



Give Big!

Storytelling and Marketing Strategies for
Give Day Campaign Success

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You will leave...

1. With an overview of nonprofit storytelling.
2. Understanding how to define your goals, key messages, hero story, a call to action and who your Give Day audience is.
3. Knowing all the parts to a Give Day campaign.



Let's dive into
nonprofit
storytelling...



The problem: Our nonprofit story formula falls short

- Explain the problem (families are struggling to afford food)
- Share facts (we give away 5,000 meals to kids each summer)
- Highlight our values – equity, compassion, respect, service
- Close with a solution
- **And this is why you should give.**



Bellingham's Public Theatre

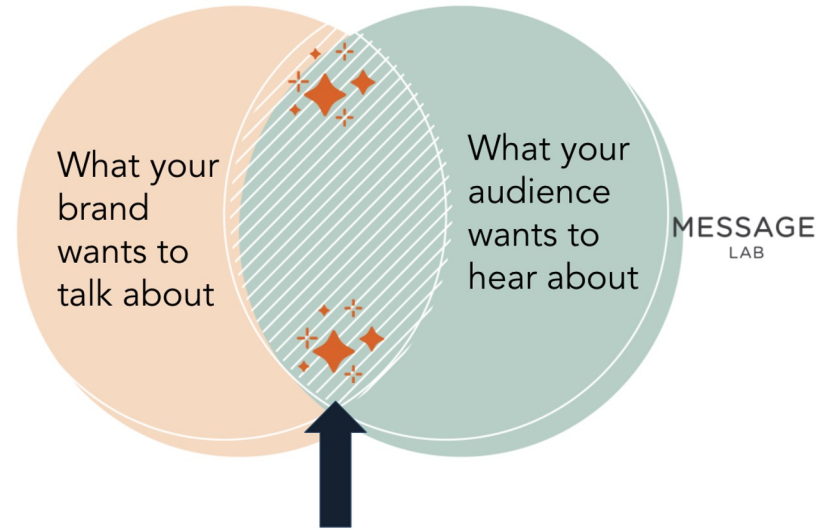
Bellingham's Public Theatre is premier live entertainment and events venue. This community-owned treasure has welcomed hundreds of extraordinary performances. An estimated 500,000 school children have enjoyed free and low cost performing arts workshops, camps and films as part of our Youth Arts Education programs.

We have done all of this and more while remaining financially solvent through the support of ticket revenue, sponsorships, grants, and donations.

Today, we humbly ask for your continued support in our efforts to give this community the well-equipped and maintained venue it deserves.

The solution: Share stories that act as advocates for our work to inspire people to...

- Believe in our mission
- Understand the problem
- Know they are an essential part of the solution
- Identify as part of our community
- **Proudly support our cause**



Your Communication Strategy

Christy's Place ensures no child sleeps outside

Each day, families call our shelter looking for a warm place to sleep, do homework, share a meal, and be together. These are our neighbors, co-workers, and even our children's classmates. We welcome families without judgement and offer them compassion and hope.

Your gift helps Christy's Place maintain critical funds to help families stay with us when they need to and find new stable places to live. In 2023, we helped 741 families move to stable housing and another 626 families stay in their homes.

Thank you for helping us fulfill our promise that every child in our community always has a safe place to sleep in 2024.

Meaningful stories

“The primary function of stories is social connection. Stories are the common ground that allows us to chronicle our lives, share information, overcoming our defenses and our differences.

Stories transcend generations and they engage us through our emotions. Through stories, we share passions, sadness, hardships, and joys. We share meaning and purpose. They are how we connect with each other, but they also entertain and inspire us.”

- Pamela Rutledge, Ph.D., Director, Media Psychology Research Center

What is a story?

A topic: Lack of green spaces in your town.

Tells your audience what the problem is.

A story: A family's life is transformed with access regular high-quality food, enabling them to pay bills on time, stay healthier, and minimize days missed from school and work.

Explains to your audience how you deliver change and why that change is important to the people/places you serve.



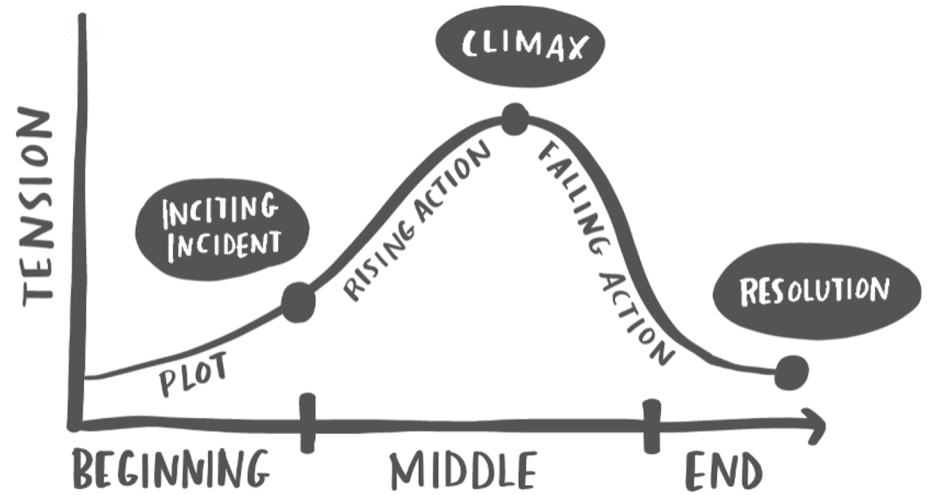
Stories have:

Characters – people, illnesses, organizations, donors, pollution, grizzly bears

Conflict – limited access, lack of resources, language and transportation barriers, laws

Change – programs funded, needs met, health improved, clean rivers, better education

A Toy Story?



Christy's Place ensures no child sleeps outside

Each day, families turn to our shelter looking for a warm place to sleep, do homework, share a meal, and be together as a family. **(Conflict)**

These are our neighbors, co-workers, and even our children's classmates.
(Characters)

We welcome families to our shelter without judgement and offer them compassion and hope. Your gifts helps Christy's Place maintain critical funds to help families stay in their homes or find new stable places to live. In 2023, we helped 741 families move to stable housing. **(Change)**

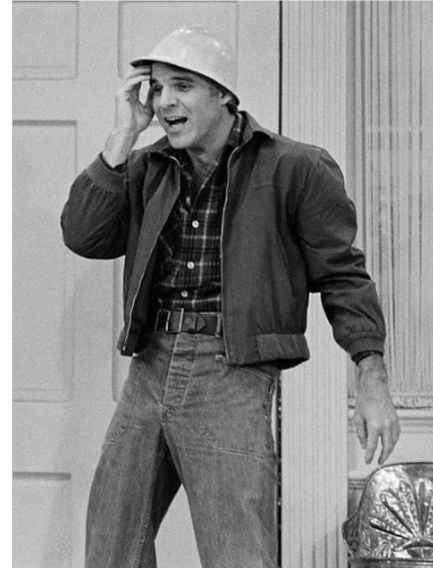
Thank you for helping us fulfill our promise that every child in our community always has a safe place to sleep in 2024.



Building your Give Day campaign story

Start with your nonprofit's:

- Overarching goal
- Key messages
- A call to action
- Audience



Identify a story that represents your nonprofit's overarching goal.

Whatcom County Food Bank:

We provide access to nutritious food through our grocery-style food bank, no-cost café, home delivery, and Weekend Food for Kids program to everyone in need.

Select a story that showcases your key messages

- We're broadening our capacity and building programs that reach out to the community, reducing the accessibility burden.
- New collaborations with farmers, grocery stores and distributors we're minimizing produce waste by using it in our hot meal kitchen.

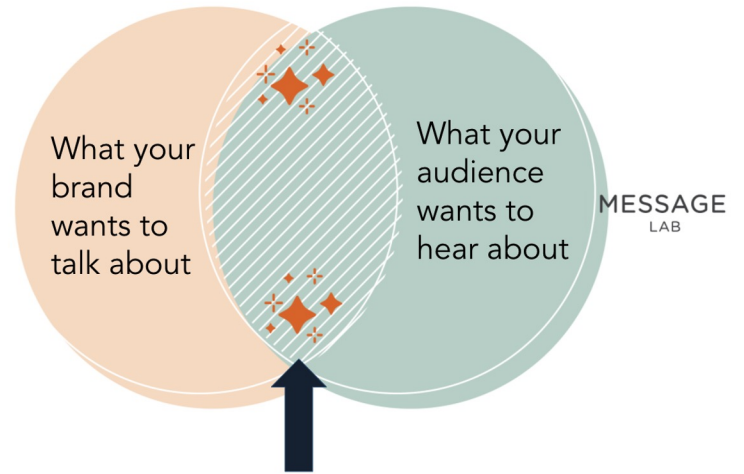
What is your Call to Action?

You might think your CTA is: *TO GIVE. \$\$\$ More \$\$\$*
But think of giving as...

- An opportunity to: **increase access to healthcare, preserve a habitat**
- A contribution that can: **transform a child's education, keep families together**
- Participation in a vision that will: **strengthen neighborhoods, propel scientific collaborations, make our community more equitable**

Who is your audience?

- Current donors
- Lapsed donors
- Volunteers
- Staff
- Beneficiaries
- Neighbors
- Community members who share your values
- Your family, friends and coworkers
- Former clients
- People who don't know you yet..



Your Communication Strategy

The Nuts and Bolts of a Give Day Campaign



Planning your story

1-2 Pre Give Big emails

- Hi... I'm Ollie the Orca (Save the date 2-3 weeks)
- Why are clean rivers important to me? (2-3 days – giving is open)
- Please Give Big for salmon – I'm hungry. (Tomorrow)

3-4 Giving day emails

- Each email tells a bit of the story

1 Post giving day email

- Thank you and celebration of your total \$\$ raised

Planning your story

When I write my story for email campaigns	I look out for the cliffhangers	or natural breaks.	So that I take my donors	on an captivating journey	throughout the whole campaign.	Until finally, I say thank you.
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Tips! for writing your emails

Write in first person if possible. WHY?

- First person closes the gap between the donor and the impact of their giving.
- A story is always more powerful in someone's own voice.

Make sure to focus on the positive outcome. WHY?

- People connect with hope.
- Urgency and injustices are real and important. But hope is more powerful.

Use simple straightforward language. Minimize jargon and long complex sentences.

- Write as if you're writing an email to a person you know.

Tips! for writing your emails

- Write creative subject lines and showcase your work
 - **Heloooooooooooo! Meet our Sons!**
 - **Pack your bags, we're off to camp**
 - **What are you having for dinner? Sadly, many won't eat tonight**
 - **Look at all the legs on that starfish**
 - **My foster family is my family**
- Use two images at most in each email
 - Include an image of who is being featured in your emails
 - Include a "live" signature – a paw print works.



WWU GIVE DAY 2023

WWU GIVE DAY 2023 HAS ENDED!

00 : 00 : 00
HRS MIN SEC

Tyani Opdahl
Major: Computer Science
Minor: Creative Writing

The tide is turning toward Western – Tomorrow is Give Day!

Dear Allie,

Waves of generosity have been building ... and building ... and building ... for weeks ... and now it's just one ... day ... away! 😊

Western Washington University's 9th Annual WWU Give Day 2023 is tomorrow!!!

There's also been a lot of buzz about a building that Western broke ground on recently: Kaiser Borsari Hall, a state-of-the-art, carbon-neutral hub for advanced technology and engineering teaching and learning.

I will probably have graduated already by the time Kaiser Borsari Hall opens, but I am still super excited how it will give more students access to the kind of interdisciplinary, real-world, forward-thinking education that drew me to Western. (More about that in an email I'll send you tomorrow!)



Open more doors to the future for students like me

Dear Allie,

I had very little coding experience when I transferred to Western a year and a half ago. I knew I wanted to pursue a high-tech career, so I went all in and declared computer science as my major.

I quickly discovered that programming has a lot in common with creative writing (my minor). Both require curiosity and flexible thinking, and a detective's eye for clues and the patience to revise, revise and revise some more, until all the throughlines connect and make sense.

As a computer science major, I'm so glad that for this years [WWU Give Day](#), I get to ask for your support in helping make Kaiser Borsari Hall a reality for future students. This is the kind of creative learning that inspired the design of Kaiser Borsari Hall – a space that exemplifies Western's commitment to graduating future leaders in advanced technology and engineering.

Thank you for your support!

It's an honor to teach at Western

Dear Allie,

It's no secret that Western's computer science department is bursting at the seams. I see it every day, in classrooms so full, there are more students than chairs.

Now is the time to make room for more students who want to pursue advanced technology and engineering degrees – students like Tyanin Opdahl, who stood out in my Intro to Programming class. She's the kind of student who forms study groups so that classmates can debug code together.

I'm thrilled to be part of this year's [WWU Give Day campaign](#) and share my gratitude for your generosity in helping us build the next generation of thoughtful tech leaders. Your gifts make it possible for students like Tyanin to have an affordable education, and have the tools and technology needed to enter the workforce with confidence.

Caroline Hardin, PhD

Assistant Professor, Computer Science

Discussion...
Questions...
Thoughts...



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