

Step Three

Module Four

Mini Lesson Guide

the
marketing
Democracy™

Welcome!



Great stories can travel across time and across different channels. Today's media world is made for storytelling. Each channel can add a new dimension. Gone are the days of repeating the same message over and over. We are going to introduce you to a technique known as Transmedia Storytelling that will help you to determine how to best tell your story across marketing channels that matter for your business.

- Judy

Module Overview

In this module, we are going to focus on four key ideas:

- In [Lesson One](#), you will learn what makes a story a "transmedia" story.
- In [Lesson Two](#), you will learn how to evaluate what certain marketing channels do really well, and align your storytelling to the strengths of each channel.
- In [Lesson Three](#), you will learn to structure your transmedia story in layers that reward your most loyal followers with their own pieces of the story.
- In [Lesson Four](#), you will learn that marketing stories do not have a clear beginning, middle, or end. You will learn to create multiple entry and exit points in your story.

To help you determine how your story can unfold across different channels, you can purchase a "Storytelling Media Map." This downloadable PDF is fully functional if you open it in Adobe Acrobat Reader. Be sure to click on the "listen" icon in the lower right-hand corner to learn more about this helpful tool. And, for additional inspiration, you can watch the real-world example video to see this lesson in practice.

Congratulations on taking this important step in your journey to developing world-class marketing for your business.



Lesson One

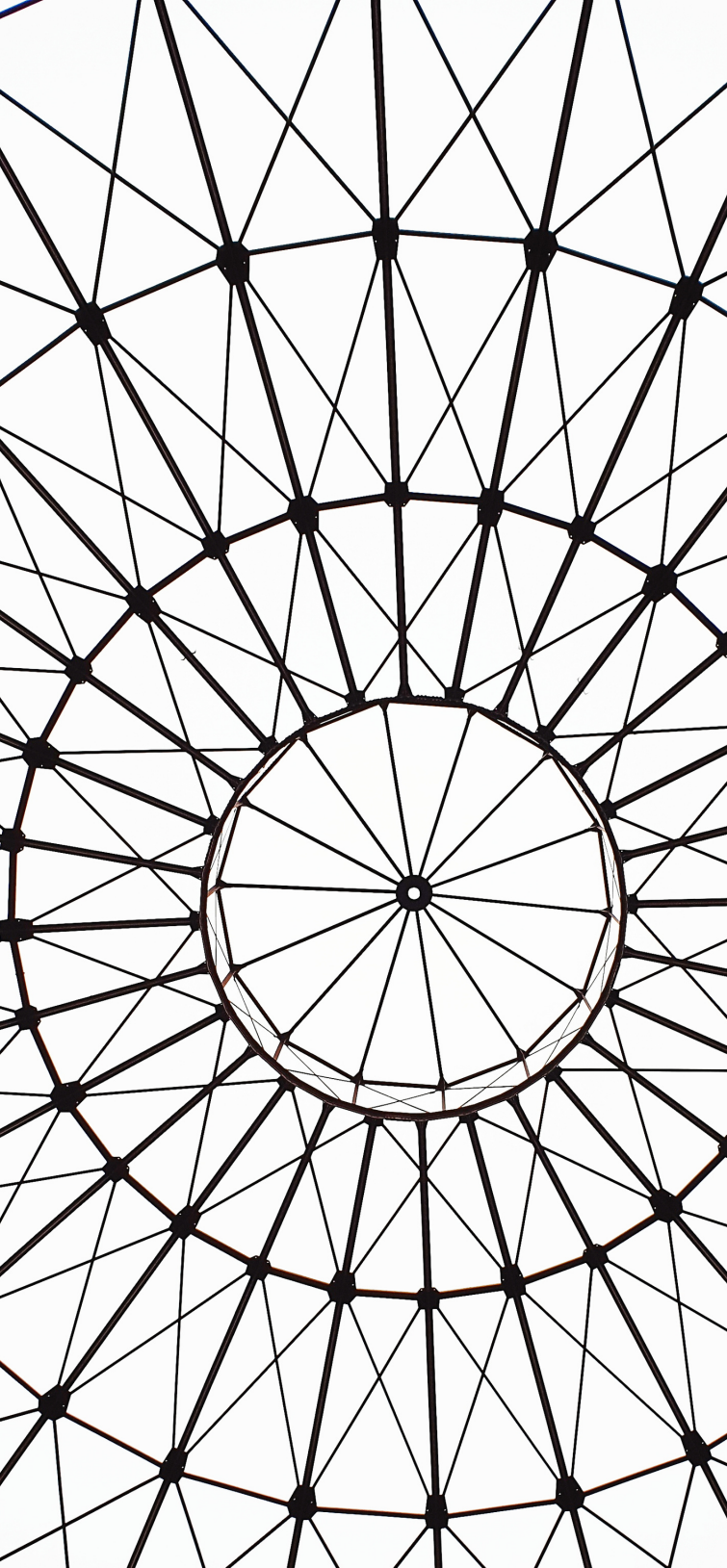
What Makes a Marketing Story a Transmedia Story?

Why This Matters

Once upon a time and not too long ago, stories were told in a single medium. Novels unfolded on the printed page. Movies were shown on the big screen, etc. Perhaps an iconic story would be adapted from one medium to another at different points in time. But it was rare that a story could be told in two different media at the same time. Thanks to digital media, we can now tell stories across different media channels at the same time. This opens up a world of possibilities for marketing communications. This lesson will introduce you to transmedia storytelling, what it is and how it works.

5 Key Takeaways

- Transmedia stories are stories that can travel across multiple media channels, whether they are paid media, owned media or earned media channels. Transmedia stories are told across multiple channels, concurrently.
- Transmedia stories tell unique pieces of the storyline in different media channels as opposed to repeating the same storyline in every channel.
- Transmedia stories reward audiences for crossing media channels to get new pieces of the story.
- The story element that is told in each channel must be able to work on its own. Transmedia stories are not mysteries or scavenger hunts. Each piece of narrative must stand on its own.
- Transmedia stories can be managed solely by the creator of the story, or it can be co-created by fans (whether formally or informally).



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Two, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Can you identify the key differences between stories that cross channels and a true, "transmedia" story? What are they?

Do you repeat the same basic message in every marketing channel? If so, you're missing an opportunity. The Storytelling Media Map can help you to utilize each channel to its fullest potential.

Is there room in your marketing communication for input from others? Or, do you prefer to fully control the narrative? Remember, word-of-mouth will always be out there, whether it's part of your story or not.

Lesson Two

Let Each Channel Do What It Does Best

Why This Matters

Transmedia storytelling opens up a world of possibilities for your brand stories and how to communicate these stories across different media channels. How do you know which channels to use to tell which parts of your story? This lesson will help you to make these decisions. It's not that difficult to create a channel strategy for your story once you strip away all the jargon in the industry today and focus on the fundamentals. Different media channels support different communication formats. It's that simple. You will learn how to match the communication format that best fits specific parts of your brand story to each media channel, accordingly.

Key Takeaways

-  We use different media for different reasons. Your marketing content should fit your customers' expectations for the channel.
-  You can classify today's media landscape into the following narrative categories: video, audio, visual and text-based. Think of how your story can be told in each of these formats.
-  Today's media landscape can accommodate both short-form and long-form story formats. Pace your story by using the right amount of time that you need.
-  Remember, social media is called "social" media for a good reason. If you use social media to carry elements of your story, you must tailor your story to encourage conversations and sharing.
-  Different media require different storytelling techniques. Make sure that you are working with skilled craftsmen for each media channel that carries your story.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Three, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Of the four main communication forms: visual, audio, video and text which are most appropriate for your business?

Are you being "social" in social media? Does your marketing in social media channels inspire a conversation?

Would you have an electrician fix a plumbing problem in your home? Of course not! Do you have the right skilled trades working on the right story formats?

Lesson Three

Reward Your Fans With Unique Content

Why This Matters

Transmedia stories provide you with an opportunity to reward your most loyal customers and followers with content that isn't available to everyone else. This is one of the most important lessons from transmedia storytelling. The best storytellers save special plotlines for their fans. The fans of any story are the most invested and they will do a lot of heavy lifting for the franchise by spreading ideas about the story to others. This lesson will help you to treat your most loyal customers and followers as fans of your brand story. You will learn how to reward them with unique ideas and incentives to make them feel special.

Key Takeaways

- 📍 Reward your most loyal customers and brand followers with unique pieces of your transmedia story that cannot be found elsewhere.
- 📍 Your direct marketing channels are a perfect opportunity to share unique story elements with loyal customers and brand followers. Direct marketing channels provide the opportunity to make your transmedia story personal.
- 📍 Take advantage of the groups (public or private) function on social media to share hidden pieces of your story. You don't need to own the group to contribute meaningful content to the group.
- 📍 Website functions are expanding to create special sections "for subscribers only." Give subscribers a reason to "go behind the wall." Just like magazine and newspaper websites that offer exclusive content for subscribers, you can, too!
- 📍 Seek out brand ambassadors (either organic or paid) and give them special pieces of the transmedia story that they can share and spread among their followers.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to Lesson Four, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of this lesson?

What special elements of your brand story can you reserve for your most loyal customers?

What communication channels do you currently have in place to directly engage with your most loyal customers?

Do you have Brand Ambassadors (either non-paid loyal customers or paid influencers) who can help to share your story? If you do, what pieces of your story can you hand over to them?

Lesson Four

Create Multiple Entry/Exit Points

Why This Matters

Marketing strategies look great on paper. Like any roadmap, we expect our customers to follow the exact journey that we lay out for them. In reality, the marketing journey is unpredictable. We can lay out a neat roadmap, and every customer will enter and exit on their own terms. If your brand story is structured in a fixed sequence, it's likely that your customers will get lost if they join the story "in progress." This lesson will illustrate how you can build your brand story in a way that anyone can catch on quickly, regardless of where and when they enter (and exit) the story.

Key Takeaways

- Unlike a linear story that flows in sequence from beginning to end, we can't control where or when someone will first see (or hear) a marketing message. You need to plan stories that can unfold in a non-linear way.
- Non-linear narratives have multiple entry and exit points. Nonlinear narratives allow each person to take the path that suits them best. Consumers will enter and exit based upon their needs vs your direction.
- Non-linear narratives require that audiences can catch on quickly without requiring too much background and back-story. That said, the background and back-story should remain available for those who opt-in to engage on a deeper level.
- Most audiences will first experience the story as part of their shopper journey or they will hear of it from someone else. Once they fulfill their needs, expect them to opt-out.
- Non-linear does not mean without any structure. You still need to organize your story elements in a thoughtful and disciplined way.



Ask Yourself

Before moving on to the action plan, take the time to reflect on this lesson.

Do you understand the five key takeaways that were presented at the beginning of the lesson?

Is your marketing communication easy for others to follow? Can someone see/hear your brand story and "get it" easily?

Do you have places (such as your website) where your customers can learn more background about you and your story if they so desire?

What tools do you currently use to create a structure for your story and to keep it on track? If your answer is, "We don't use anything," there's a Storytelling Media Map waiting for you!