

STORYTELLING WITH IMPACT

imix

What you will learn

In this Storytelling with impact resource, you will learn how to craft compelling narratives that effectively convey your organisation's mission, engage supporters, and drive meaningful change. You will explore the essential elements that make a story compelling, gain insights into crafting messages with impact, understand audience analysis, different strategies for sharing stories and ethical storytelling practices.

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- What makes a good story?
- Crafting messages
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- Ethics, consent and safeguarding



What makes a good story?

A good story resonates by evoking genuine emotions, offering educational insights, and empowering narratives, each contributing to its impact on target audiences.

Elements of a good story

- **Real emotion:** stories should evoke genuine emotions about things that matter to people.
- **Timeliness:** A good story is relevant and timely.
- **Real people:** An ordinary person in an extraordinary situation.
- **Perspective shift:** Helps audience see the world differently.
- **Journey:** Takes the reader on a journey.
- **Education and Empowerment:** Educates and empowers people with knowledge and gives context to numbers often shared in the news.
- **Surprising** or ironic turn of events.
- **Acts of kindness, courage or hard work:** Adds depth to the story.

Examples of powerful stories that embody these elements...



Nada al-Ahdal:
'My life changed
forever. I was to
be a bride at the
age of 10'

I didn't understand what child
marriage was, but I was aware
how dangerous it was through
seeing its victims.



'You have to start
your life from
scratch.': Life in
the UK two years
after the fall of
Kabul

Saghar Khalid's dream of
becoming a TV producer
shattered when the Taliban
regained power in Kabul. Now,
having found refuge in the UK
for the past two years,...



Celebrating
Friendship: 'I met
my friend on a
rescue ship in the
Med'

Lisa tells the incredible story of
the day she met Yordi on a boat
in the Med and how they stayed
friends afterwards.

What makes a good story? (continued)

What makes a story compelling? Here are some fundamentals that will help your story stand out...

- 1. Human interest angle:** Case studies bring stories to life, making them relatable.
- 2. Reliable information:** Back your story up with reliable facts, figures, and research.
- 3. Unique Spin:** Add a unique angle to your story, presenting something new or different.
- 4. Clear Messaging:** Ensure there is a particular narrative you want to convey and communicate it simply.

The importance of characters!

When creating a story, incorporate a range of voices to build the story and give it context. For example...

- **Lived experience:** someone with direct experience of the issue.
- **Charity spokesperson:** A frontline representative from your organisation or a relevant one.
- **Project volunteer:** Share perspectives from those actively involved.
- **Sector expert:** Provide insights from an expert in the field.

Creating powerful stories involves combining these elements and considering the audience's perspective, ensuring your narrative resonates and inspires action.

Where to find stories

- **Be curious** and use your senses. It's about keeping your eyes and ears open... and often being in the right place at the right time.
- **Visit your organisation's projects regularly.**
- **Listen** closely at staff meetings/background office chat.
- **Talk to everyone** – beneficiaries, volunteers, members of staff etc.

Crafting messaging

Whether you're preparing for a media interview or shaping the messaging for a story in a campaign, the ability to communicate your story with impact is a valuable skill.

Crafting compelling key messages is not just about conveying information; it's about creating a powerful and memorable story that captures attention, fosters understanding and prompts action.

Consider the following elements when crafting your messages:

- 1. Problem statement:** What issue do you aim to address?
- 2. Case for support:** Why is action necessary?
- 3. Call to action:** What specific actions do you want your audience to take?
- 4. Your role:** Why are you uniquely positioned to address this issue?
- 5. Evidence:** What compelling quotes and information can you include?

Remember, effective key messaging is not just about words; it's about creating a compelling narrative that resonates with your audience, prompts action, and leaves a lasting impression.

When crafting your messages, it's essential to understand your **audience's preferences, values, and demographics**. Conducting audience analysis allows you to tailor your messages effectively, ensuring maximum impact and resonance.

Crafting messaging (continued)

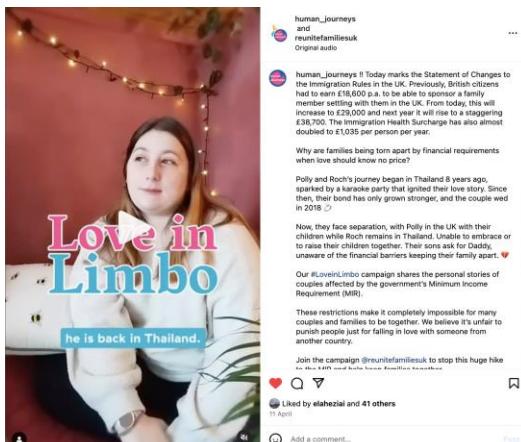
See how this copy from an Instagram story combines a **powerful story, key messages and call to actions**:

Today marks the Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules in the UK. Previously, British citizens had to earn £18,600 p.a. to be able to sponsor a family member settling with them in the UK. From today, this will increase to £29,000 and next year it will rise to a staggering £38,700. The Immigration Health Surcharge has also almost doubled to £1,035 per person per year. Why are families being torn apart by financial requirements when love should know no price?

Polly and Roch's journey began in Thailand 8 years ago, sparked by a karaoke party that ignited their love story. Since then, their bond has only grown stronger, and the couple wed in 2018. Now, they face separation, with Polly in the UK with their children while Roch remains in Thailand. Unable to embrace or to raise their children together, their sons ask for Daddy, unaware of the financial barriers keeping their family apart.

Our #LoveinLimbo campaign shares the personal stories of couples affected by the government's Minimum Income Requirement (MIR). These restrictions make it completely impossible for many couples and families to be together. We believe it's unfair to punish people just for falling in love with someone from another country.

Join the campaign @reunitefamilies to stop this huge hike to the MIR and help keep families together. Follow the link in our bio for ways to join the movement against the MIR increase.



Watch the full video which accompanies this story [here](#).

Audiences and the media

Understanding and connecting with audiences is key to effective and powerful storytelling. Whether engaging service users, donors, volunteers, policy makers or the public, organisations must tailor their stories to resonate with specific audiences. This strategic approach ensures messages are relevant, relatable and capable of inspiring action.

To achieve this, it's crucial to **identify target audiences** and determine the most effective channels for reaching them, **whether through social media platforms, traditional media channels, or digital platforms** like newsletters.

Understanding the mixed middle

- Politicians care about public opinion – it's when the majority of the population puts pressure on them that they tend to act.
- Most studies divide the British public into 25% pro-immigration, 25% against and 50% undecided – the 'mixed middle'.
- By reaching the 'mixed middle' audience, organisations can drive meaningful change on a large scale.

People find it hard to dismiss peoples' real-life experiences.

To challenge prevailing misconceptions and reshape public perceptions, real people's stories can serve as a powerful tool for humanising complex themes, fostering empathy and connecting with audiences.

Why speak to the media?

- Human stories have more impact than facts and figures.
- If conducted correctly, you can be in control and at the same time raise awareness about an issue you care about.
- You can use your story to call for policy change, to campaign, or educate and inform people who will have never met a refugee and know about what it is like to seek safety.
- Some of those people may be moved enough to take concrete action.

Sharing the story

Once you have your story and have thought about key audiences you want to reach, you can amplify your impact through targeted platforms.

Harnessing social media channels

Consider your audience: Tailor your approach based on your target audience's preferences and demographics to ensure maximum impact. Identify which platform(s) your target audience is using to effectively engage them.

Incorporate into regular communications

- **Include in newsletters:** Integrate your story into your organisation's regular newsletter to keep supporters engaged and informed.
- **Spotlight in annual reports:** Showcase your story, providing transparency and accountability to donors and stakeholders.
- **Share as a blogs or op-ed,** incorporating key storytelling elements.

Engaging with the media

If appropriate and timely, share your story with the media to reach a broader audience and raise awareness about your cause.

Choosing the Right Platform:

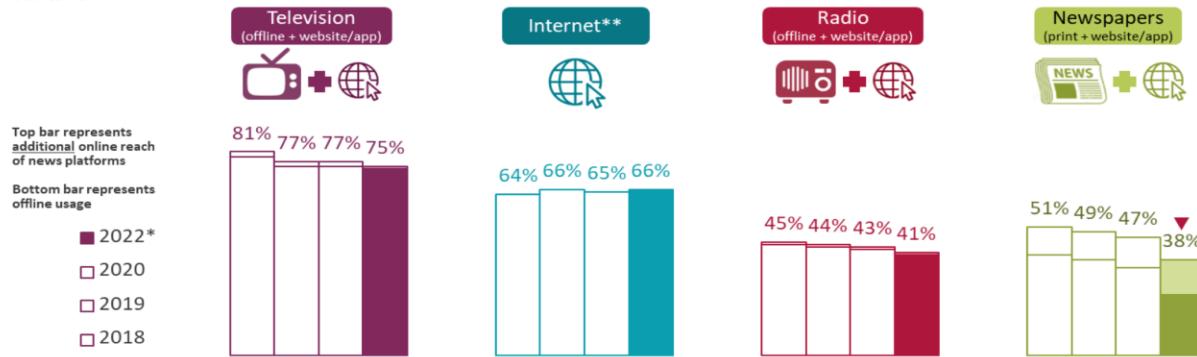
- **Evaluate impact:** Consider which platform will deliver the highest impact for your story, whether it's through television, internet, radio, or print media.
- **Leverage local news:** Don't underestimate the power of local news outlets in amplifying your message within your community.

TV and Internet remain the most-used platforms for news nowadays. Print and online newspapers, and radio, both reach 4 in 10 adults

Ofcom
making communications work
for everyone

Figure 2.1

Use of main platforms for news nowadays
All adults 16+



Ethics, consent and safeguarding

Before you interview people, you will need to check the following:

- Charity/sector spokespeople - do they need any media training?
- Are interviewees with lived experience happy to be identified?
- Do they fully understand where the footage will be shown?
- Does appearing on TV/Internet put themselves or their families in any danger?
- Are there any questions they would rather NOT be asked?

Interviewing people

In order to get the best out of people you need to make them feel comfortable and create trust:

- Choose a space where you won't be interrupted and is quiet.
- Will the interviewee need an interpreter or perhaps a case worker who they trust and feel comfortable with?
- Will you make notes or record the interview on your phone so you can write it up afterwards? If you are recording it just for note taking be very clear about your intentions.
- Share the questions you will be asking them in advance to give them time to prepare.

[Find a full safeguarding checklist on the IMIX website](#)

Social media safeguarding

- Make sure the interviewee knows there may be negative comments before they do the interview.
- If the story is being published on your organisation's platform, offer the interviewee the opportunity to review the text before it goes live.
- Ask the journalist to turn off comments under the article, if possible, as these are often the nastiest.
- Monitor comments on behalf of the interviewee rather than encouraging them to read them directly.
- You can flag comments to social media platforms and report those inciting hatred to the police.



Prioritise interviewee well-being and safety, obtaining consent, and implementing social media safeguards for ethical storytelling.



Telling the human story of migration

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And follow our projects



Human
Journeys



Good
Neighbours



Un/Documented
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