

Gabrielle Dolan

Magnetic Stories

Connect with Customers and Engage Employees
with Brand Storytelling.

Part 1



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Magnetic Stories

Your brand is the stories people share about you when you're not in the room, and it's these brand stories that determine if people buy from you, employ you, work for you, recommend you or invest in you. When the stakes are that high, wouldn't you want to take control of it?

This white paper will help you understand what brand storytelling is; the types of stories you need to share and where to share them. It also explores how to implement brand storytelling and the benefits of doing so, as well as the common mistakes companies make.

Let's start with the power of a magnetic story.



[Click to play video](#)



Four Global Trends

There are four trends that have emerged over recent years that you need to be aware of when it comes to brand storytelling.

- **Trend 1:** Customers are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on their own values. While this is not new, more socially aware consumers are realising their collective power when it comes to influencing companies to make more ethical choices.
- **Trend 2:** Employees are seeking greater alignment between their own personal values and their employers' values. They are looking to work for companies that have a greater purpose than simply profit.
- **Trend 3:** A super-connected world has resulted in a surge of transparency that people are referring to as 'Glass Box Brands'. Before social media it was more like a black box ... hard to see into and easy to decorate on the outside. Social media has meant it is very hard to hide an internal culture from the outside world.
- **Trend 4:** The birth of 'cancel culture', where people will use social media to call out any company or celebrity that they believe has done something wrong. They will publicly withdraw support and shame them, encouraging others to do the same.

Companies need to be aware of the combined impact these four trends have on their brand.

The internal and external brand have become one, and it is more important than ever to take control of your brand and your stories.





What is brand and what is brand storytelling?

Click to play video

What is Brand Storytelling?

If you search the definition of ‘brand’, you will find an enormous range of terms and phrases that vary greatly. You will also find many articles on how hard it is to define ‘brand’.

Marty Neumeier, who is a leading expert on brands and author of such books as *The Brand Gap* and *The Brand Flip*, defines brand by stating what a brand isn’t:

‘A brand is not a logo. A brand is not an identity. A brand is not a product.’

Neumeier then adds that:

‘A brand is a person’s gut feeling about a product, service, or organisation.’

I like this definition as it implies that brand perception is an emotional gut feeling.

My favourite definition of brand, however, comes from Amazon founder and former CEO Jeff Bezos, who is widely quoted as saying:

‘Your brand is what other people say about you when you’re not in the room.’

My variation of that is ***your brand is the stories people share about you when you are not in the room.***

The following video explains brand storytelling further.



Where we are going wrong?

A major catalyst for writing Magnetic Stories is that I noticed a lot of companies attempting to implement brand storytelling and not achieving the results they wanted.

The following video covers the five common mistakes I see companies make when it come to brand storytelling.

Another aspect that hinders companies sharing stories successfully is that, in business, we have a bias towards data over stories which is a missed opportunity.



[Click to play video](#)



[Click to play video](#)



About the Author

Gabrielle Dolan can tell you a story or two.

In fact, it was while working in a senior leadership role at National Australia Bank that she realised the power of storytelling in effective business communication. Since that epiphany, Gabrielle has found her calling as a global expert on strategic storytelling and real communication.

A highly sought-after keynote speaker, educator and author, Gabrielle's extensive client list includes Telstra, EY, Accenture, VISA, Australia Post, National Australia Bank, Amazon, Vodafone and the Obama Foundation.

Gabrielle holds a master's degree in management and leadership, an associate diploma in education and training and is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School of Executive Education.

In 2024 she launched the successful podcast *Keeping it Real with Jac and Ral* that

consistently ranks well in the best business podcast charts. Episodes explore different topics such as personal brand, public speaking, energy management, negotiation and other great ways to keep you real.

Gabrielle is also the bestselling author of seven books. Her latest title, *Magnetic Stories: Connect with customers and engage employees with brand storytelling* was published by Wiley in March 2021 and debuted at number two on Australia's best-selling business books.

Bringing humanity to the way business people communicate isn't just a career, it's a calling. Her dedication to the industry was recognised when Gabrielle was awarded the 2020 Communicator of the Year by the International Association of Business Communicators Asia Pacific region. The ultimate expression of her passion for the cause is her Jargon Free Fridays global movement (jargonfreefridays.com).



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Books by Gabrielle

