

CORPORATE

STORYTELLING

**ENABLING MARKET
SUCCESS**

At globeone we are specialists for targeted brand positioning.

We believe in good process, thorough research, and a hands-on spirit from strategy to implementation.

With this discussion paper we want to inspire and show how to unfold the power of corporate storytelling.

Because organizations have more to offer than just products and services. Because we want to encourage leaders to understand and utilize the greater meaning behind an organization's offering. We want to help leaders to discover stories that increase business success.

Learn more about the untapped potential of corporate storytelling and how globeone can help to identify, create and bring the right story to life.

Potential challenges faced by organizations – to be addressed with a storytelling approach

- 1 { Disharmonious corporate communication not following one clear direction
- 2 { Operating in markets where all products and solutions seem to be ‘the same’
- 3 { Offering intangible commodities whose added value isn’t visible at first sight
- 4 { Translating a complex business portfolio to a diverse group of demanding stakeholders
- 5 { Reaching stakeholders in an era where digitalization is permeating all levels of business

Corporate storytelling adds value to your business

Stories attract attention, are easy to digest, arouse emotions and remain in our memory. People love stories. The media subsists on stories.

Corporate storytelling utilizes this longing for narratives. Being linked to a powerful and authentic story brings organizations closer to their stakeholders – creating relatable and meaningful differentiation through value-based and emotional bonds.

Unique stories build positive reputations. They help organizations to secure investment capital, attract and retain talented employees, win customers, and receive the attention of the media.

The storytelling approach of Skype

Actually, Skype...

- ...is a freemium voice-over-internet-protocol service and instant messaging client
- ...is a hybrid peer-to-peer and client-server system
- ...makes use of background processing

But this is neither communicated nor relevant to consumers.

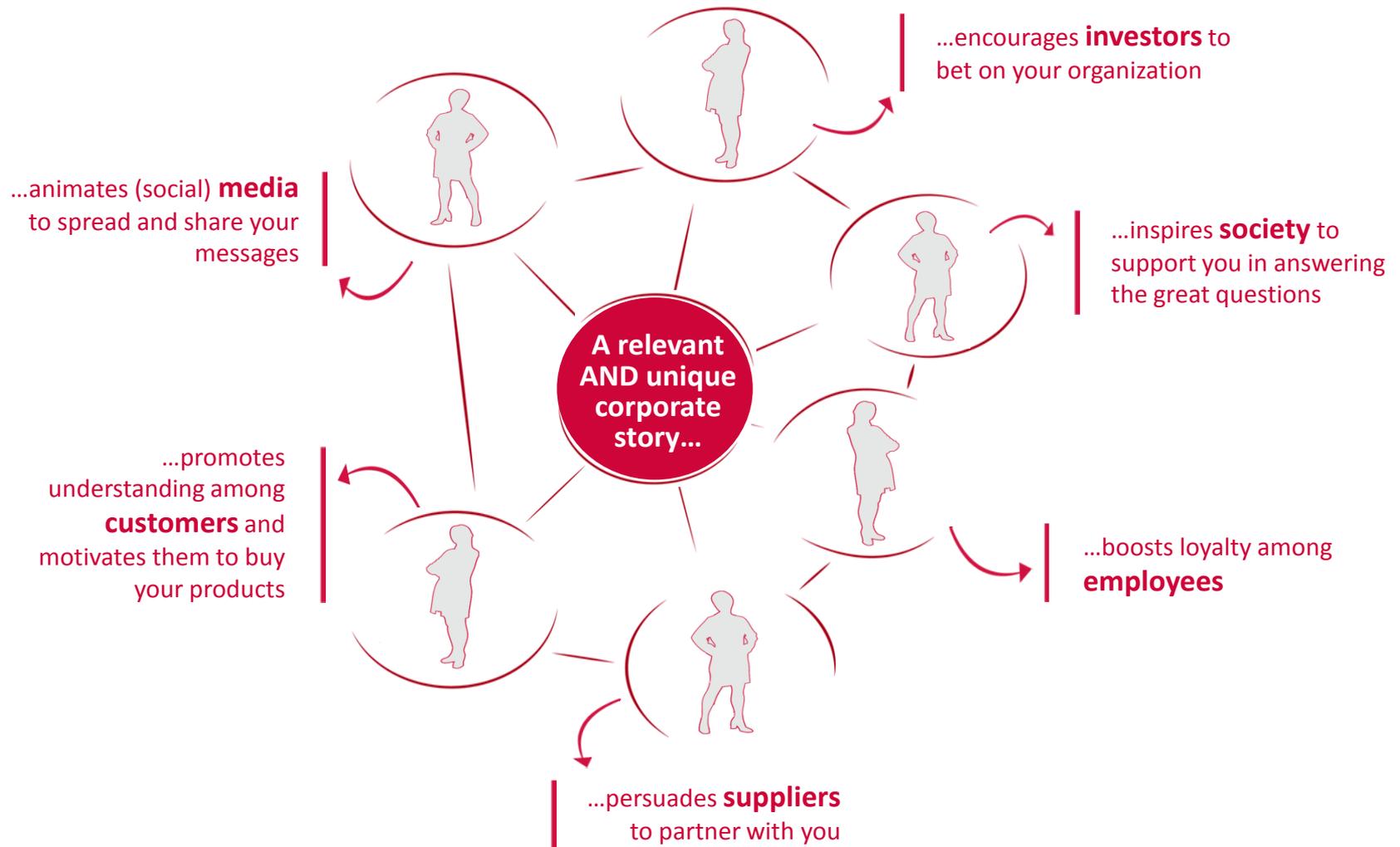
The story that is told is all about...

- ...bringing together faraway friends and family – face to face
- ...bonding closely despite physical distance
- ...sharing each other's world



Source: Skype

Corporate stories have a strong impact on all stakeholder groups



Mind share before market share – a new dimension of corporate communications

As digital publishing and sharing tools transform our personal and working routines, the concept of reputation building has changed. Social media, in particular, has enabled organizations to have direct conversations with their stakeholders.

And more than ever, stakeholders demand the added value of emotional bonds and meaningful context. They want to identify with the organization and therefore need a powerful story fitting to their moral views.

Organizations should therefore not only focus on conquering market share but – first and foremost – on conquering share of mind.

78 percent of CMOs think content is the future of marketing.

Source: Hanley-Wood Business Media, 2013

But content alone does not change the game.

Only stories have the potential to be noticed, retold and spread virally.

Therefore, storytelling is a skill that every

organization needs to master.

Building relationships through stories is key for organizations to be relevant and successful.

Developing the right story

Developing a corporate story is not solely a marketing exercise, since in the ideal case it integrates and consolidates an organization's portfolio, mission and business model – and communicates it all in an inspiring way to achieve the organization's overall objectives. Therefore, finding the right story is an integrated quest, bringing together and aligning all relevant internal decision makers. In order for them to be part of the process, and in order to guarantee their commitment to 'live' the story once it is in place.

Development process overview

- #1** Asset and market check
- #2** Internal inspiration journey
- #3** External inspiration journey

#1 Asset and market check

A story has the potential to inspire an organization from within, but it must never be a lie. Understanding the organization's positioning, its assets, current business situation and strategy therefore is the first important step.

Next in line is a thorough understanding of the overall market and competitor landscape, of gaps and 'vacant' topics. As every story is addressed towards an audience, one should not forget to include the perspective of key stakeholders. With an in-depth analysis including surveys and interviews, the perceptions can be revealed.

#2 Internal inspiration journey

Unique and innovative storytelling opportunities must be proactively explored and identified. This can come from within. When business and functional departments maintain a constant channel of communication, collaborate and inspire each other, each gains insights into possibilities that would otherwise have remained undetected. This is how breakthrough storylines are born.

There are several ways to spot compelling stories from within the organization – by looking at what it does with a fresh and open-minded view:

Leveraging combinations and synergies: communication umbrellas and meta-topics serve to jointly communicate portfolios or products from different business units in inspirational ways

Betting on new business areas: 'newcomer' segments or innovative products can sometimes hold more potential for unique, future-oriented stories than larger, more traditional segments

Developing opportunity gaps: outside-the-box thinking applied to proven products and their uses can open up benefits to new application areas, and therewith: interesting stories to tell

#3 External inspiration journey

Memorable stories should also be found and verified by going beyond the organization's universe. Global trend scouting gives insights on which topics could influence society in the future. Social media research reveals what really moves people, thereby serving as inspiring base for giving the story the right twist.

What makes a story vivid and unique?

#1 Being relevant

A story must be meaningful! Touching a hot topic in society and being inspiring is essential, but it is even more important that the story fits to the organization's mission, vision and values. Keeping the balance between inspiration and reality is key for a meaningful storyline.

#2 Appointing a hero

Every story needs a hero! The audience needs to identify with a character. Possible heroes for a corporate story could be the organization itself, the CEO, certain solutions, the employees or its clients.

#3 Integrating transformation

Failure is part of every good story! A story without peaks and valleys does not move its audience. A credible corporate story positions

conflicts in the foreground and shows how to overcome them.

#4 Arousing emotions

Emotions connect storyteller and audience! Choosing vivid language and intonation for the corporate story ensures emotional involvement and thereby fosters trust and support.

#5 Using media

A story needs to spread! Good stories are retold, but professionally positioning your story in the right media channels helps developing a story universe that is able to spread on a large scale.

#6 'Walk the talk'

A story has to be lived! Stakeholders can only be convinced with stories that are 'real'. By expressing a corporate story through initiatives, events, product design, customer service and so on, an organization shows that it is a storydoer – not only a storyteller.

How Red Bull lives its story

“Red Bull gives you wings” – a claim many young people around the world are aware of. A claim that marks the essence of Red Bull's storytelling approach: accompanying extreme athletes on their journey to new top performances, again and again.

But the brand does more than just tell its story: it puts it into action through its entire range of events and experiences. It makes dauntless people fly from frightening heights and men jump from outer space with only a free-fall parachute.

‘Doing its story’ also pays off for Red Bull: the brand's messages spread themselves, saving the company precious media budgets.



Source: Red Bull

Bringing a story to life – with a detailed communication plan

Even the best story does not tell itself. It needs to be brought to life through systematic planning and long-term ‘staging’.

One story can have different messages, and not every message needs to be told in every channel or to everybody.

A detailed communication plan

therefore defines the overall strategy and adjustment possibilities for certain markets and target audiences, as well as roles and responsibilities.

To ensure that all communication channels present the story coherently and consistently when it comes to content and visual execution, internal as well as external communicators (including agencies) need to be properly briefed and steered. The availability of implementation tools

can greatly support this process.

For example, message matrices and fact books provide all relevant and communicable information. Campaign manuals give a thorough overview on design requirements and adaptation needs for different topics, markets, business units and channels.

Only by managing the project lifecycle meticulously, the power of storytelling can be fully unleashed.

The Siemens Newsroom

The days when consumers were stuck to certain media or devices are over – today’s lines are blurry. Siemens reacted to this global trend by mirroring these vanished borders within its organizational structure.

It tore down the walls between communication departments by setting up the ‘Siemens Newsroom’ and appointing its employees as story architects, creating an inspiring mind shift: they do not think in channels anymore, they think in stories – no matter when and how they reach Siemens’ stakeholders.



globeone Corporate Storytelling Process

#1 Asset and market screening:

- Understanding of current business situation, positioning and key objectives
- Analyzing market and competitors for ‘blank spots’ and trend topics
- Identifying internal and external stakeholders’ perception of the organization

#3 Setting up the story concept:

- Aligning hard and soft factors to filter out the final corporate story
- Defining the key topic for your story, incl. messages, proof points, dramaturgy, etc.

#5 Bringing the story to life:

- Developing content for each measure based on predefined messages and channels
- Roll-out of COM activities and orchestration with regards to content, consistency, timing
- Agency steering and stakeholder coordination to ensure smooth project flow

#2 Systematic inspiration quest:

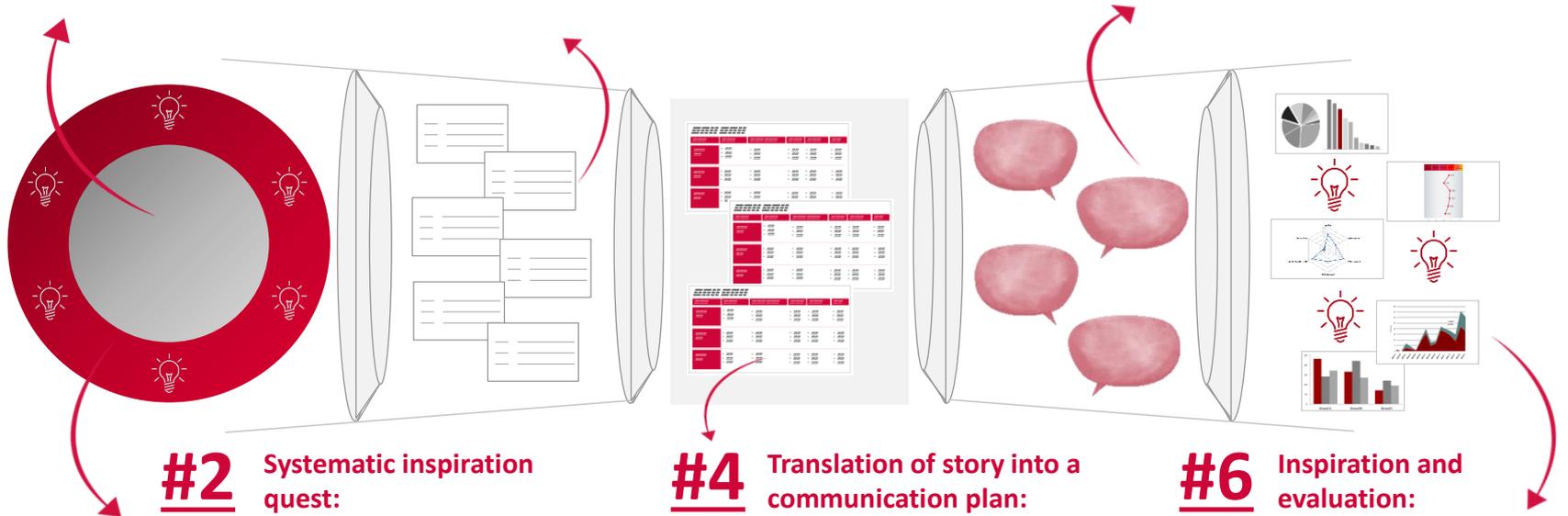
- Establishing cross-departmental routines enabling a fresh perspective and new insights
- Trend scouting and social media research to identify promising topics with long-term impact

#4 Translation of story into a communication plan:

- Prioritizing marketing channels and activities into a tactical action plan
- Developing implementation tools such as message matrix and campaign manual for coherent execution of content and visuals

#6 Inspiration and evaluation:

- Documentation and analysis of global story performance
- Establishing internal platforms to discuss and identify optimization potential



Best practice

Qatar Foundation – Changing a country’s image



Qatar’s economy relies heavily on oil and gas. But reserves will not last forever. Therefore, Qatar is working on positioning itself as a knowledge-based economy towards global investor and talent pools – all under the communicative umbrella of “unlocking human potential”.

Qatar’s vision gave birth to Qatar Foundation, a non-profit organization built on the pillars of Education, Science & Research, and Community Development. Qatar Foundation encourages people from all over the world to create and innovate, providing them with the resources they need for it and by therefore contributing to the wellbeing of mankind.

In order to increase awareness globally and to drive the world’s most innovative thinkers and companies to Qatar, the “Think” campaign was launched (2009), later followed by the “Achievers” campaign (2011). Especially the “Achievers” campaign translates Qatar’s business objective to a highly personal level, depicting stories of twelve unique personalities that are part of Qatar Foundation. They share insights about their careers and achievements, but also about their childhoods and self-development.



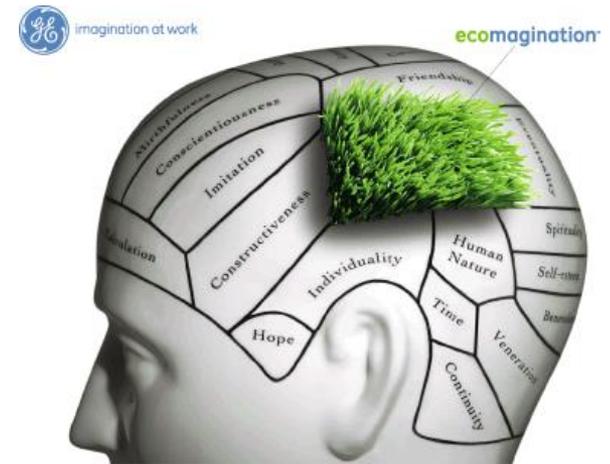
Best practice

General Electric – Meaningful stories that engage people

The impact of General Electric’s innovations is not always visible. Therefore the general public has difficulty identifying with the brand – if they are at all aware of it.

GE acknowledged the need to communicate its complex portfolio in a more relatable way in order to raise awareness and make clear that GE products and services aren’t just intangible and complicated parts for areas nobody is affected by, but solutions that enhance our everyday lives.

GE decided to communicate through stories which inform people about what the company contributes to – instead of what it sells. They give answers to questions such as “How is GE helping to develop a more ecological future?” Visually, the brand utilizes the power of images. Social media channels such as Tumblr, Instagram or Pinterest are used as further multipliers. The result: the GE story is being shared everyday by thousands of people.



Best practice

LANXESS – Megatrends reflecting the challenges of the future



The world is constantly in flux. New challenges confronting society have evolved into global megatrends.

Building on the salience of the topic in popular media, global specialty chemicals company LANXESS hinged its corporate communications on the most important problems of our time. It derived four megatrends – mobility, urbanization, agriculture and water – that are relevant to its complex business portfolio. They serve as the emotional agent that explains to all stakeholder groups how the company's solutions answer the most relevant problems the world faces today.

With the help of its communication activities, all dedicated to one of the megatrends, LANXESS could successfully position itself on its home market. Due to a well thought-out strategy and detailed global planning, the corporate story and its main messages could be easily adapted to international markets.

To reach its diverse stakeholder groups, different tools were used. For example, a special event series for the megatrend mobility, tailored to the needs of suppliers and potential business partners (e.g. OEMs), enabled LANXESS to showcase its automotive competence and to build and strengthen relationships, thereby creating huge business impact.



Who are we?

globeone is a **management consultancy** with a **focus on the world's key growth markets**. From our offices in Germany, South America, and across Asia, we combine global strategy and local opportunity to help brands with **market-driven positioning** where it matters most.

With special competence in **brand management, marketing strategy, communications and research**, we help ambitious leaders outsmart the competition.



Want to know more?

We're looking forward to hearing from you! Or visit us at www.globe-one.com



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Carina Hauswald is an expert in brand management and strategic market communications. Her profound marketing expertise has allowed her to create meaningful impact for DAX and MDAX listed companies. As an expert in the internationalization of corporate communications, she helps companies explore their untapped story potential and inspires them to bring the right story to life.



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Kristin Werner is a true storytelling enthusiast. With her experience in strategic corporate and market communications as well as journalistic skills she supports clients as story architect, creating vivid and unique stories. She designs communication plans which enable to unfold the full power of differentiating stories.

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