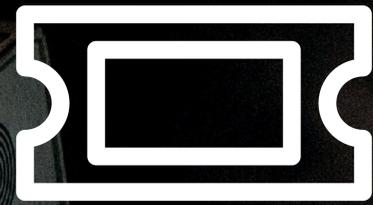


Ch. 1



NARRATIVE

*Say Goodbye to
Hollywood: A New
Kind of Storytelling*

Strategic Narrative

Say Goodbye to Hollywood: A New Kind of Storytelling

Mark Bonchek, Phd



Welcome to your Shift Expedition® on Strategic Narrative. I'm your guide, Mark Bonchek, the founder of Shift Thinking.

The purpose of this Expedition is to give you a new way of thinking about digital storytelling that creates more enduring and authentic engagement and differentiation. This Expedition is a followup to my recent webinar, "Say Goodbye to Hollywood." If you didn't catch the webinar live, you're welcome to go back and watch the recording [here](#).

What to Expect

At each destination of the Expedition we'll review a key element of the Shift Thinking approach to Strategic Narrative. You'll see examples of each element from companies you know. And you'll get a simple exercise to start applying the method to your own business.

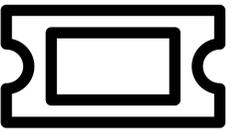
This worksheet will walk you through the journey. After each destination, you can fill in a few notes on your thoughts on the exercise to keep your journey moving forward.

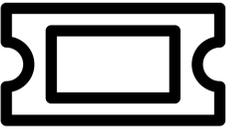
I think you will be amazed at how quickly you can start to see new opportunities open up when you change how you think before trying to change what you do.

Say Goodbye to Hollywood

Our starting point is the belief that in business, we need a new kind of storytelling. In the past, companies looked to Hollywood as a model for how to tell their story. The product or company is the hero, and the message is like a movie script that employers are reading from.

But digital technology has changed the way these stories are told, and who gets to tell them. Thanks to social media, what others say about your company matters more than what you say about yourself.





People want to know who you are, not just what you sell, and customers are not just consumers of your story, they are co-creators. You simply can't control the message the way you used to.

It's time for marketers to say goodbye to Hollywood -- today's brands need to focus less on persuading and entertaining, and more on engaging and co-creating.

For the sake of this discussion, let's make a distinction between story and narrative:

A story	A narrative
is something I tell you about me	is something we create together
has a pre-determined outcome	is open-ended
has a beginning, middle and end	connects the past, present and future
has an audience	has participants

Most corporate communications fall into the category of story rather than narrative. They explain why a person should buy something from the company and what they will get if they do. It is a story building up to a transaction.

But in today's digital economy, the narrative needs to be more about a relationship than a transaction. People need to know why they should have a relationship with you, what they will get from that relationship, and who they will be if they do. It is as much a story about identity as it is about utility.

The brands that understand this new kind of narrative are the brands that have been the most successful. In the coming days we'll learn from their example.

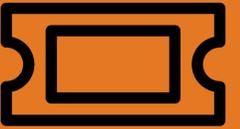
You might be wondering how this applies to B2B companies or your particular industry. I've used the same method with companies of all sizes and industries and even personal brands. I haven't found a situation yet where it doesn't apply. These days everything is H2H (human to human).

Story vs. Narrative



A STORY	A NARRATIVE
is something I tell you about me	is something we create together
has a pre-determined outcome	is open-ended
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Exercise: Assess Your Company Story



How clearly does it connect your past to your future?



How much does it focus on your product vs. your purpose?



How well does it engage people as consumers vs. as co-creators?



Up Next:

Next we will look at Shared Purpose, the first element of Strategic Narrative. Do you have a purpose TO, FOR or WITH?

Go Deeper:

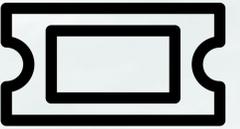
For more on the distinction between story and narrative, see my friend John Hagel's post on the topic [here](#).

Put into Practice:

Think about your own company story. How well does it connect your past to your future? How much does it focus on your product vs. your purpose? Does it engage people as consumers or as co-creators?

Share With Others:

If you find this Expedition helpful, please share it with your colleagues. They can view the original webinar video and register for the email series at [this link](#).



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