

International Journal of Research in Marketing Management and Sales



E-ISSN: 2663-3337
P-ISSN: 2663-3329
www.marketingjournal.net
IJRMMS 2025; 7(1): 243-247
Received: 11-01-2025
Accepted: 17-02-2025

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Digital storytelling-A powerful communication tool to connect with customers

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26633329.2025.v7.i1c.231>

Abstract

Storytelling serves as a potent means of communication that resonates emotionally with individuals. Digital storytelling represents a contemporary approach to communication through various online platforms like Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube, among others. This storytelling idea is not entirely new; it has been around for a long time, as many of us recall how our parents or grandparents used to share stories to encourage values such as loyalty, faith, and education. The same principle applies to digital storytelling, where businesses aim to forge connections between customers and their brand's quality and loyalty, which helps draw customers towards their brand and fosters a strong bond between buyers and sellers. Once customers feel a sense of satisfaction and emotional attachment to a brand, they often promote it through word-of-mouth recommendations. This strategy successfully captures customer interest. Consequently, businesses can indirectly boost their profits, increase sales, and grow their presence in the market. The story being told must always be meaningful, captivating, and capable of attracting customers. To improve product sales or enhance brand visibility, companies are embracing the strategy of digital storytelling. The purpose of this research paper is to emphasize the impact of storytelling on consumers' attachment to brands, and to present it as an effective communication tool for business growth and success.

Keywords: Storytelling, communication, appealing, emotionally, brand

Introduction

Many of us recall how, in our childhood, we eagerly anticipated story time, excited to listen to tales from our parents or grandparents. The goal of these traditional storytelling sessions was to familiarize us with figures like kings, queens, princes, princesses, monks, and giants. Parents and grandparents enjoyed sharing these narratives with the hope of imparting moral lessons, and they felt a sense of fulfilment when they noticed positive changes in us. Thus, storytelling proves to be a powerful way to connect with someone on a deeper level. However, the contemporary form of storytelling is called digital storytelling; hence the craft of merging reality with creativity to communicate a message to your audience is known as storytelling. Certain stories are based on actual events, while others may be stretched or invented to highlight the main idea. Storytelling encompasses more than just visuals in marketing; it can also be expressed through various mediums like images, spoken words, or written text. This narrative approach can be shared via various platforms, such as social media and outdoor ads. Storytelling is considered one of the most impactful marketing strategies for building strong emotional connections with consumers, enhancing trust and credibility, and ultimately increasing sales and profits. In today's world, marketers are constantly exploring innovative methods to capture customer interest and lead them through every stage of their journey, from awareness and curiosity to desire, action, and advocacy. Narratives make sustainability efforts more relatable and significant. Compelling storytelling surrounding sustainability can: Enhance brand reliability by highlighting the authentic initiatives taken by a company. Distinguish a brand in a marketplace that is progressively focused on sustainability. The use of storytelling in advertising and marketing has created a stronger bond with consumers and increased brand loyalty. In a landscape crowded with distractions, narratives give marketers a competitive advantage by creating advertisements that resonate with consumers and remain memorable. Leading brands like Apple, Disney, Guinness, Coca-Cola, and Hyundai leverage storytelling to convey their messages successfully to their target audiences. Below are examples of brands that excel in the art of storytelling.

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Review of Literature

Rania Farouk Abdel Azim Nakhil ^[1]. This research examines the impact of storytelling as a method for brand engagement. In today's marketplace, connecting with customers has become increasingly challenging, prompting companies to engage emotionally using storytelling strategies. This approach effectively captures customer attention. As a result, businesses can indirectly enhance their profits, boost sales, and expand their market presence. The narrative must always be significant, appealing, and possess the power to draw in customers. In this research, the author aims to clarify the concept of a brand story, which encapsulates the brand's values and mission, thereby fostering a strong and enduring relationship with customers. The goal of this research paper is to evaluate how storytelling influences consumers' emotional attachment to the brand.

Patrícia Dias and Rita Cavalheiro ^[2] - This article explores the case study of the jewellery brand PANDORA. The primary aim of the study is to determine whether the storytelling strategy successfully engages customers with the brand. Findings from the study indicate that storytelling significantly contributes to the brand's business growth, as it fosters a strong emotional connection with customers.

Sudhir Kumar, Madan Prasad Shivajirao and Rajesh Verma ^[3]. This study explores how storytelling within content marketing affects consumer engagement and brand loyalty. In the current competitive landscape, companies are looking for more impactful and emotionally resonant strategies to foster innovation and business growth. This research delves into various methods to engage with customers through storytelling, utilizing videos, images, written content, and different social media channels. The paper clarifies how storytelling captures interest, fosters emotional connections, boosts profits and brand loyalty, creates memorable narratives, distinguishes brands, and encourages customers to make purchases.

Beata Zatwarnicka-Madura, Robert Nowacki ^[4]: The research investigates the effective marketing communication strategy of advertising to help businesses succeed in the competitive toy industry. Companies are exploring digital storytelling as it attracts more customers and provides emotionally resonant narratives. This article analyses the potential of storytelling as a means to improve the effectiveness of advertising messages, drawing on current research findings about how these messages are received. The authors emphasize the key criteria for implementing storytelling and trends associated with creating advertising narratives, and they present selected findings regarding its influence on message recipients.

Charmaine du Plessis ^[5]: The research explores the journey of the Coca-Cola brand and illustrates the experiences of various customers by utilizing narratives from both traditional and contemporary media sources. To draw in customers, companies create visuals, texts, or stories that emotionally resonate with their audience regarding that specific brand. All visuals, texts, and stories are original. Brand storytelling is considered one of the most effective strategies for brand evolution, allowing companies to convey valuable brand-related content to consumers.

Mariana Santos de Matos Ramirez Fernandes ^[6]. This research examines how the marketing strategy of storytelling draws in customers. In today's competitive environment, captivating customers poses a significant challenge for businesses. Customers tend to be highly

focused on brands. The primary aim of this dissertation is to explore whether digital storytelling serves as an effective marketing communication tool for engaging Millennials, who have a unique perspective on brands, and to analyse its effect on value creation for companies. The findings indicate that customer responses to storytelling are largely positive, allowing businesses to foster trust, loyalty, emotional attachment to the brand, and increased involvement.

Henric Johnler and Amanda Olsen ^[7]-This research examines how storytelling influences the brand equity of consumers. It also asserts that a storytelling approach creates an emotional bond with customers, leading them to perceive the brand as aligned with their own values and beliefs. Therefore, the findings of the study indicate that an engaging narrative consistently captures customers' hearts, enabling businesses to forge solid and meaningful relationships with their clientele through storytelling.

Katinka Weissenfeld, Hanna Krasnova and Olga Abramova ^[8]-The research illustrates how storytelling was a vital element during traditional times, indicating that it served as a powerful means of communication. In contrast, digital storytelling has now replaced traditional communication methods with customers. Digital storytelling refers to the interaction through online social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, and blogs; it has the ability to engage customers, enabling businesses to establish strong connections and emotional ties with their audience, making customers feel valued. These narratives resonate deeply with audiences, making them memorable. In digital storytelling, textual information is conveyed through digital formats like videos, images, or hyperlinks.

Carla Peho ^[9]-The research analysed the advantages and rationale behind using storytelling for brand development, while also investigating how brand narratives contribute to authenticity and emotional connection. According to the findings, storytelling is seen as a vital component for businesses, allowing them to stand out from their rivals by significantly boosting brand visibility. Stories have been sought after not just in the present, but for a long time, as they resonate deeply with people's emotions and intellect.

Kesha k. Coker, Richard Flight and dominic m. Baima ^[10]-The research outlines a method to address the challenge of consumer engagement, identifying video storytelling as the sole solution. This approach helps strengthen the connection between customers and their brands. The findings indicate that video storytelling is a significantly more effective tool than direct selling. Consumers develop an emotional connection to the brand, leading to increased trust and satisfaction. Additionally, these consumers act as advocates for the brand, spreading the word through word-of-mouth after forming that connection.

Research Gap

The literature review shows that digital storytelling is an effective communication tool for engaging customers, and it has been extensively examined in various businesses. However, the impact of digital storytelling on Indian businesses remains insufficiently explored. Hence, a research gap is identified in this field, which the current study seeks to address. In the contemporary digital landscape, consumer demand is growing increasingly, as they seek more information about products or services and yearn for unique experiences that resonate with them emotionally or psychologically. In this highly competitive

environment, it is challenging to distinguish ourselves from other competitors. This study is designed to bridge that gap by offering valuable insights and practical recommendations for businesses.

Objectives

- To study the impact of digital storytelling in building relationship with customers.
- To analyse and find out the different digital storytelling platforms using by businesses for increasing their profit and growth.

Significance of the Study

Digital storytelling presents a powerful way to connect with consumers, and this strategy is particularly effective for all Indian brands. When customers come across a narrative that truly resonates with them, they feel appreciated and special; these stories help create strong emotional connections. Building this emotional relationship with the brand is a vital first step toward achieving business success, after which the company is unlikely to regress. Businesses aim to improve their rapport with customers by fostering trust, confidence, and loyalty. Many large and small companies utilize this method of digital storytelling to achieve growth and success, including brands like Apple, Surf Excel, Dettol, Horlicks, and Cadbury, among others. As a result, it is crucial to examine and understand digital marketing strategies while building relationships with consumers. Thus, this study intends to identify the digital storytelling techniques that are vital for improving business performance and drawing in a wider range of potential customers.

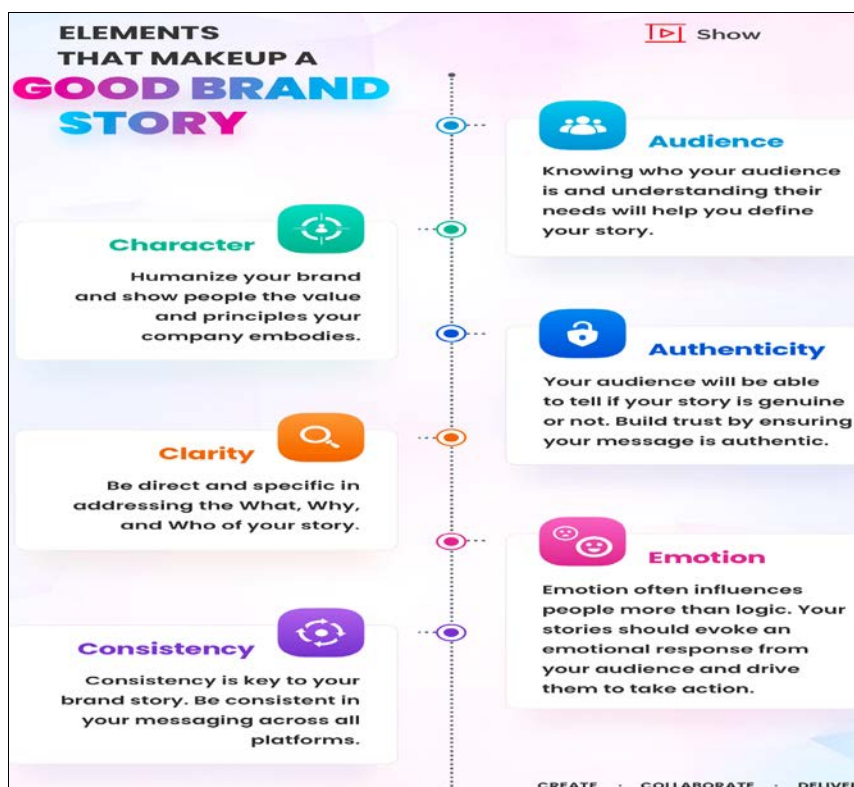
Methodology

This study uses secondary data to understand consumer behaviour, it analyses digital storytelling strategies, and for this purpose, information has been collected from published research journals, books, websites, and e-book sources.

Some Famous Brands Storytelling advertisement of India

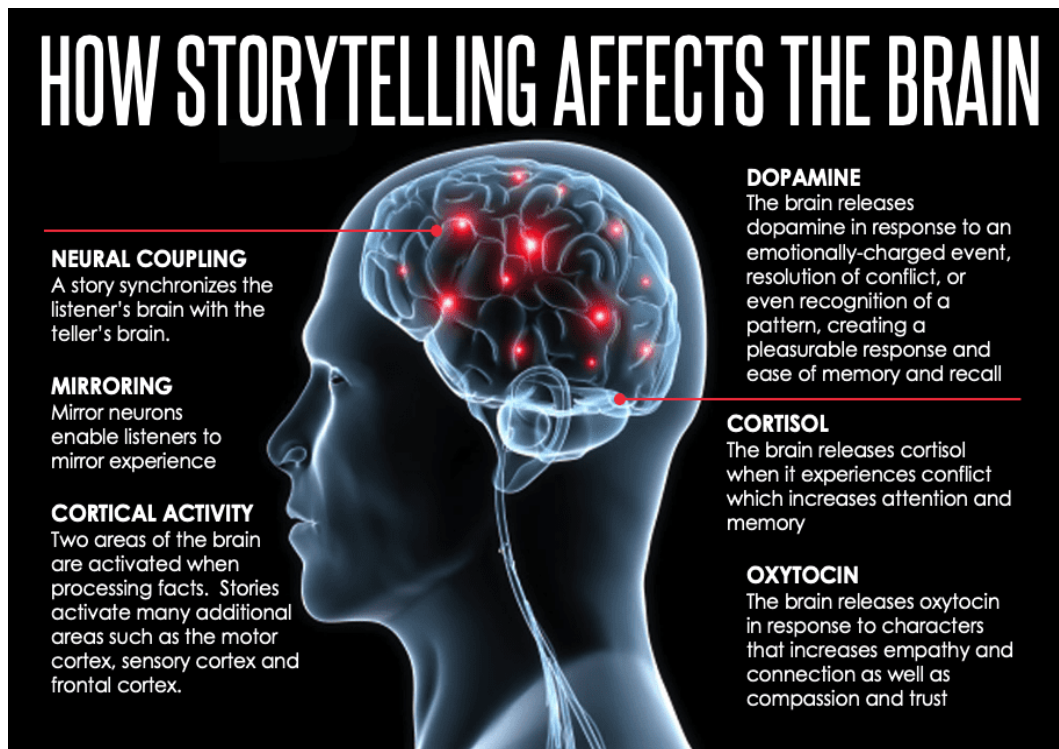
- **Bornvitta Tayyari Jeet Ki:** This is the digital storytelling of the Cadbury brand, where they communicate that in our pursuit of goals, we may stumble. However, we believe that these falls empower us to soar! This serves as a reminder to everyone to persist until you reach your objectives.
- **Surf Excel Daag Ache Hain:** Surf Excel is a detergent powder brand in India, owned by Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), which holds a strong position in the Indian detergent industry. We believe that each stain a child brings home signifies an experience; a lesson learned through the journey of play! In this campaign, a brother demonstrates the importance of caring for his sister and helps to create a smile on her adorable face. This brand creates an emotional bond with its customers.
- **Nestlé Maggi:** Nestlé has launched multiple advertising campaigns for Maggi noodles, such as the "Me & Meri Maggi" campaign commemorating 25 years of Maggi, and the "Rishte Maange, Bas Do Minute" campaign aimed at uniting families. This brand fosters a feeling of unity.
- **Tata Tea's "Jaago Re":** A Tata brand advertising campaign seeks to increase awareness of social issues, including corruption and voting rights. The initiative 'Jaago Re' is designed to 'wake up' the nation to the importance of holding the government accountable for various failures and motivates citizens to engage in the political processes of the country by casting their votes.
- **Amul-"Amul Dudh Peeta Hai India":** This is a brand called Amul that motivates children to consume milk and enhances their energy levels. This brand also builds an emotional connection with its customers.

Elements of a Good Brand Story



Source:-<https://www.zoho.com/show/chronicles/how-brands-use-storytelling-to-shape-their-identity.html>

How Storytelling Affects the Brain



Source: <https://www.pamelarutledge.com/story-power-the-psychology-of-story/>

Limitations of the study

The study did not cover additional domains of digital storytelling such as education and health, or brands related to products or services, so the results should be understood specifically in relation to certain brands. This research depends exclusively on secondary data. Information was sourced from a variety of places, including scholarly articles, internet resources, journals, and other publications. There is a lack of available data on this topic.

Conclusion

The research offers an in-depth insight into how digital storytelling engages customers. It underscores the significance of establishing relationships with customers through various digital storytelling strategies. In today's competitive environment, businesses encounter substantial obstacles in retaining existing customers and attracting new ones. As a result, numerous leading brands are adopting digital storytelling in their marketing strategies, acknowledging it as a powerful means of conveying messages and fostering strong connections with their audience. Storytelling acts as a valuable tool, enabling companies to prosper and maintain their relevance in the market. By adopting this strategy, brands can cultivate strong and favourable relationships with both their existing and potential customers. This research paper will be beneficial for scholars, students, and educational institutions.

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