

‘Your Story is Told, Your Issue is Handled’

The Myth of Social Activity Corporate Storytelling in English-Speaking Business Communication in the Age of Technically Mediated Orality

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Abstract

In this article we focus on a specific form of business communication called storytelling. Storytelling is practiced in marketing, PR, and journalism. Storytelling is a common genre of oral communication also implemented into written texts. Storytelling in business communication is a form of persuasive communication directed towards the consumer. The story connects the product and the consumer. ‘Tua fabula narritur, tua res agitur.’ or ‘Your story is told, your issue is handled’. is the maxim of this identification effect. Storytelling is a narrative mode that in several ways binds the consumer to the product. The most effective elements of storytelling are evidence and the direct approach of the consumer. The narrative mode is a special mode of business communication.

1. The State of Research on Storytelling and Discourse of Mass Media Communication

Towards a Business Communication Model of Applied Storytelling in Management

The sentence ‘Your story is told, your Issue is handled’ (‘Tua Fabula Narratur, Tua Res Agitur.’) refers to the relation between storytelling and activity. It described the relationship between storytelling in corporate business and the enterprises and activities of a business. We use here the expression myth of social activity to describe the function of storytelling in

business communication. Storytelling is here used to involve the consumer in social actions of a reality that presents a product or business as a positive asset in a positive surrounding created by the company and promoted through marketing, public relations, and advertising. Entering this created 'world of assets' is for the consumer possible, when consuming the product or using the service offered. In the following chapters we will present a theory and study examples of the application of storytelling in business communication. The 'age of mediated orality' is a phrase we use to describe the 21st century with its availability of hyper media that allow instant communication nearly with the same flow and fastness like in storytelling in a real oral communicative exchange.

Nerone wrote in the article *Narrative News Story* in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication* about the oral tradition as earliest form of the distribution of news:

"The term "narrative news story" refers most broadly to any sort of nonfiction storytelling, but more specifically to a news story that begins with an anecdote rather than a summary lead and then is organized in temporal sequence rather than either by inverted pyramid style or analytically."

(Nerone)

On the U.S. American website *Creating the 21st Century* in the article *Storytelling: Passport to Success in the 21st Century* initiated by the museum-based continuing education program of the Smithsonian Associates was written: "Why is there a resurgence of interest among today's business and organizational leaders in the ancient art of storytelling at a time when electronic communications might seem to make it obsolete? Human beings have been communicating with each other through storytelling since we lived in caves and sat around campfires exchanging tales. What is new today about the art of telling stories is the purposeful use of narrative to achieve a practical outcome with an individual, a community, or an organization. (*Creating the 21st Century*) Schwartz (2004) discusses the role of listening and storytelling in business and government communication. Terez (2002: 22) focuses on the

application of storytelling in business and employee management. Kahan (2001: 26) focuses on the use of storytelling in managing an organization for knowledge sharing. Hart (2011) in his article presents suggestions to authors of narrative nonfiction for writing dialogue that does not violate journalism ethics. Timbs (2003: 24) in *Storytelling Key to Good Journalism* emphasized the importance of the storytelling element of journalism. Giles (2004: 8) discussed storytelling as a form of narrative journalism. Schwartz (2004) discusses the role of listening and storytelling in business and government communication. Terez (2002) in *The Business of Storytelling* focused on the application of storytelling in business and employee management. Hicks (2000) in *Leadership Through Storytelling* and Haigh (2005) in *The Leader's Guide to Storytelling: mastering the art and discipline of business narrative* discussed the same topic. Kahan (2001) wrote in *Bringing Us Back to Life: Storytelling and the Modern Organization* about the use of storytelling in business life. McLellan wrote in *Introduction to Corporate Storytelling*: “Stories, including narratives, myths, and fables, constitute a uniquely powerful currency in human relationships. Stories speak to both parts of the human mind - its reason and emotion. Stories provide a tool for articulating and focusing vision. Stories provide a medium of communication, both internally within an organization and externally to customers, potential customers, business partners, business rivals, investors, and others.” (McLellan)

Methodological Considerations

Now we look at the way a company can deal with storytelling as a fixed element of management and business communication. This element of storytelling must of course not be the only element of communication.

Management	Business Communication
Derivery of aims and goals in storytelling	Marketing Mouth to mouth propaganda Texts with storytelling
	PR Mouth to mouth propaganda PR releases and kits with storytelling

<p>Customers success stories Company-legends</p> <p>Advertising Advertisement with Storytelling</p> <p>Journalism Journalistic writing with elements of storytelling Special forms with storytelling: Features, human-interest-stories</p>
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Illustration 1 - Applications of Storytelling in Management and Business Communication

Types of Storytelling

Already ancient Greek scholars distinguished between two modes of speech: The *logos* and the *mythos*. *Logos* is the words of reality in the logical mood of speaking, while the *mythos* refers to a speech mode of narrating. Barthes wrote in *Mythologies* about the use of the myth in the 20th century: "Myth hides nothing and flaunts nothing: it distorts; myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflection. Placed before the dilemma which I mentioned a moment ago, myth finds a third way out. Threatened with disappearance if it yields to either of the first two types of focusing, it gets out of this tight spot thanks to a compromise - it is this compromise. (...) But for the myth-reader, the outcome is quite different: everything happens as if the picture naturally conjured up the concept, as if the signifier gave a foundation to the signified: the myth exists from the precise moment when French imperialism achieves the natural state: myth is speech justified in excess." (Barthes) We can distinguish several types of storytelling according to the way the story is told as a report a legend, or a myth.

Storytelling as narrative of myth

Storytelling as narrative of legend

Storytelling as narrative of report

Illustration 2 - Types of Storytelling

The main branches of professional business communication are journalism, public relations, and marketing. Here we find storytelling in various forms suitable to the branch.

Storytelling in Journalism	Feature, Human Interest Story
Storytelling in Marketing	Legend of a Founder of a Company
Storytelling in Advertising	Celebrity-Story
Storytelling in Public Relations	Storytelling in PR release

Illustration 3 - Examples of Storytelling in the Main Branches of Professional Communication

2. The Age of the Discourse of Mass Media Communication

The Importance of Storytelling in Business Communication and Marketing

The International Encyclopedia of Communication writes about marketing communication: "For the sponsoring organization, the role of marketing communications includes distributing information, promoting image and reputation, creating and stabilizing product and service demand, emphasizing features and benefits, providing competitive differentiation, generating sales leads, ensuring customer retention and loyalty, and motivating staff." (*The International Encyclopedia of Communication*) Storytelling is classified as a topic-chaining discourse (cf. also: *Cengage Learning Intercultural Communication*: 123, 375, 389–390). In *The Importance of Storytelling in Marketing* Dunford on the website *Rocket Watcher* wrote about the importance of storytelling in marketing:

"Tell me a fact and I'll learn. Tell me a truth and I'll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.

The most common problem I see in smaller companies is the inability to describe what they do in simple language (read my post on that

here). The second biggest problem is bringing that description to life with stories.”

(Dunford)

Dunford wrote about the story about a product:

“Characteristics of a good product story

1. Clearly illustrates the product’s unique value (...)
2. Short, and easy to tell and memorable (...)
3. Relevant to your target customers (...)
4. Illustrates measurable, concrete results (...)

(Dunford)

Dunford mentioned the credibility of authentic stories coming from customers: “I once had a customer say (on video no less) that our product was saving his company ‘A million dollars a day’.” (Dunford) Benun wrote in *Marketing is Storytelling* at the website *The Small Business Advocate*:

“A little drama doesn't hurt either.

You can also use your own story in your marketing. It may be appropriate for you to tell the life story of your business to a prospect to illustrate how you came to do what you do; then again, it may not be.

(...)

Storytelling

That's right, because ultimately, business stories are human interest stories and every reporter is looking for a good story. In fact the press refers to the articles they write as stories. Here are 4 things you need to give the press to help them tell your story:

1. Personality (...)
2. Facts & figures (...)
3. Anecdotes (...)
4. Details that reveal (...)

(Benun)

Storytelling as Professional Communication in Journalism

In her blog *A Storied Carrer in Four Pronouncements about Storytelling in Journalism* a journalist wrote about storytelling in journalism demonstration the culture of citation of this business up to a degree of unintended ironification that documents the semi-oral tradition of professionals paraphrasing and quoting other professionals of their field: "Here are four (somewhat) recent pronouncements about storytelling in journalism: When storytelling is reduced to content, ideas die. These were the words of Gary Goldhammer in an impassioned blog entry called *The Last Newspaper*. Goldhammer imagines a character, Daniel, who has purchased the last newspaper ever to be published and is answering questions from curious onlookers and telling them about how "what they now refer to as 'content' used to be called 'stories,' delivered by trained individuals known as 'storytellers' and 'journalists.'" (...) In fact, storytelling is essential to new forms of journalism, which is pretty much what Amanda Michel, editor of distributed reporting at the investigative outlet ProPublica, says in an article about her on the Columbia Journalism Review site by Megan Gerber. "Journalism Plus" is one term these new forms of journalism (Robert Scoble coined the term, reports Josh Halliday in InJournalism magazine.) Medium is immaterial to those who espouse Journalism Plus. Halliday quotes student editor Greg Linch: "Journalism is not about the medium — it's about the story. Audio and video helps the subject tell [his or her] own story. Multimedia storytelling allows us to do better journalism." (Hansen) What makes this example of the professional's statement about storytelling interesting is that the assemblage of paraphrases, quotation, and citations of the sources with trivial statements put together is a typical feature of storytelling in a literal form; quoting material from other oral sources in order to tell about an issue in a narrative is common process in the original cultures of storytellers. It is part of an oral culture based upon repetition, which aims to document and communicate information in stories. But Hansen here in her article tells *nolens volens* the story of the U.S. journalism market in the early 20th century that changed with upcoming new media like the blog as a tool for journalism showing the literary oral tradition of wandering information in the age of the internet.

Storytelling as Professional Communication in Marketing and Public Relations

In *The Importance of Storytelling in Marketing* Dunford wrote about the characteristics of a good product story: "Clearly illustrates the product's unique value – A great story that illustrates the value of any product in your segment isn't all that useful. It needs to highlight the differentiating value of your product. Short, and easy to tell and memorable – You want sales folks, marketers, and customers to tell the story." (Dunford) Dunmore wrote in *Inside-out Marketing: How to Create an Internal Marketing Strategy*: "Information is segmented by business sector and unit for ease of finding information that is directly relevant to the people working in those areas." (Dunmore 2002: 145) Nicolson wrote in *Storytelling Rules & Writing Better Press Releases* on the Website *PR Newswire*: "Everything is a story. Stories are how we make sense of the world around us, how we communicate, how we reach out and touch others. Press releases, videos, podcasts, blog posts, tweets... They're all forms of storytelling, even the driest financial statement has at its heart the story of a company's performance. (...).

Rule 1. Know your audience.

Rule 2. Give your audience what they need to achieve their goal.

Rule 3. Help your audience tell the world about your story."

(Nicolson)

Storytelling in Management

In *Storytelling an Important Part of Change Management* Rick wrote in his blog: "What do stories have to do with change management? Storytelling can be a powerful tool when you want to drive organizational change. There's nothing new about storytelling. Long before we had books and newspapers, telephones and telegraphs and the internet and our ancestor's sat around the fire and told stories. More than storytellers, we're story consumers. And, compared to the great quantity of management tools, few leadership tools are available to the manager. One of the few – and one of the most effective – is storytelling." (Rick) Taylor

wrote in *The Aesthetics of Management Storytelling. A Key to Organizational Learning in Management Learning*: "An aesthetics perspective on storytelling contributes to an understanding of how and why some stories are more effective than others. Three ideas about the nature of aesthetic experience— that it is (1) felt meaning from abductive reasoning, (2) characterized by feelings of connectedness, and (3) enjoyed for its own sake— supply criteria for identifying story quality and suggest how to make stories more effective. This idea of good and bad stories informs every aspect of management storytelling, which we illustrate by reviewing the functions of management storytelling using Mintzberg's taxonomy of the roles of the manager. Furthermore, through Mintzberg's taxonomy, we show the contributions of aesthetically strong management stories to organizational learning." (Taylor 2002: 313) For the functions of storytelling we look at professional management organizations that describe storytelling. Frost wrote in the article *Storytelling* of the website *Knowledge Management Tools*: "Storytelling is a very old technique, dating back throughout most of human history. The practice is embedded into our culture; it was the primary form of family entertainment before the television (which is a different medium for story telling), it is mastered by competent politicians and journalists, and it remains as one of the most effective ways to reach someone and move them with your message." (Frost) Frost mentions as functions of storytelling in business communication sharing of norms and values, the development of trust and commitment, sharing of tacit knowledge, the facilitation of unlearning, and the establishment of emotional connections." (Frost) Barone wrote in *Storyteller Marketing: The Art of Storytelling Matches Up With the Business of Marketing*: "You and the 50 other million marketers need to be out there. To be heard, you need to be creative, aggressive and consistent. All stories should illustrate and support your core brand promise/value proposition. Use a combination of syndication and promotion to help get a maximum retention of your message. In order to get the maximum amount of results from your storytelling campaign, you need to keep at it for three years. The Apple/Mac story is five years old. The fresher you keep an old story line, the more you're going to get out of it." (Barone)

Storytelling as Professional Communication in Advertising

Sherrett wrote in *Storytelling for Advertising Creatives* in the *AdHack Blog* (22 July 2009): "As humans we're hardwired for stories. We tell them to make sense of the world. We hear them, read them and watch them to learn about the world." (Sherrett) In the article *Advertising Media. Why Storytelling And Social Media Need Each Other To Survive* published online by *WordPress* was written: "Social media needs powerful storytelling to thrive, just as brand storytellers must now embrace social media." (*WordPress*) Fouts wrote in *Use Storytelling to Create More Engaging Business Communications*: "As business communicators, we're not looking for the intricate plot either. Our job is to communicate how our companies solve ordinary, everyday business problems. You can easily adapt Chekhov's three part storytelling model to tell more engaging stories about you or your company." (Fouts) In *Marketing Through Stories: The Selling Power of Narrative* Andrea Learned wrote: "Brands like Kleenex, Dove, Hitachi, Kashi and Donovan are delivering their features and benefits through engaging stories about customers and employees. (...) Facts and figures, specifications and price all still matter, for certain. But it takes stories to connect with customers on an emotional level." (Learned) Benun wrote in *Marketing Is Storytelling*:

"Storytelling. That's right, because ultimately, business stories are human interest stories and every reporter is looking for a good story. In fact the press refers to the articles they write as stories. Here are 4 things you need to give the press to help them tell your story:

1. Personality (...)
2. Facts & Figures (...)
3. Anecdotes (...)
4. Details that Reveal."

(Benun)

3. Examples of Storytelling in Business Communication

3.1. Storytelling in the Mass Media I: The Example of Marketing a Brand

Storytelling as Business Communication: Stories of Daimler Benz

On the Mercedes-Benz website the marketing and advertising is presented on a website called *Brand World*. (International Website of *Daimler Benz*). Mercedes Benz on the website creates a self-representation with topics like *How It All Began*, *Gallery of Legends*, and *Magic Moments in Racing History* for the Mercedes-Benz Museum. (Mercedes-Benz Museum) On the contrary, the history of Enzo Ferrari is a biography of this person with photographs presented on the website of *Ferrari*. (*Ferrari*) The German marketing company *Hilker Consulting* wrote: "Customers, business partners and employees to understand the large and small relationship of a company. They ask for storytelling: they want to hear stories about your company, your products and the maker. The foundation of storytelling is the foundation narrative. It covers the history and structure of a company or organization." (*Hilker Consulting*) Fog, Budtz, and Yakaboylu (2005: 164) wrote in *Storytelling: Branding in Practice* that Mercedes collected full data on 1 4000 prospective drivers. In *The History Behind the Mercedes-Benz Brand and the Three-Pointed Star* was written: "If you're a regular reader of *eMercedesBenz*, you're no doubt familiar with the origins of the Mercedes-Benz brand and the three-pointed star. But for those of you who are just joining us or those of you who may have missed our past coverage on the subject, Daimler today has published a refresher course detailing briefly the historical milestones that led to the Mercedes-Benz we know and love today. A few of the topics covered include where the name Mercedes was derived from, what led to the introduction of the three-pointed star and what the star symbolizes. Also shown are the various incarnations of the logo over the years, each of which played an instrumental role in helping shape one of the most recognizable brands in existence. To view these and a host of other details regarding the history of the Mercedes-Benz brand, you can find more info in the official press release below." (*The History Behind the Mercedes-Benz Brand and the Three-Pointed Star. Gottlieb Daimler and Carl Benz.*) The

Mercedes-Benz Museum is a museum that documents in a single continuous timeline over 120 years of auto industry history from its very beginnings to the present day with 160 vehicles and over 1,500 exhibits.” For the system Android Mercedes Benz developed the *Mercedes-Benz Classic app* allowing users to gain access to all 160 vehicles within the Mercedes-Benz museum tours. *EMercedesBenz* is an online publication dedicated to covering the Mercedes-Benz, Maybach and smart brands. Learn more. Readers are asked to contribute to the stories about the companies asking “Have A Story? Do you have a great Mercedes-Benz story you can't find on our site? Let us know.” (EMercedesBenz)

3.2. Storytelling in the Mass Media II: The Example of the Feature in Journalism

Works like Hart’s (2011) *How to Write Effective Dialogue in Narrative Nonfiction: A Longtime Editor and Teacher Shares Tips for Adapting a Fiction Tool to True Storytelling—Without Upsetting Journalism Ethics* and Giles’ (2004) *Thinking About Storytelling and Narrative Journalism* are practical contributions to writing journalism articles with storytelling. Ekstroem (2000: 465) discussed storytelling in TV communication. In *How to Write a Feature Story* on the website *eHow.com* is written that “a feature story is an essay written by a journalist or news reporter on varied subjects of human interest. It can be a profile of someone or about some event. It can also be about your pet, favorite food or dresses and so on. (...)

Developing the Feature Story

1. Come up with a catchy short headline. (...)
2. Follow a systematic path of presenting the feature story with an introduction, main
3. body and the ending highlighting the purpose that you have already thought about. (...)
4. Write an impressive introduction. It can be contain a thought-provoking question or an idea. (...)

5. Give a human touch to the feature story as deemed fit to make it more interesting. (...)
6. Insert facts or apparent facts depending on whether your feature story is based on real-life events or is fictitious.
7. Use striking illustrations and anecdotes relevant to the topic.
8. Conclude with a powerful message. (...)
9. Evaluate it as neutral reader as it can help improve the overall presentation of the feature story. (...)" (eHow)

Features are a narrative approach with scene-setting narrative parts. Other elements are pretending to be another person, 'human touch', interviews, a portrait of a particular person, background information, analysis, and an examination of the reasons. Ryan wrote in *Feature Writing of SNN Newsroom*:

"If you ask the question "how and why" things happen, then you probably like reading feature stories in newspapers and magazines.

What is a feature story?

A feature takes an in-depth look at what's going on behind the news. It gets into the lives of people.

It tries to explain why and how a trend developed.

Unlike news, a feature does not have to be tied to a current event or a breaking story. But it can grow out of something that's reported in the news." (Ryan)

3.3. Storytelling in the Mass Media III: The Example of PR and Advertising My World –Concepts in Marketing

Narrative Storytelling Elements of the Website of Tschibo

Narrative storytelling elements of the website of *Tschibo* include the segmentation into weekly changing offers, which derive all from one topic, the items are placed in a story, which is visually told using one or two models. The concept of 'my world' is here used to connect the customers with the products. *Tschibo* used the same models for a theme all

products are related to. The products of the week are presented in motion on photographs with the models in a special setting and isolated as items with a description. The length of one website telling one story can be long and supports this way the narrative construction.

Facebook or 'The Inversion of Storytelling'

Facebook reaches about 750 million people. *Facebook* offers advertisement in each language. In order to target the right group of persons, the persons can be selected according to place, age, and interests. Also the *Facebook* page can be used for the advertisement itself. In this example of social media the users create and tell a story of themselves; they inform other persons about their life and exchange information about their personal life. According to the needs of a successful story in corporate business, the story of the persons must be connected with the product or service the advertising company wants to sell. Here the information of the users according to needed selection criteria for a successful placement of an advertisement according to the targeting group. (*Facebook*) *Facebook Ads* release the following news of Leah Pearlman on November 7th, 2007 writing to the users of this social network: "You now have a way to connect with products, businesses, bands, celebrities and more on Facebook. Ads should be getting more relevant and more meaningful to you. You now have the option to share actions you take on other sites with your friends on Facebook. Engaging with businesses and buying things are part of your everyday life. Advertising doesn't have to be about interrupting what you're doing, but getting the right information about the purchases you make when you want it. We believe we've created a system where ads are more relevant and actually enhance Facebook." (*Facebook Ads*) Flores wrote in the *The New York Times* (March 3, 2010) about *Facebook*: "Eddie Izzard fans got an ad about testing an Apple iPad. Another offered to show viewers how their child by a celebrity would look. But the site's pages are also home to countless ads from smaller companies that can be funny, weird or just plain creepy — those suggesting you are, say, eligible to get a free *iPad* because you are exactly 26 years old, or entreaties to see what your offspring would look like if you had a child with a celebrity. Odd Web ads, like the dancing women promoting mortgage brokers, are not new. But on social networks like Facebook, where people go to

communicate with one another, advertisers seem to be trying especially hard to intrude on the conversation. The so-called self-service ads on the site, from the likes of video game start-ups, herbal supplement makers, sweepstakes companies and wedding photographers, are shown on the right side of most pages. Many advertisers who use the self-service system are tempted to go as far as possible in making ads that attract attention and appear relevant, aided by the information that people give to Facebook. “When it works, it’s amazingly impactful, but when it doesn’t work, it’s not only creepy but off-putting,” said Tim Hanlon, a principal at the consulting firm Riverview Lane Associates of Chicago. “What a marketer might think is endearing, by knowing a little bit about you, actually crosses the line pretty easily.”” (Flores)

Adams Creative is a U.K. based company for creative services in business communication describing the function of advertisements in the market and the services they offer as follows: “In today’s ultra-connected, mobile world, creativity is just the start. Employing a joined-up marketing strategy that incorporates the right combination of online and offline marketing tools is crucial. That’s why an integrated marketing agency like Adams Creative offers you the best chance of success. It means that when we prepare a strategy, we have every possible tool at our disposal to help us pursue your objective. Adams Creative has all the expertise in house to provide you with that striking website but also to ensure it ranks highly in search engines; to offer you a targeted email campaigns, but also to boost your brand profile through social media marketing.” (*Adams Creative*) This company uses a French Bulldog as an icon for the company, which contributes to the brand identity. This dog is also described in a personification: “He’s as stubborn as, well... a French bulldog. So Louis wants to be more than just our ‘poster boy’. Fair enough we thought; it’s about time he took his career to a new level. We’ve set him a new challenge and it’s a bit out of his comfort zone. Will he embrace his new role or revert back to pouting for the camera? Only time will tell. We’ll fill you in soon so make sure you check your emails to find out what he’s up to.” (*Adams Creative*)

4. The Narration as an Element of Persuasion and as a Feature of Storytelling in the Mass Media Management

The narration (*narratio*) has its systematic place in arts and sciences in the rhetorical system. Here it is the part of a speech in which is told what happened. Schmid wrote an introductory work with the title *Narratology: An Introduction* about narratology (Schmid 2010). Kearns wrote about narratology from the perspective of narration in *Rhetorical Narratology* (Kearns 1999). Abbott's definition of narrativity states: "Though it has become a contested term, "narrativity" is still commonly used in two senses: in a fixed sense as the "narrativeness" of narrative and in a scalar sense as the "narrativeness" of a narrative, the one applied generally to the concept of narrative, the other applied comparatively to particular narratives. As such, it can be aligned with any number of modal pairings: e.g. the lyricism of the lyric/a lyric; the descriptiveness of description/a description." (Abbot) We can distinguish the following text types:

Report	History
Description	Existence, Presence
Narration	Movement

Illustration 6 - Functions of Text Types

The science of naratology was described by Schmid (Schmid 2010). Boles in *Language of Media Literacy: A Glossary of Terms* wrote on narrative: "How the plot or story is told. In a media text, narrative is the coherent sequencing of events across time and space." (Boles)

5. Storytelling From Oral Tradition to Professional Business Communication: Mystification of the Product as Outcome of Storytelling

In *Elsevier's Economics Dictionary* the term technicians' myth (mythe techniciste, mito tecnicista, Mythos m der Technisierung) is used. (Lucca 2001: 570) Bignell described in *Postmodern Media Culture* by Colin Campbell the 'myth of social action' as a "powerful critique of contemporary sociology and a call to reject the prevailing orthodoxy." (Begnell

2000: ii) Barthes wrote in *Mythologies: The International Encyclopedia of Communication* writes about rhetorical studies and media: “In its modern use, freedom of speech means the freedom of communicating in a variety of formats, including but not limited to the spoken word. The right to communicate may vary from one medium to another, and when scholars and jurists discuss free speech, they focus on a broader freedom to communicate, rather than on the narrow right to speak orally. Therefore, “freedom of speech,” “freedom of expression,” “freedom of the press,” and “freedom of information” are often used interchangeably. Freedom of speech, under the US constitution, refers to the right to publish – that is, to write, speak, print, or broadcast information without censorship by the state.” (*The International Encyclopedia of Communication*)

Myth hides nothing and flaunts nothing: it distorts; myth is neither a lie nor a confession: it is an inflection. Placed before the dilemma which I mentioned a moment ago, myth finds a third way out. Threatened with disappearance if it yields to either of the first two types of focusing, it gets out of this tight spot thanks to a compromise - it is this compromise." (Barthes) Braun in *The Philosophy of Branding: Great Philosophers Think Brands* mentioned that Plato in his *Allegory of the Cave* taught in his dialogue about the dangers of brands that Plato “warned about creating ‘brands’ that exist for people only at a surface level – the level of immediate consumer experience. What he urged was the need for brands that are rooted in those fundamentals that constitute true reality. Many readers may have heard of Plato’s ‘Myth of the Cave’ – probably the most well-known part of the Republic. Far fewer people, however, know of his ‘Myth of the Brand’. I therefore set it out here in a shortened form. (Braun 2004: 67) Braun also interpreted Wittgenstein: “Both picture and reality, argues Wittgenstein, share the same ‘logical form’. Logical form The role of the brand is similar to that of the picture. What a brand does is to represent for us something that we value in the world at large. The brand in effect ‘stands for’ that something. To use a very simple example, Persil soap-powder in Britain in the 1960s was the ‘logical form’ of clean white clothes. Through the power and consistency of its communication, Persil ‘stood for’ whiteness.” (Braun 2004: 45) De Chernatony and McDonald wrote in *Creating Powerful Brands in Consumer, Service and Industrial Markets*:

“In marketing terms, myths are associated with powerful brands, such as Nike, Body Shop and Virgin. Myths provide a logical framework to overcome contradictions in society and successful brands capitalize on this. The myth of the ‘Persil Mum’ reconciles two opposites: the distance of a detached factory producing the detergent and the closeness of a loving member of the family taking care of the family needs.” (De Chernatony; McDonald 2003: 149)

Traditional non-professional storytelling is a part of the oral culture. Even early journalism, PR, and advertising ('word of mouth') have this character of storytelling. Storytelling is used for conveying events in a narrative form in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, and documentation and communication of cultural history and values. In Western business culture the use of a fictional storytelling techniques has the following features: It is concrete and easier to understand than abstract theoretical concepts. Storytelling in management is used as a tool to solve conflicts, when a direct action is impossible. It also can communicate the values and ethics of a company. Storytelling is also a tool of persuasion. In the business world storytelling is a persuasive tool supporting the aims of the branch of business communication and the management's aims and objectives. Modern management assumes that values are besides business objectives a part of a successful business. Unluckily, a product, be it a car or bet it a drink, does not possess any emotional or ethical values on its own. As a genuine product, a car *per se*, the values can derived from general qualities such as speed in the case of the car or from specific brand qualities like special production quality of the company. In other words: Any value that is not part of the product must be created. Creative professionals create such values and professional business communicators distribute the values. The values created and distributed must serve the aims and goals of the management. Storytelling is here a tool of business communication that serve management goals and aims that obvious cannot be communicated by the product on its own. The variety and redundancy of products from one genuine generic field, e.g. cars of different branches, makes it desirable that a branded product distinguishes itself from the other products. Here obviously a ‘world’ of the product is created, which serves needs and desires of a human. In other words expressed: The

product imitates genuine human functions. So it increased its sum of values. Let's look at the specific function of storytelling in a professional communication setting: We can compare the persuasive impact of the storytelling with speech as myth. Speech as mythos is a non-real speech that mystifies the issue told released from any concrete time and space. Actors, celebrities, or average-persons as narrating persons of this story present the product in a credible way and connecting it with abstract values and emotions.

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