

North Carolina



Center *for* Nonprofits

WEBINAR

Storytelling for Impact

Presented by Kiersten Hill
April 27, 2023

Kiersten
Hill →



Nebraska's
First B Corp™





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Kiersten Hill →



Firespring provides strategic guidance activated through creative solutions in marketing, printing and technology to help businesses and nonprofits prosper.



WE LEVERAGE OUR

**PEOPLE,
PRODUCTS
& PROFIT**

→ TO DO

**MORE
GOOD**

1% of

our profits

(top-line revenue
donated to NPOs)

2% of

our products

(in-kind products
and services)

3% of

our people

(volunteer 1 day
per month)

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Storytelling for Impact

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If you're tweeting today:
#poweredbypurpose
@firespring

- What is Storytelling & Why It's Important.
- 7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling.
- Creating Your Brand Voice & Tone.
- 7 Elements of Great Stories.
- Storytelling in Action.
- 12 Ways to Up Your Storytelling Game.
- Action Steps | Q&A





What is storytelling?

The art of sharing narratives to engage your audience, deliver messages, information and knowledge in a subtle, yet entertaining, way.



7 Benefits

of Nonprofit Storytelling



7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling



1

Shares your truth.

“The average American family of four uses 400 gallons of water per day. Helen’s family was divvying up 10 gallons.”

Charity Water



STORIES FROM THE FIELD

What Helen Taught Us

She told us that clean water made her feel beautiful then. Her story is even more beautiful today.



by Tyler Riewer & Beki Watts



When [we first met Helen in 2009](#), her community had just received a hand pump in the middle of their village.

For decades, Helen had spent most of her days walking and waiting to collect water. It was such a time-consuming process that she could only manage to bring home two Jerry Cans per day.



7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling



2

Establishes relationships
and draws people in.

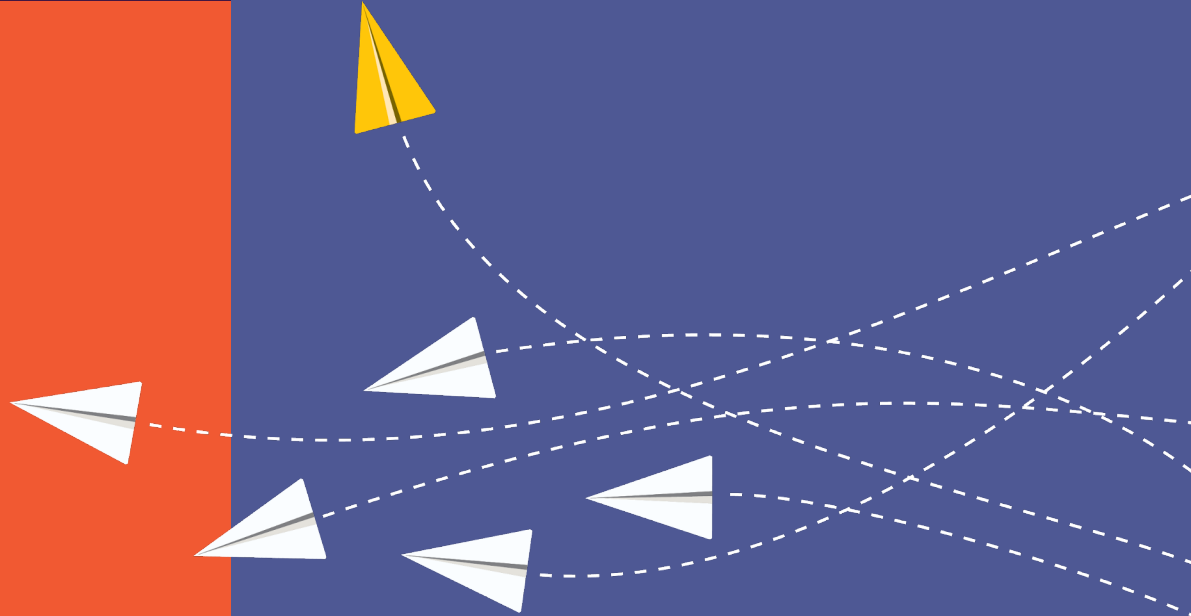


7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling



3

Sets you apart.



7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling



4

Drives action.

- ✓ Raise funds
- ✓ Increase conversion
- ✓ Educate
- ✓ Build trust
- ✓ Say thank you
- ✓ Grow following
- ✓ Subscribe
- ✓ Volunteer
- ✓ Register

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Hill →



Hunger Blog • Responding To Hurricanes On The Gulf Coast And In The Southeast

Responding to hurricanes on the Gulf Coast and in the Southeast

October 29, 2020
by Paul Morello

What's Happening?

In just over two months, the Gulf Coast and the Southeast have been devastated by four powerful hurricanes.

The most recent storm, Hurricane Zeta, moved across the Southeast on Thursday, October 29, leaving behind a trail of damage. Two million homes and businesses were left without power after destructive winds and rain.



Making a difficult situation even worse, many of the impacted communities were rebuilding from Hurricane Delta earlier this month, Hurricane Sally in September, and Hurricane Laura that made landfall in late August. These storms caused record flooding and led to thousands being evacuated from their homes.

How are Feeding America and local food banks responding?

Feeding America is working with food banks in Louisiana, Alabama, Florida, Texas, and Arkansas to mobilize our disaster response to ensure people impacted by all four hurricanes have the food and resources they need.

At this time, food banks in the impacted areas are working to provide necessary food to their communities. As the extent of damage and need becomes clearer, Feeding America and local food banks will continue providing meals and additional resources to support our neighbors in need.

In the wake of all the natural disasters this year, Feeding America continues to work closely with a network of national emergency response organizations such as the FEMA National Response Coordination Center, National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, and the American Red Cross, as well as member food banks and local emergency officials.

How can I help?

- **Donate to Feeding America's Disaster Response Fund.** While our neighbors along the Gulf Coast and the Southeast were already dealing with a challenging time, Hurricanes Zeta, Delta, Sally, and Laura have further upended the lives of millions of people. Ensure local food banks can respond in the wake of the storm by supporting Feeding America's disaster response fund.
- **Donate to food banks in the impacted area.** Donating funds is the most efficient way to support affected food banks as they respond to the need after a disaster. From purchasing extra food to putting gas in trucks, a monetary donation goes a long way at the local level. Find local food banks and donate.
- **Follow affected food banks on social media.** Local food banks will know what they need most to respond to in their community. Whether that's food, funds, or volunteers – watch their social channels to learn the best way to make a local impact.



5

Informs everything.



7 Benefits of Nonprofit Storytelling



6

Extends reach.



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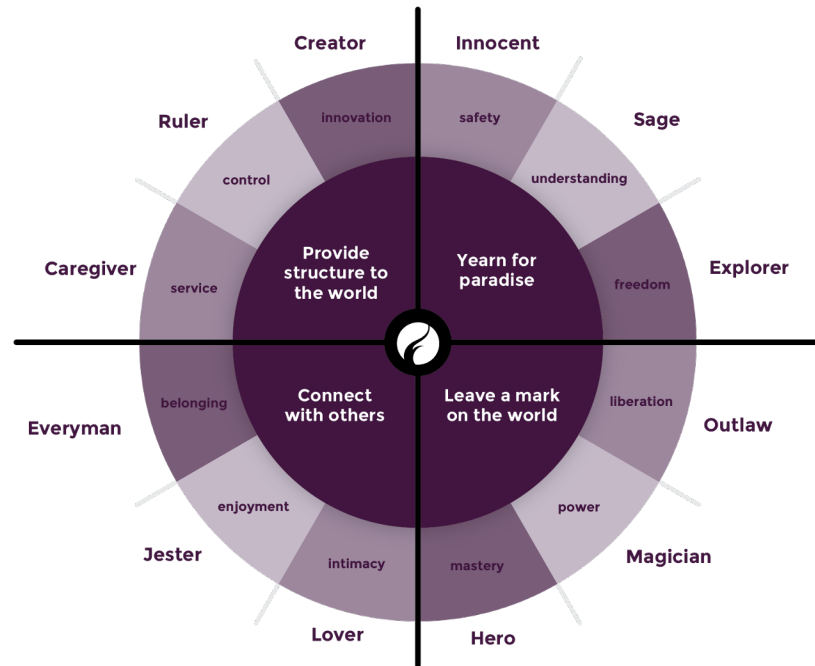




7

Builds your personality:

- ✓ What do you do?
- ✓ What does it take to do it well?
- ✓ What do you want to be known for?



Defining Your Brand Personality

Voice

Your brand personality described in an adjective (e.g., lively, positive, cynical, professional, bold, serious, youthful, whimsical, spiritual, rebellious, etc.)

Tone

A subset of your brand's voice. Tone adds specific flavor to your voice based on factors like audience, situation, and channel.

You have **one** brand voice and **many** tones that refine that voice. Voice is your mission statement. Tone is the application of that mission.



Defining Your Brand Personality



Kiersten Hill



Economic Impact of Storytelling

Storytelling is **22x** more memorable than facts. *(Forbes)*

56% of nonprofit followers on mobile and social networks take further action, primarily making a donation, after reading a compelling story published by a nonprofit

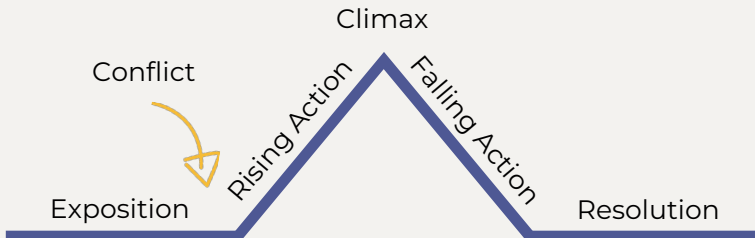
(Mansfield, H. Mobile for good: A how-to fundraising guide for nonprofits)

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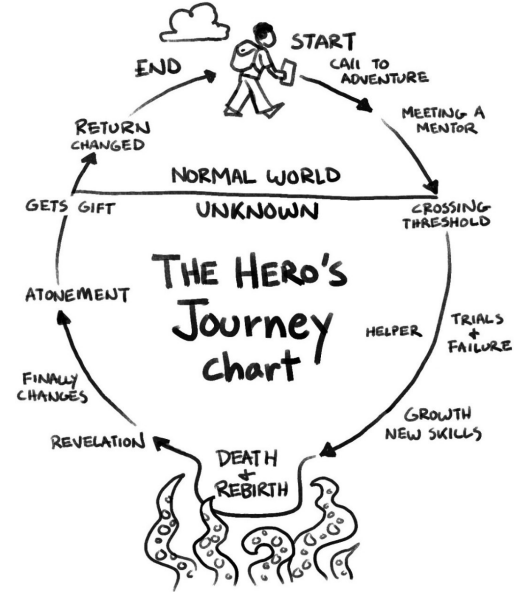


2 Main Story Structures*

Freytag Pyramid



The Hero's Journey



Source: Joseph Campbell



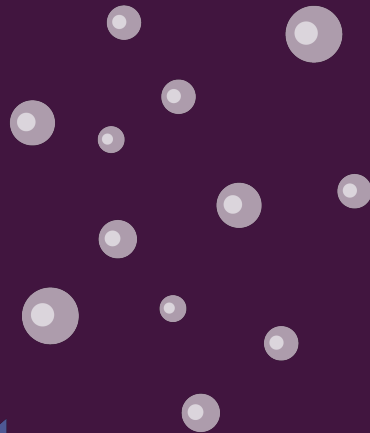


7 Elements of a Great Story



1

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Hook

- ✓ Needs to capture your audience's attention in the first few seconds



2

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Protagonist

- ✓ An individual (not a group) who helps your audience relate to your story
- ✓ Affected by the cause or problem
- ✓ Use personas to give this character depth



3

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Emotion

- ✓ Makes them feel something
- ✓ Appeals to your audience
- ✓ Compels them to engage



4

7 Elements of a Great Story



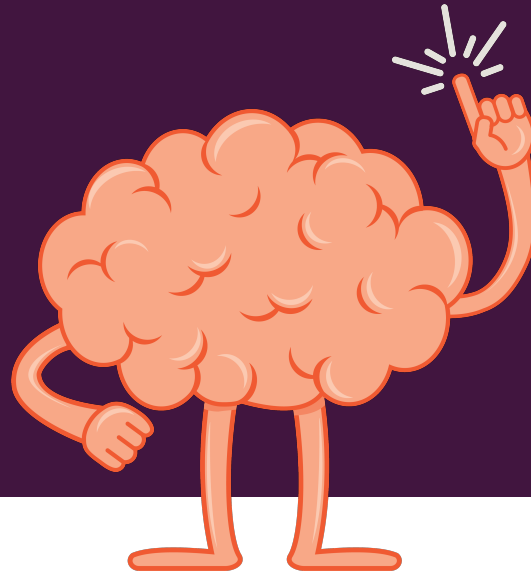
The Villain

- ✓ What is the problem?
- ✓ Who or what is causing it?



5

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Logic

- ✓ Why does this issue matter?
- ✓ What happens if you don't solve the problem?



6

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Guide

- ✓ How does your mission provide a solution that solves the problem?



7

7 Elements of a Great Story



The Hero

- ✓ Your supporter or audience
- ✓ A call to action that brings your audience into the story to create a desired impact



Telling Your Story

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Hill →



Telling Your Story

<p>PROTAGONIST</p> <p>WHAT DO THEY WANT?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>AND MEETS A GUIDE</p> <p>EMPATHY</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>AUTHORITY</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>AND CALLS THEM TO ACTION</p> <p>DIRECT</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>THAT ENDS IN SUCCESS</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>HAS A PROBLEM</p> <p>VILLAIN</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>EXTERNAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>INTERNAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>PHILOSOPHICAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>WHO GIVES THEM A PLAN</p> <p>PROCESS</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>AGREEMENT</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>TRANSITIONAL</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>CHARACTER TRANSFORMATION</p> <p>FROM</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p>TO</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>THAT HELPS THEM AVOID FAILURE</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>



Keep it Simple

The StoryBrand Framework



BRANDSCRIPT
SCRIPT

At _____ we know that you want to be (a/an) _____

_____. In order to do that, you need _____. The

problem is _____, which makes you feel _____.

_____. We believe _____.

We understand _____, which is why we _____.

Here's how we do it: 1. _____, 2. _____.

_____, 3. _____.

So, _____, And in the meantime, _____.

_____, So you can stop _____ and instead

_____.

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Hill



One-Liner to Bring it Together



Hint: A second-grader should be able to understand and remember it.

1	The Problem	Main pain point you solve
2	The Solution	What you do to solve it
3	The Result	What positive experience will occur as a result

In Action

“Most business leaders have trouble explaining what they offer. They’re too close to it and they fumble their words. So we have a seven-part framework that helps business leaders clarify their message. When they do, customers engage. It’s the fastest way to grow your business.”



Where to Find Stories



1

Your Founding

2

People You Serve

3

Your Donors & Funders

4

Your Volunteers

5

Your Staff & Board

6

Your Sponsors & Vendors

7

Your Community



Where do people prefer to see stories?



1

The brand's website, blog or e-newsletter

2

Website advertising

3

Social media advertising

4

Social media account

5

Shared by a friend

6

A blog they read

7

Messaging app

Source: Headstream



BLOG

EMAIL
OPT IN

DONATE

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

VOLUNTEER

Most nonprofits send
visitors away to engage
instead of keeping them
on the website.

PHOTO
GALLERY

EVENT
REGISTRATION

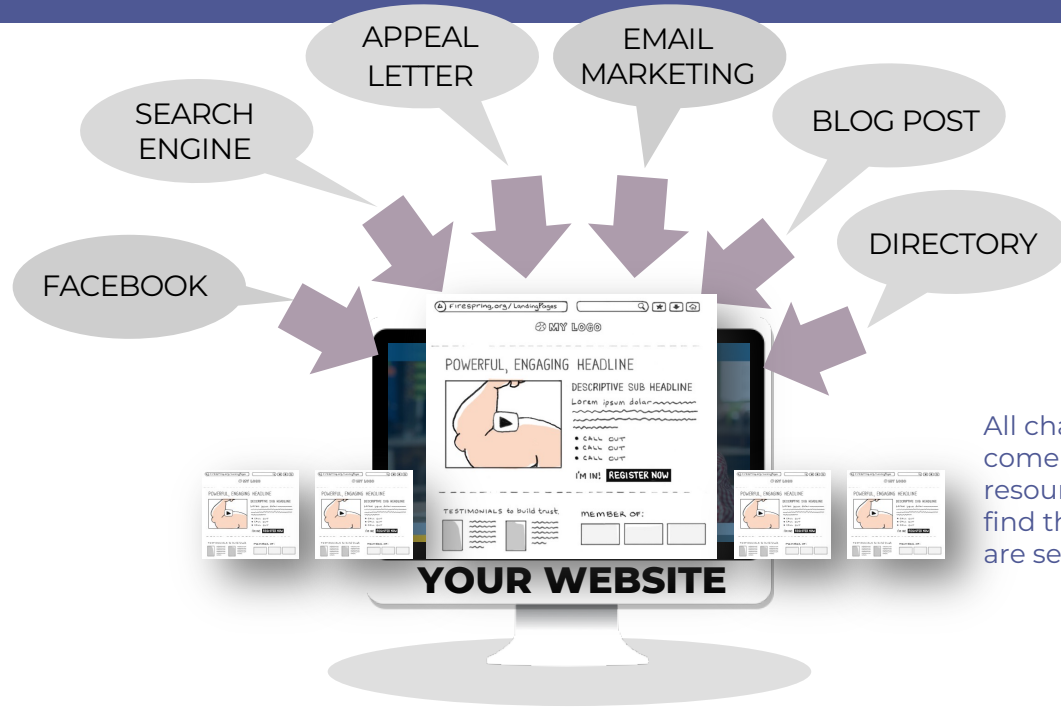
ANSWER OUR
SURVEY

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TELLING YOUR STORY

Your Website



All channels of your story should come from your website. This is the resource for all your supporters to find the story and information they are searching for.



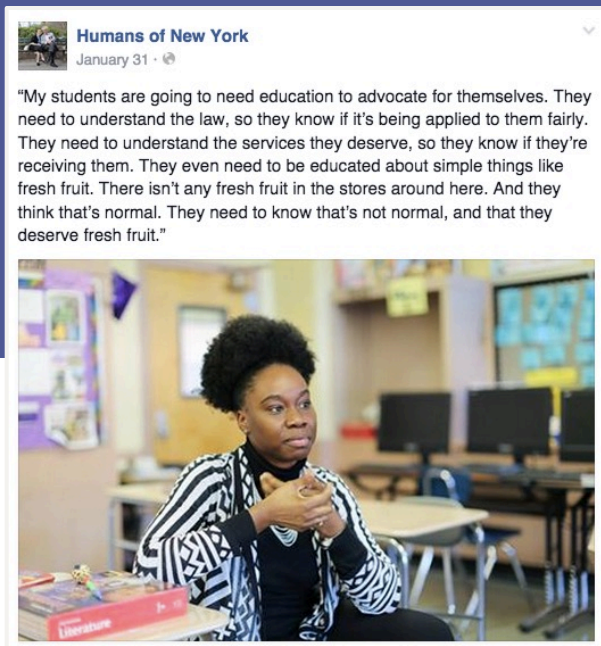
Your Website

1	Spotlights	Rotating images on your website homepage that feature a call to action. Can be easily edited through a content management system.
2	Blogging	Tell your story in a designated feed featured within your website. Invite your community to participate as guest writers.
3	Landing Pages	The most powerful tool on your site. A page for donors to land with no navigation and a singular call to action.
4	News & Events	Keep constituents in the know and make sure they have time to plan their support for you and spread the word to their network.



TELLING YOUR STORY

Facebook



Single Post Stories

Humans of New York



TELLING YOUR STORY

Facebook



Leverage influencer marketing where you can. Bernie Sanders' sweatshirt and t-shirt sales raised several million dollars benefiting Vermont Meals on Wheels program.

Look for influencers among:

- ✓ Existing supporters
- ✓ Leaders already involved in your cause
- ✓ Existing followers
- ✓ Board members



Single Post Stories

Lincoln City Libraries



TELLING YOUR STORY

Facebook

Illustrate different parts of your story, characters, places and activities associated with your purpose.

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile of Capital Humane Society (@capitalhumanesociety). The profile picture is a silhouette of a person holding a dog. The page features a navigation menu on the left with options: Home, Events, About, Photos (selected), Videos, Community, and Posts. The main content area displays an album titled "Tails 'N Trails Pet Walk & Festival 2019" with 151 photos. A post within the album includes the text: "Check out pictures from our Tails 'N Trails Pet Walk & Festival last month! Thank you to everyone who came out and joined us! Feel free to tag yourself & your pet!". Below the text is a grid of eight photos showing various scenes from the event, including people walking dogs, a dog on a leash, and a dog's face.

Encourage engagement like 'Tag yourself!' can increase your reach.



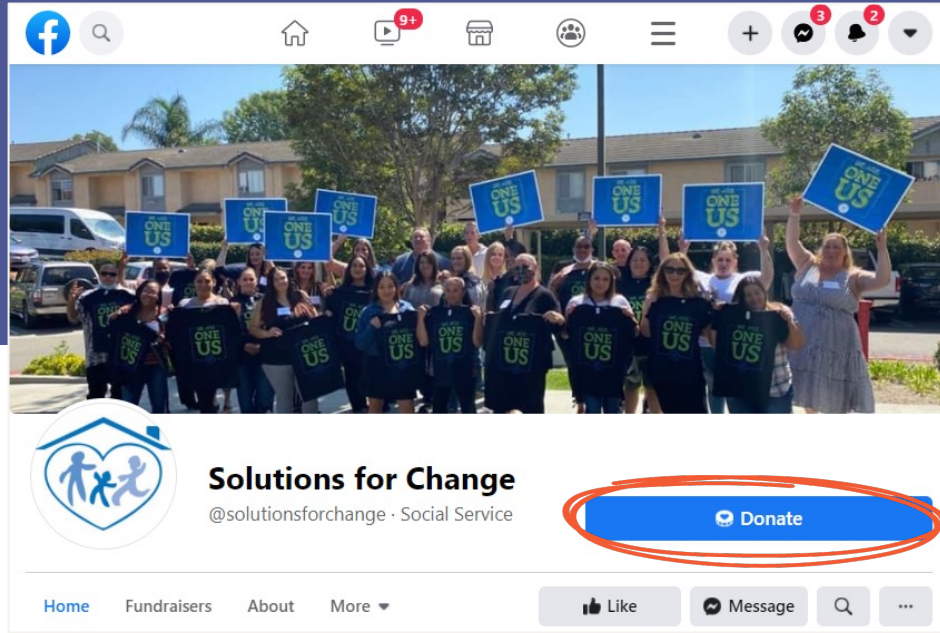
Photo Galleries

Capital Humane Society

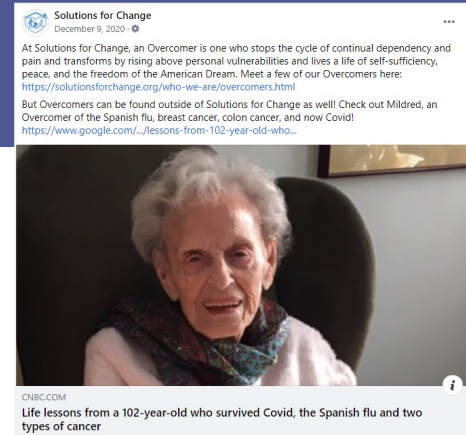


TELLING YOUR STORY

Facebook



The screenshot shows the Facebook profile page for 'Solutions for Change'. The profile picture is a group of people holding blue signs that say 'ONE US'. The name 'Solutions for Change' is displayed in bold, with the handle '@solutionsforchange · Social Service' below it. A blue 'Donate' button is prominently featured and circled in orange. Below the profile information are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Fundraisers', 'About', and 'More'. At the bottom of the profile section are buttons for 'Like', 'Message', and a search icon.



The screenshot shows a Facebook post from 'Solutions for Change' dated December 9, 2020. The post text reads: 'At Solutions for Change, an Overcomer is one who stops the cycle of continual dependency and pain and transforms by rising above personal vulnerabilities and lives a life of self-sufficiency, peace, and the freedom of the American Dream. Meet a few of our Overcomers here: <https://solutionsforchange.org/who-we-are/overcomers.html> But Overcomers can be found outside of Solutions for Change as well! Check out Mildred, an Overcomer of the Spanish flu, breast cancer, colon cancer, and now Covid! <https://www.google.com/.../lessons-from-102-year-old-who-...>' Below the text is a video thumbnail showing an elderly woman with white hair, smiling. The video is from CNBC.COM and is titled 'Life lessons from a 102-year-old who survived Covid, the Spanish flu and two types of cancer'.



Add a Call to Action
Solutions for Change



TELLING YOUR STORY

Facebook

“Chewbacca Mom” was the most watched Facebook Live in 2016



Setup: Introduction of the video where she describes her trip to Kohl's

Confrontation: Build-up as she unboxes the Chewbacca mask

Resolution: Climax where she laughs uncontrollably



Live Videos
Candace Payne



TELLING YOUR STORY

Twitter

The screenshot shows the StoryCorps Twitter profile. The header includes navigation links for Home, Moments, Notifications, Messages, and a search bar. The profile banner features a StoryCorps van on a road at night. The profile bio states: "Our mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories in order to build connections between people and create a more just and compassionate world." It lists the location as Brooklyn, NY, the website as storycorps.org, and the join date as February 2008. The profile has 10K tweets, 7,106 following, 67.5K followers, and 5,028 likes. The main content area shows a tweet from StoryCorps (@StoryCorps) from 32m ago: "I want people to look at us as human beings who went through a lot, and survived." Our Story of the Week, as heard on @MorningEdition. The tweet includes a video thumbnail with the text "Were you ever worried about..." and "Listen. Honor. Share. storycorps.org". Below the tweet is a card for "Like my GRANDPA ACTUAL SUPER HERO" with a play button icon. The right sidebar shows a "Who to follow" section with accounts like The Moth, Morning Edition, and NPR Extra, and a "United States trends" section with hashtags like #MondayMotivation, #PrimeDayAmazon, #SweetPea, #RacistPresident, #riplanca, and #MondayMorning.



Timeline Sequence

StoryCorps

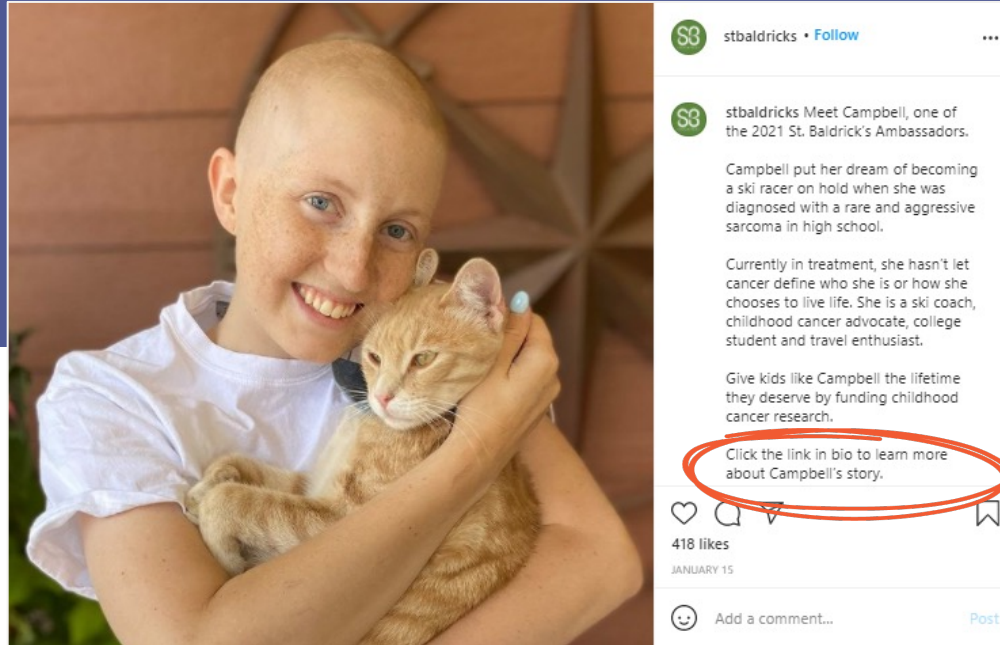


TELLING YOUR STORY

Instagram

Use calls to action with “link in bio.”

Encourage engagement with polls.



Great format for short and long form stories.

“See More”: Swipe up available for 10k followers + or verified accounts



Posts & Stories

St. Baldrick's Foundation



12 Ways to Up Your Storytelling Game

1

Get something worth writing about.

2

Keep the main point the main point.

3

Find real-life anecdotes that tap into emotions.

4

Ask your social networks to share.

5

Use one story several ways.

6

Interview the people involved.

7

Tap into the experts.

8

Use powerful images.

9

Compel people to act, then tell them what to do.

10

Create a plan to follow up.

11

Proofread everything.

12

Make storytelling a part of your nonprofit's culture.





“Every staff member of a nonprofit should know a story of someone helped by the organization. Our brains are wired to tell ourselves a story, so that we feel something, so that we can make a decision.”

Lori L. Jacobwith

Master Storyteller
Founder of Ignited Fundraising



Action Steps

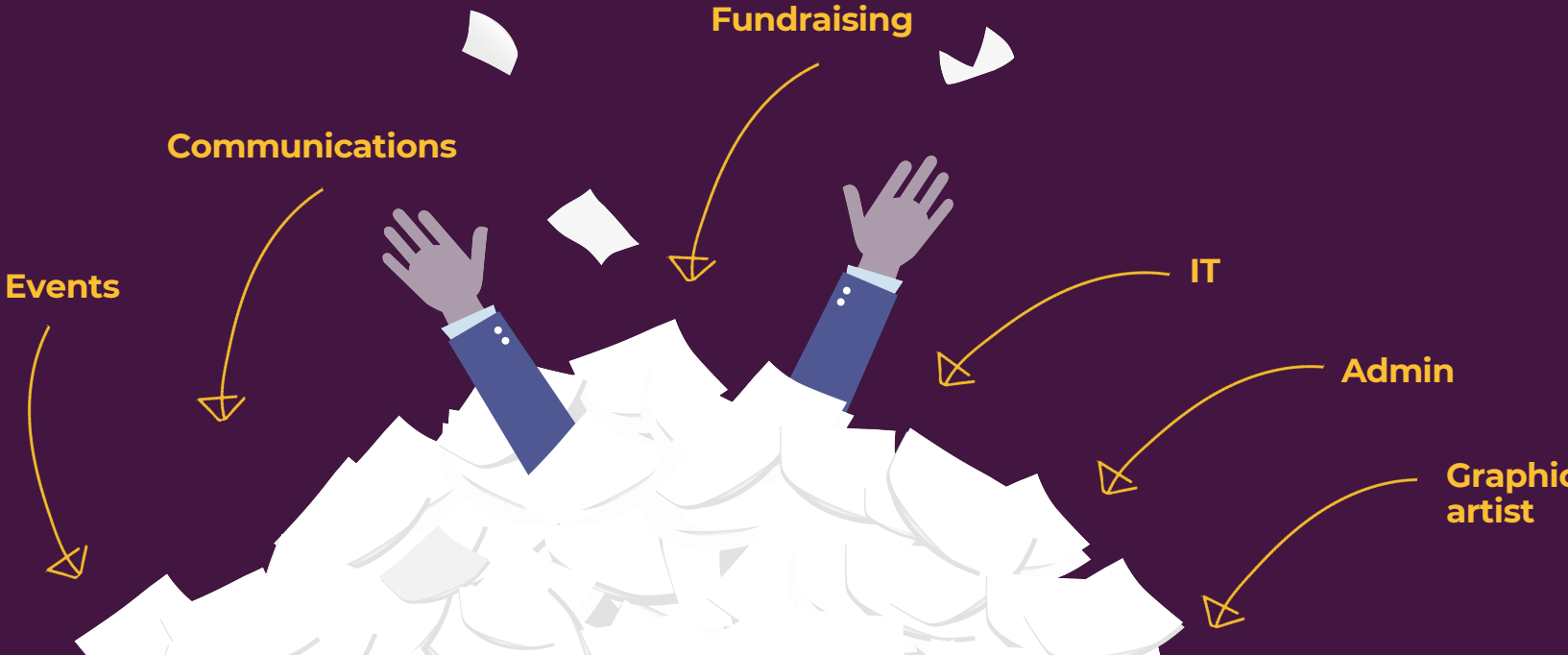
- 1 Discover your brand **VOICE** and implement **TONE**.
- 2 Select a couple **PROTAGONISTS** for your stories.
- 3 Document your **FOUNDING** along the Hero's Journey.
- 4 **INTERVIEW** 5 individuals you serve asking **OPEN ENDED** questions.
- 5 Utilize your **CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM** to make your website a storytelling hub.
- 6 Use **SOCIAL MEDIA** to share your stories.
- 7 Keep learning! Attend more **WEBINARS** from Firespring and visit **NONPROFITHUB.ORG** for additional resources.

Kiersten Hill



Feeling buried?

Let your website do the heavy lifting and dig you out.



Your mission management system



THE TOOLS YOU NEED IN ONE CENTRAL PLACE

- ✓ LEGENDARY SUPPORT & TRAINING
- ✓ CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
- ✓ MOBILE FRIENDLY WEB DESIGNS
- ✓ FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGNS (WITH RECURRING DONATIONS)
- ✓ BLOG TOOLS & NEWSFEEDS
- ✓ TURNKEY LANDING PAGES
- ✓ STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY LIBRARY
- ✓ SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION
- ✓ EMAIL MARKETING AUTOMATION
- ✓ EVENT REGISTRATION
- ✓ ECOMMERCE
- ✓ COMMUNICATION PORTALS

(FOR YOUR STAFF, BOARD, MEMBERS, DONORS)



Nonprofit Websites

Marketing

Printing

Strategic Guidance

- Custom website design
- Search engine optimization
- Search engine marketing
- Social media posts & optimization
- Impact strategy
- Engagement campaigns
- Landing page development
- Email marketing automation
- Branding & creative services
- Strategic marketing campaigns

Yep, all under **one** roof.



North Carolina



Center *for* Nonprofits

Member Benefit

Save 20%

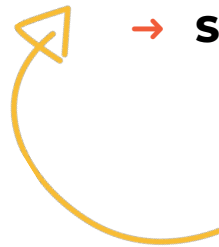


[firespring.com/
ncnonprofits](https://firespring.com/ncnonprofits)



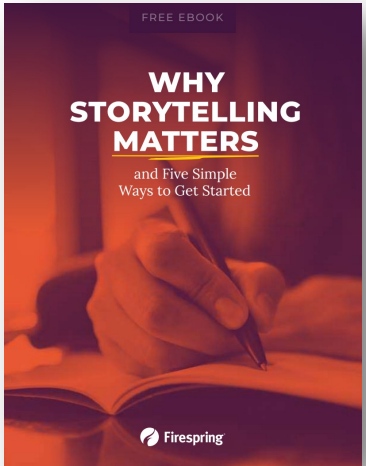
Get an additional 20% off these awesome tools and services when you partner with Firespring!

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Yep, all under one roof.





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 firespring.com/resources/nonprofit-storytelling-importance



Keep Learning with Us

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How to Captivate & Engage Constituents with Your Website



Convert Supporters with Powerful Landing Pages



Events in a Digital Age: How to Maximize Offline Events in an Online World



Overcoming the Overhead Myth: Making a Website Within Your Budget



Be Found: The Secrets of SEO for Nonprofits



5 Secrets of Email Marketing Geniuses



Online Fundraising Best Practices For Nonprofits



The Power of Blogging & Thought Leadership



Social Media 101 & Social Media 102



It's a New World: How to Cultivate Your Community Online



Storytelling for Impact on Your Website



Mobile Marketing Tips for Each Generation



How to Get the Most Out of Your Nonprofit Website



An Inside Look at Firespring Nonprofit Websites



Get Your Board to Help You Fundraise, Even if They Don't Wanna!



How to Avoid Fundraising's Quiet Killer: Donor Attrition



Guest Webinars Featuring Consultants, Influencers, and Fundraising Coaches in the Nonprofit Field



Online Tools Every Nonprofit Needs to Simplify Their Life



Kiersten Hill



Questions?
)



Kiersten Hill

*Director of
Nonprofit Solutions*

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-  @firespring
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