



sounddelivery

Digital storytelling tips for charities

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Welcome to sounddelivery's storytelling top tips

Storytelling is one of the most effective ways that we as charities can communicate our impact, raise awareness of our cause, and challenge perceptions, stigma or narratives around an issue.

Some organisations may face barriers to telling stories particularly when the issues charities are seeking to address deal with difficult and sensitive issues.

We believe that there is always a technique to tell a story – from the anonymity of audio and blogging to the visuals of animation and video – it all depends on the person whose story we are supporting to tell.

But in order to tell first hand stories staff, trustees, frontline workers and volunteers need to understand how to tell stories, how storytelling can work for the organisation and most importantly feel confident to be part of the storytelling process.

If we don't tell our stories or amplify the issues that we seek to address – who will?

In this brief guide we will look at a range of storytelling techniques which mean you can share powerful, authentic stories which will have a big impact. This introduction guide will take you through storytelling tips and tricks to provide you with some storytelling inspiration and new ideas to put into practice.

We've always championed the importance of first-hand, authentic storytelling. We believe the people that charities support should be a core part of their communications, fundraising, campaigning and service development.

We need to bring stories and people that until now have often gone unheard to the forefront.

Happy reading!

Jude Habib

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Blogging

Blogging and the written word can be one of the most accessible forms of storytelling. It's a great way of giving a platform to a range of different individuals and issues and collating their stories in one place. Charities are using blogs to give a voice to the people they support by sharing firsthand stories to a wider audience. Organisations like mental health charity Mind are leading the way in blogging providing helpful guidelines, support and ideas to their potential guest bloggers. (<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/>) and most importantly a platform. This has made a huge difference to their work in challenging stigmas around mental ill health.

You don't need to have a big budget or resources to tell stories using blogs.

Why blog?

A blog is a kind of online column that is updated regularly. The writer – or blogger shares expert opinion, first hand insights and generates conversation on an issue they care about or have direct experience of.

It's personal. A blog communicates an enormous amount of information with real personality. People want to 'friend' or 'follow'

a real human being.

You don't have to wait for journalists to come to you when an issue you seek to address makes the news. You can be offering your own expert opinion yourself, in your own way and in your own words. You can then share them with the audience you are trying to target. Eventually your goals should be unmissable so people subscribe to it for updates.

You can learn more about your readers. You can use comments and feedback gathered from your blog to better understand the kind of content that your readers are interested in. You may be surprised by what your community responds to.

More people will read about your work. If you update your blog regularly, it should appear high up in page results when people search on the internet through sites like Google.

Shout about your work. Blogging is a great way to let people know how you are progressing, to share what you have learned and to publicise any personal interest stories. It is even better if you include photos and videos in your blog posts.

What makes a good blog?

You. Read other blogs and take note of their style, approach and content.

Personality. People will engage with you if you are honest, upfront and write in an accessible, jargon-free way. Imagine you are talking to a friend.

Authenticity. Write like a real person, not someone from PR. People want to read about real experiences and views.

Frequency. Keep it fresh and regular. It's a good idea to update about twice a month. Tell people what you're up to, share your thoughts and stories from your project.

Diversity. A blog can be written or voiced by anyone who has a story to tell – volunteers, chief executives, project managers, service users, frontline members of staff. So you could have a rota for different writers. Use it as an opportunity to showcase what you are doing with your projects.

Interaction. Blogs are a conversation, a two-way interaction. Ask questions, encourage comments – and reply to them.

Creativity. Mix up your blog format. You could use: lists, responses to a breaking news story, photos and stories from an event, interviews with experts, donors, fundraisers and volunteers.

Medium



WORDPRESS



Platforms for blogging include

- **Medium**
<https://medium.com/>
- **Wordpress/hosted**
<https://wordpress.com/>
- **Huffington Post**
<http://projects.huffingtonpost.co.uk/all-women-everywhere/>
- **Guardian Voluntary Network**
<https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network>
- **Linkedin Pulse**
- **Facebook**
For long form / instant articles
- **The Pool**
<https://www.the-pool.com/>

Example blogs

Jude Habib - Watch Your Tongue - Why We Need to Challenge 'Deficit' Language
http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/jude-habib/watch-your-tongue-why-we-_b_10756356.html

Darren Murinas - Sharing my life story is helping other service users
<https://www.theguardian.com/social-care-network/2015/feb/04/sharing-my-life-story-is-helping-other-service-users>

Barbara Burton - Using Lingerie to Support Women from the Prison Gate into Work
<http://www.sounddelivery.org.uk/2017/03/using-lingerie-support-women-prison-gate-work/>

Katherine Sacks Jones
<http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/author/katharine-sacks-jones>

Winnie M Li 'Telling the Story of Your Own Rape'
<https://www.sounddelivery.org.uk/2016/12/winnie-m-li-telling-story-rape/>

Jo Cutts - I chose to live
<http://www.expertcitizens.org.uk/jo-cutts-i-chose-live/>

Audio storytelling

Audio is one of the most underused storytelling tools in the charity sector but there are lots of great opportunities to harness audio particularly if working with people who wish to remain anonymous.

Getting started

Many smart phones have the ability to record audio. Find out where the microphone is on your device and practice with your voice memo to hear how it sounds. Practice using it yourself before you start recording others.

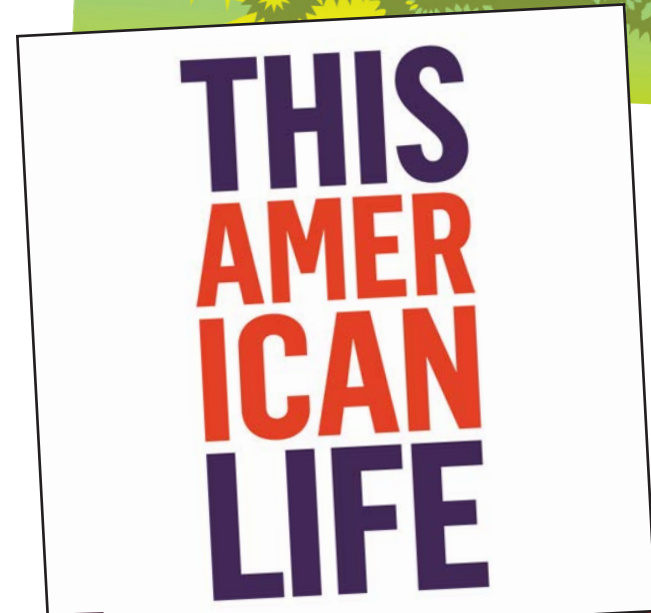
Recording apps include

- Voice Record Pro
- Voice Memos



Top tips

- The best conversations happen when people are relaxed, begin interviews and conversations with easy-to-answer questions before moving on to harder questions
- Listen and respond naturally, help people expand their answers through asking open questions like 'How did that make you feel?'
- End with impact, ask a strong question for example 'what are you proudest of?'
- Don't record with background music in the background, music, if needed can be added on later.
- Listen to podcasts, like **The Moth**, **This American Life**, **Storycorps** and radio programmes including **The Listening Project** (<http://bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01cq3b>) to get inspiration and ideas.



Editing tools include

- Audacity
Free to download
- Waveditor
- Garageband

There are still challenges of making audio shareable. Increasingly outlets are visualising audio like Audiogram animations. This is a new visualised concept <https://audiogram.sparemin.com/audiogram/> Audio continues to be a very powerful form of storytelling and is extremely versatile.

Audiogram Generator

For visualising your audio to make it more shareable. You can add an image background, sound waves and text to your audio.

Aegisub

Free, cross-platform open source tool for creating and modifying subtitles
<http://www.aegisub.org/>

Hosting tools:

- Soundcloud
https://www.soundcloud.com_
- Audioboom
<https://www.audioboom.com>
Monthly subscription fee



Example audio

BBC Radio 4 - Woman's Hour

Audio recorded by **sound**delivery for Untold Story Hull, a collective of women in Hull supported by the Lighthouse Project and Lankelly Chase who all have experience of working on the street.

<https://bbc.co.uk/programmes/p051xjd8>

York Road Project – Experiences of Homelessness

<https://soundcloud.com/user-188629747>

My Voices, Maya Centre

<https://www.mayacentre.org.uk/need-help/audio/>



Video storytelling

Video is the fastest-growing storytelling medium on the internet, it is the most shared and engaged-with content online. Capturing authentic video stories has never been easier as smartphone video quality means that you can record high-quality footage on the move using your phone.

Gathering tools

- **Mobile phones**
In Phone camera
- **Filmic Pro**
A recording and editing tool for smartphones (fee)
- **Snapchat**
If you're trying to reach a young audience
- **Instagram & Instagram Stories**
- **Facebook Live / Periscope**
- **Third Sector: How to use Facebook Live for your Charity**
<http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/kirsty-marrins-use-facebook-live-charity/digital/article/1405841>

Hosting tools

- Vimeo and Vimeo Premium
- YouTube
- Take a look at YouTube's Nonprofit Programme
<https://www.youtube.com/nonprofits>
- Social video: Great examples include Channel 4/Buzzfeed/ Al Jazeera/ UNilad/ Pinack

Editing tools

- SPLICE
- Caption Box
- iMovie/ Windows Movie Maker
- Cyberlink
- Powerdirector
- Davina
- Amara (Subtitling)
When sharing video across social media think about subtitling for those who watch videos without sound.

Example video

Meet the geezers

<https://vimeo.com/239630945>

Clear Lines Festival #letstalkaboutit

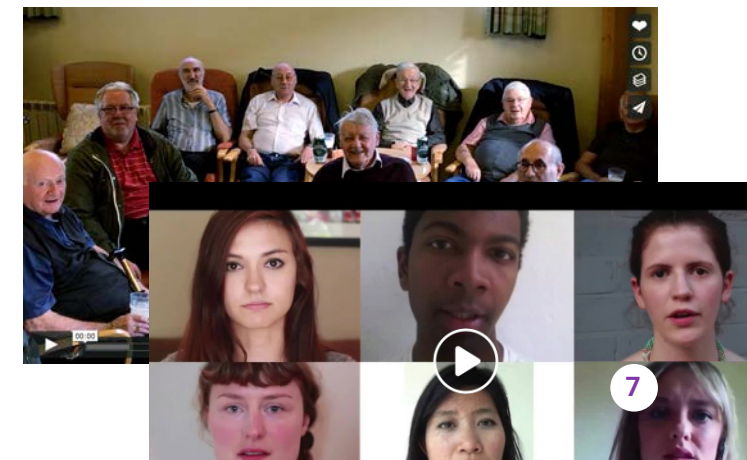
<https://www.facebook.com/clearlinesuk/videos/883223881724869/>

Mental Health Vlogger Jonny Benjamin

<https://www.youtube.com/user/johnjusthuman>

Vlogger Siobhan Pyburn share insights around Child Sexual Abuse

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChKEfe0Ru-WJZI3z_6U9vA



Photography & visuals

As the phrase goes a picture can tell a thousand words, sharing photographs is a great way to capture your audience and tell the story of your organisation. Creating visuals can be a quick and low-cost/free method of using images to increase engagement online. You can tell your organisation's story through visuals in a number of ways; creating visualised quotes, infographics, sharing statistics and simple but powerful photographs.

Capturing & hosting tools

- Flickr
- Instagram

Editing & visual tools:

- Canva
- Layout
- Data visuals
- Tableau
- Highcharts
- Wordswag
- Piktochart infographics

Get inspiration from

Humans of New York on Facebook and Instagram
<http://www.humansofnewyork.com/>

Made on Canva

sounddelivery
harnessing the power of digital storytelling

“
You'll never know unless you ask.
You'll never learn unless you talk.
Let your voice be heard

MAYA VOICES

International Women's Day

Crowdsourcing content

Crowdsourced content or 'user-generated content' is a brilliant way of gathering and sharing authentic firsthand stories. You can put your community of supporters and those that your organisations supports at the heart of your communications by asking them to share stories, images, quotes and more. A social media takeover, handing over your social media account to someone else for a day, is also a brilliant way to crowdsource stories.

Twitter takeovers are when a Twitter account is handed over to someone else for a day, or longer but there are several participants who will guest-tweet from an account. Charities and organisations have adopted this method to amplify the voices of the people they support through authentic firsthand storytelling, and to provide different insights into a common topic.

Examples

#CancerRightNow from Cancer Research UK

<http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerrightnow>

Anthony Nolan

<https://www.facebook.com/AnthonyNolan/photos/a.387996548886.167010.11245843886/10155898653288887/?type=3&theater>

@NHS Social Media Takeovers

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/atnhs/>

@Parkinsons52 Twitter Takeover

<https://twitter.com/parkinsons52>

#CancerRightNow

Real people are at the heart of our campaign, so we want to hear your stories. Share a picture and tell us about your 'right now'

Upload a photo

The image grid contains 15 photos: a person in a red jacket in a field; a child with 'CHEMO SUCKS' magnets; a person in a hospital bed; a person holding a baby; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a white t-shirt; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown; a person in a hospital gown.



Final thoughts

Be brave

Be clear about why you want to capture stories. How will it be used? Who would hear/see it?

Don't presume that people don't want to tell their stories – ask

Build relationships and trust will follow

Look at how different organisations working on challenging social issues tell their stories

Involve the whole organisation

Consent forms



SOCIAL MEDIA EXCHANGE

Social Media Exchange 2018

On Monday 5th February - charity staff, social entrepreneurs, media professionals and digital storytellers will gather in London for **sound**delivery's flagship training event, The Social Media Exchange 2018.

The Social Media Exchange aims to support the charity sector to harness the opportunities that social media and digital storytelling offer. This one-off event will be part social media training bootcamp, part conference and will give both charity staff and media professionals the opportunity to connect and learn from each other.

Delegates will enjoy:

- **Interactive masterclasses** on digital storytelling trends, video, social media, audio, working with production companies and more.
- Ted-style '**Lightning Talks**' with 3 dynamic speakers

- **Lunchbites:** informal sessions during lunch to get to explore how to work with journalists to get your stories into the media, and how to have a big impact as a small charity
- Opportunities to make connections, learn new skills, compare, contrast and bounce ideas off other delegates.

Find out more at:

<http://www.socialmediaexchange.org.uk>

More peer to peer support

Third Sector PR and Communications Network on Facebook

Further information at:

<https://www.sounddelivery.org.uk/2017/02/peer-peer-support-networks-know/>

About sounddelivery

sounddelivery champion stories that need to be told, stories that challenge prejudice and disadvantage, and have the power to change the world around us. **sound**delivery offers a wide range of digital storytelling services, from bespoke digital training for expert citizens and in-house teams, to project partnerships, consultancy, supporting funders to skill-up grantees, story gathering and content creation. We also arrange meet-ups and other interesting events getting people together to share ideas and make connections.

We can help you maximise your impact through storytelling to:

- Unlock the potential of digital storytelling within your organisation
- Give a voice to the people and communities you support
- Change perceptions, influence policy and raise funds through firsthand stories.
- Connect to the media and those who have the power to create positive change.

We would love to work with you and develop exciting projects. Please do not hesitate to get in contact or arrange to meet us for a chat.

Any questions please call

Jude and Helena

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