to spread the story?
