

The year of storytelling

By [Masego Mtsogi](#)

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The truth about storytelling is that it will never go out of fashion. Perhaps the mediums through which it comes will continue to change, but the form itself... it is here to stay.



Masego Mtsogi, managing director at Grid Worldwide.

I recall growing up, the mediums we had at our disposal being limited to what I can possibly count on one hand. No-one can argue that the World Wide Web and social media have brought quite an interesting dynamic into the world, and in turn have affected how stories are told.

The proliferation of these platforms has unwittingly sent everyone into a frenzy, trying to be relevant on every platform; but have we really come to understand how these channels work and the impact they have on what we do and, in turn, promote the potency of our work and our credibility as a collective?



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Maybe, just maybe we have forgotten why we do what we do. Of course, a lot of the time, we have to answer those very important brief objectives that lead to sales, increased traffic and the like.

It does seem that more and more though, with clients wanting communication agencies to serve as an extension of their marketing teams; the dial is skewed towards the agency needing to deliver on sales as opposed to inviting customers into the brand world in a way that will keep them enticed and attracted to the brand.



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At its very core, our industry exists to tell stories – they may be brand stories, but they are stories, nonetheless. Once we go back to understanding this of ourselves, I think we will make some inroads in how the messages we put out are understood and start using the most appropriate channels to deliver our message, and hopefully win some hearts again and not be seen as “trying too hard”.

“Gone are the days when a brief called out TV, radio, print and outdoor as the key mediums and going Full Monty with “matching luggage” communication pieces. Gone are the days when advertising could be distinctly separated from general social commentary. Gone are the days when brands competed within one category.”

These days, share of voice is indisputably amongst a host of lifestyle brands and not just a vertical of brands that answer to one set of needs. And so, how do we position the brands that we touch in a category of one, and tell compelling stories that will keep consumers wanting more? In the year ahead, I expect that:

- With the industry struggling to have their messages cut through the clutter, we will go back to the art form that is storytelling and use that to our advantage.
 - We will use the right channels to tell these potentially culture-shifting stories and be bold in adapting the way we tell those stories (even if it is with a slight difference) across channels, and not fall into the trap of “channel agnostic” ideas that then fall flat when it comes to media planning and eventual delivery.
 - The idea of “telling” insinuates that there is no exchange, but by virtue of us being storytellers means that we must be ready to respond, and so we must. Burying our heads in the sand will only render us powerless, incredible and unimpactful. Responsive brands win.
 - We make sure that we craft our stories so well that they inspire (and we don’t leave all the inspiration to fall on the shoulders of one team that has won a sporting tournament); we entertain while we inform and make it absolutely beautiful, because aesthetics matter.
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Here's to a less superficial 2020, inspired by our desire to tell meaningful stories that are inspiring, informative, educational and told in the most beautiful way.

ABOUT MASEGO MOTSOGI

Masego Mtsogi is the Managing Director at Grid Worldwide and her experience in the industry spans just over 16 years. She has worked with clients across various industries and has a keen interest in youth and women development and their advancement in the industry. She strongly believes that the communications industry has potential to influence culture, and as such should take itself and its product with the seriousness it deserves.

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