Final assignment

Digital storytelling in theory and practice

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Introduction

Corporate storytelling is a very powerful tool that companies use to tell the organisation's shared story and to roadmap their future. Corporate stories are used for internal and external use, but in all cases the story must ring true with employees and customers. A corporate story reinforces the values that relate to that company, and these values should be consistent with the products or services provided by that company. (The Corporate Storyteller, 2015)

For this assignment, we have chosen to focus on The Royal Dutch Shell plc, or more commonly known as Shell. Shell is an Anglo-Dutch multinational gas and oil company. The company was founded in 1907, as two companies, The Royal Dutch Petroleum Company and the Shell Transport and Trading Company, merged. By making massive profits from exploiting gas, oil and other fossil fuels, Shell has managed to become one of the world's largest companies. (Corporate Watch, 2014) Shell aims to operate in environmentally, economically, and socially responsible ways, whilst helping meeting the world's ever-growing demand for energy (Shell, 2015). The oil and gas landscape is very competitive, and Shell's main competitors are large companies such as Chevron, Exxon Mobil, BP, Total and ConocoPhillips. Shell however is the largest name in its field, with a strong brand equity as it is the 2nd largest energy company (mbaskool.com, 2015). In 2015, all of these companies shares dropped between 18% and 32%, and oil prices are estimated to remain low because of oversupply and demand decreasing. Shell has managed to be efficient in its operations and capital spending, and based on the first half year of 2015, Shell is outperforming Exxon and Chevron. (Keulen, 2015)

We will analyse Shell's previous and current corporate stories, and from there, plan and conceptualise a new corporate story using two social media platforms. Using the available social media platforms efficiently can give a company a huge competitive advantage. Especially in the oil and gas field, companies have not yet realised the potentials of social media, thus this is an area that Shell should focus on in order to gain and maintain that competitive advantage.

Brand Analysis

Shell is a global group of energy and petrochemical companies, with Royal Dutch Shell plc as its parent company incorporated in England and Wales. Shell headquarters are located in The Hague, The Netherlands and the Chief Executive Officer is Ben van Beurden. Shell has around 94,000 employees in more than 70 countries. Shell tries to help build a sustainable energy future by using advanced technologies and taking an innovative approach. Shell is a vertically integrated company. Upstream the company explores and extracts natural gas and crude oil. Downstream they refine, supply, trade and ship crude worldwide, they manufacture and market a range of products, and they produce petrochemical for industrial customers. Shell's Projects and Technology department

manages the delivery of Shell's major products and drives innovation and research to create technology solutions. (Shell, 2015)

The company has operations in over 90 countries, it has 44,000 service stations worldwide and manages to produce around 3.1 million barrels of oil equivalent per day. They have interests in 24 refineries around the world. The Shell Oil Company is its subsidiary in the United States and it is one of its largest businesses. When UK-based Shell Transport & Trading and Royal Dutch Petroleum merged in 2014, Shell became the fourth largest company in the world, in terms of revenue. It is also one of the six oil and gas supermajors. (Shell, 2015)

Shell is one of the most valuable companies in the world, being 3rd in 2015 on the Fortune Global 500 list of world's largest companies. In 2014, Shell topped the list, and at the time, Royal Dutch Shell's revenue was equal to 84% of the Netherlands GDP (Fortune, 2015). In 2014, Shell's annual revenue was $421.1 billion, income was $14.7 billion, net capital investment was $23.9 billion, and investment in research and development was $1.2 billion.

Shell has a very large target audience. Anyone who drives a car or needs petroleum for any type of motorised vehicle, is part of the target audience, not dependant on social class. Shell provides products and services in urban and rural areas, thus both geographic segments are included in the target audience. The target audience also includes everyone that uses other products and services of Shell, such as suppliers, contractors and other joint ventures.

Shell has a very catchy and famous tagline: "You can be sure of Shell" (Hussain, 2015).This tagline was first used in 1937, as a sort of confidence trick. Basically the message that the slogan was to bring across was that Shell now has principles that it will not sacrifice for profit. (Donovan, 2014) Shell is still continuing with this positioning. Traci Alford, the head of fuels branding for Shell, said "The way we are structured, we will always be quality or premium. We will never be price fighters because that's just not who we are. We pride ourselves on being technologically advanced, having the best in the world." (Low, 2014) Shell aims to bank on the premiumisation of its products, by positioning their product as a higher variant of the product in question. (Low, 2014)

Three corporate stories of the brand

1. History

Shell is one of the world's most valuable companies

Shell is vertically integrated and active in every area of the oil and gas industry, including exploration and production, refining, distribution and marketing, petrochemicals, etc. (EuroJobCenter, 2015) Due to its long history and wide company structure, the company has a lot of power and voice in global economy and the use of natural resources, and it operates in more than 90 countries. The Shell strategy seeks to reinforce its position as a leader in the oil industry.

Shell tells a long corporate story that roots from the end of 19th century, which is an effective tool to gain and reflect credibility and trust. An aged, successful company has established its position in consumers' minds with its very easily recognizable logo. With its operations Shell has acquired expertise and knowledge from a diversity of areas. Regardless of whether Shell's decisions affect humanity positively or negatively, the company can refer to its long history and tradition as a justification for its acts. It can also shape the audience's dissonance and attitudes towards more radical (careless use of raw materials) or respectively, by turning its power into an asset and using the sustainability and environmentally friendly element as a tool of creating a great conflict in consumers' minds, leading them back to the end result of the world still being dependent of this "new energy system" Shell is building, "while supporting a deeper understanding of climate science (Marshall, 2014). The story and campaigns are hard to question, because they are built on solely coherent past and argumentation. Shell has indeed delivered what it needed, partly because of its powerful position; a showcase for their global brand and strong, own corporate story line. This is because their narrative is better than any climate change education program.

2. Saving the world

Shell helps the world to meet the growing demand for energy in economically profitable, socially responsible and environmentally friendly ways

Keeping its eye on market trends, Shell believes that cleaner gas and advanced technologies are now expected by its target market and audience. Shell uses heavy advertising in print, billboards, radio and TV. The company is also publishing its own magazine, "Spirit", that informs customers about Shell's newest products and investments. Due to its powerful position among energy companies and providers, Shell is obliged to appear as highly environmentally responsible and caring; its core values are *honesty, integrity* and *respect for people.* (Shell, 2014) People will need to keep the planet habitable, for its population is at constant rise, and therefore energy that does not burden the earth is desperately needed. The story about the importance and valuableness of environment that

Shell communicates continuously, is framed psychologically, by episodic means, referring to concrete instances that directly relate to global warming and its immediacy. Shell remains consistent with its values by tweeting regularly and publishing reports about modern, renewable energies, and encouraging its customers to participate to a more sustainable lifestyle. Engagement to these "orders" should concern the whole population of the planet, hence the target audience is basically everyone, but most concretely and connotatively Shell can be considered as a fuel seller, so the advertising reaches and involves car drivers most urgently.

The environmental corporate story is effective, because global warming is a threat, hazard to human species, and it arouses emotion - that of guilt, urgency, and uncertainty - and addresses everyone. This can also be regarded as loss framing; the receiver is threatened to lose something (good living conditions) if he/she fails to comply with the message. Most of its ads, however, are framed in a way that portray negative aspects of Shell's products and services in a positive light; Shell uses the pretext of optimism, turning global warming into its business asset. This may arouse concern among the target audience; a lot of controversy occurs when the environment's concerned, since most of the decisions that have to be made have two sides to them, e.g Shell's objective to drill oil from Alaska is favourable for business but, on the other hand, may lead to oil spills and wildlife destruction (Popular Mechanics, 2012). According to George Marshall, people at Shell now look like they are the good guys who produce energy, find good solutions for environmental change to come about, and help to solve the climate crisis.

(Photo: Adventure Journal)

3. Expertise

Shell constantly aims at delivering operational excellence with its highly motivated employees.

Shell resorts to the statistical use of animation, videos and graphs to prove the point of their expertise. This is efficient and effective, as these methods are currently trending in advertising and they simultaneously inspire and entertain the viewer.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VFar4g3rJLc

Shell comes across confident and purposeful. It grips the audience by repeating phrases like "Let's go", referring to consumers as "we", as if it was involving them to action; it emphasises that the messages concern everyone, creating a feel of urgency to participate. Expertise is also a trump that is immediately connected to the history, logo and long tradition of the company. In its corporate brochure Shell describes its innovation and scientists. It also emphasises the importance of diversity and equality in its "Our People" section. While Shell is operating in democratic and fair ways, it leads to a higher rate of motivation among employees.

" We believe in diversity and inclusion in our workforce. It helps us better understand partners, customers and others we work with. We aim to provide equal opportunity for all, including those with disabilities, in recruitment, career development, promotion, training and rewards. Women hold around one in six of our senior roles. In around 40% of the countries where we operate, local nationals fill more than half the senior leadership positions. We work continually to improve these figures. "

- Shell Corporate Brochure, 2014

New corporate story: Shell Cares

As inspiration for this new corporate story, we looked at an old Dutch campaign by Shell "Shell Helpt". In the 70's, Shell started a campaign in America which inspired a similar one in Holland. The campaign was created because of the oil crisis in 1973. The purpose of the campaign was to promote Shell's products and services through a time of high prices, poverty and critical consumers.

(Translation:
Shell helps, Episode/part 3,
Normal, Super, LPG or
Diesel: what is the cheapest
for you?)
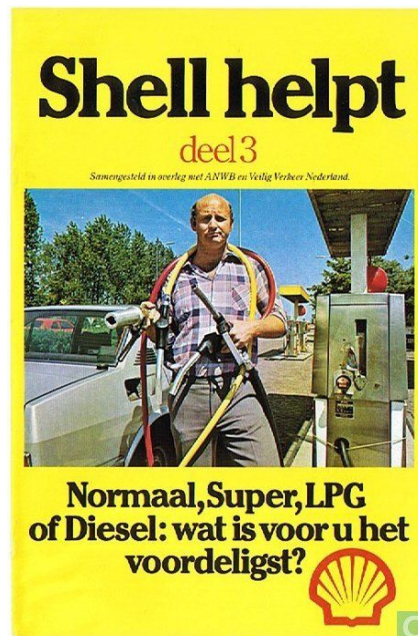
Shell wanted to create a campaign which would enhance their brand image and create more brand awareness. Therefore, Shell created a campaign to show the consumers that they cared and were involved by educating them with their advertisements with taglines such as "Normal, Super, LPG or Diesel: what is the cheapest for you?", "How you can prevent car troubles before they will cost you a lot of money" or "Getting through the winter without any problems". In the campaign, they created different "episodes" with their own number, flyer and some of them even have a short commercial.

Just like the campaign flyers, the commercials had an educational purpose, reconstructing common problems and suggest solutions for the consumers. An example of one of the commercials is the commercial "Shell helpt" episode/part 19. In this commercial a man walks into a car retail shop and asks to buy a car. He simply says to the salesperson "Give me the green one there". After this sort reconstruction of a common scenario, the man explains to the viewer that it is not as easy to buy a car and that Shell has created episode/part 19 with tips and tricks on how to purchase a car. Used or brand new?, Diesel or gas? etc. The campaign lasted for five years.

The old campaign and the new corporate story have the same storyline that we want to portray, which shows the consumers that Shell takes care of people and wants to stand out

as a socially accountable company. Shell hopes to increase sales simultaneously, but this won't be communicated visibly through the campaign, because social responsibility plays the main role.

We are going to stay true to the storyline of the old campaign, mainly focussing on involvement of Shell with their consumers, while also creating the new corporate story with the modern designs of Shell. This corporate story will also be international, in contrary to the old campaign which was in Dutch. The visuals for this corporate stories will be available on the social media platforms of Shell.

Target group

Shell's target audience should be defined and shown clearly through their new campaigns and social media communications. Their new stronger, more emphasized and even more transparent story will be frameless and raw, and therefore it needs to also tighten its grip on citizens. Shell has a great deal of social responsibility and its acts concern everyone in the planet. Therefore Shell will target its story - and services and products within - at anyone from 15 to 95-year-old teenagers, adults and elderly people who are able to make their own, mundane decisions and can be encouraged to go for yet more green and sustainable and yet less earth-loading lifestyle choices. The target audience will be concentrated on urban citizens as most of the earth's population will be living in cities, in the next coming decades ever more increasingly. However the story itself involves everyone in the planet. Those who inhabit rural areas can be addressed more easily via radio and internet. Shell just wants to address people into thinking about more collective, collaborative and networked ways of living in dense areas. People in cities will be targeted heavily through billboards, posters, interactive street ads and events.

Shell needs to articulate its messages in less complicated and less witty ways than it has done previously via advertising. Teenagers who will soon enter the market or already have a moped, car or any other motorised vehicle are a very important target market, but they may not be receptive to complex stimuli and lexical puzzles that take time to be resolved. Shell will have to realize that the youngest generations are the most teachable and will bring about crucial determination and innovation as to how the climate change can be stopped or slowed up.

Social media platforms

In the market that Shell operates in, not many competitors aside from BP have taken advantage of the opportunities that social media platforms can offer. Shell on the other hand has been heightening its social media game. Shell has created a very different image of themselves online than what it is offline. On social media platforms, Shell explains what they do, what they stand for and what they plan to do in the future, but doing this in a visual way that captures the attention of the audience. They reinforce this by discussing trending topics and industries that their target audience would be interested in, and with this strategy it is easy for Shell to appear on people's news feeds. Shell remains consistent with its values by being responsive and interactive with its followers on Facebook, Instagram and other social

media platforms. Shell has managed to captivate its audience successfully on several social media platforms. They have 5.2 million Facebook fans, over 9,000 Instagram followers, 28,000 YouTube subscribers and 287k followers on Twitter. (Knight, 2015)

As Shell already has such a great social media strategy in place, they receive a great amount of engagement on social media channels and this gives them a strong online voice. We will continue to use these social media platforms for spreading the new corporate story. We will focus on Shell's Facebook and Instagram. Through these social media platforms, we can educate a very wide target audience on Shell's new corporate story as both platforms have a large reach.

Purpose of the story

The purpose of the new corporate story is to create a transparent and positive image, which will awaken hope and willpower and encourage participation in consumers, mainly in being environmentally responsible and collaborative with other people. To achieve this image for Shell, instead of using the obvious and often used method of giving the consumers a discount to guide their choices, we decided to get Shell more involved with their consumers on a concrete level.

Shell has used multiple social media platforms to their benefit to enhance their image, but like most oil companies, the offline image of Shell is still debatable. Therefore, our goal is to exploit their social media platforms even further, introducing a new corporate story, and enhance the image of an environmental friendly oil company involved with their consumers. More conversation and interaction is needed in order to avoid vague impressions and fluffy, jargon-filled promises about Shell's future operations in terms of protecting the planet. In addition to developing a better image for Shell, this new corporate story will hopefully also stimulate an increase in their sales, which will lead to an increase in market share.

Synopsis

Shell, one of the biggest oil companies in the world, has decided to improve its image and to increase transparency in terms of its taken actions, because climate problems, skyrocketing population growth and the company's own adjustment to the current global situation need to work better together. Shell's reputation has deteriorated due to conservationist lobbies, and everyone knows that the company is using natural resources in order to give its consumers the needed end products.

Shell needs to communicate its objectives and actions more honestly than it has previously done, and comply with its own, clearly articulated values. Shell has a lot of elements required to remain on top of the industry, such as size, international distribution and expertise. Therefore, the company now wants to concentrate equally on making profit, but also on its consumers' and the planet's benefit.

Shell will pay attention to the resources it uses more carefully and will take part in fixing consequences of natural disasters. Shell's new corporate story is empowering and encouraging; the company will prove deeper affection and care for the environment, cleanliness of the planet, people and other species. Shell wants to interact with its consumers and provide answers and actions to fill any gaps that may emerge throughout its new insightful corporate story. The story nostalgically refers to Shell's previous campaign in the 70's, but the elements shown are yet more focussed on collective behaviours and importance of concrete acts, not merely articulated ones. Shell shows a great deal of newly acquired awareness in new storyline, and the company now wants to share its awakening to reality and urgency to make a change and affect the planet's and humanity's better future.

Robert McKee's plot and principles of storytelling

According Robert McKee's "Plot and principles of storytelling" theory, there are three rules for a good plot in a story; the hook, hold and payoff. The hook engages the audience and wins their interest, and this will be done through environmentally themed, and/or collective and social elements in the new narrative. They are directly associated to Shell, since this captures the viewers' attention and makes them wonder how the company might be involved in increasing social responsibility and donating money to communities. The hold is the part of the story which keeps up the interest of the audience; we will do this by posting actively on social media about how the changes can be done, by remaining coherent and loyal to our original plot of increasing the company's sense of human interest and collective behaviour. The payoff is the satisfaction and/or final explanation that the audience gains from the story - this will be won over when Shell has done adequately concrete acts to demonstrate its new storyline's functionality. This brings about credibility, and the longer the actions take, the more secured is the audience's engagement and trust.

Visuals

The new corporate story tagline is Shell Cares. We wanted to keep the advertisements simple, but still interesting to look at. Especially when working on social media, with so many messages in the RSS-feed, it is important it catches the eye of the target audience. Most importantly, we wanted to create an advertisement which is recognizable to the target audience. Shell's current advertisements are quite simple, with most of the time a picture as background, a sheer white bar with a statement and the tagline of the campaign at the bottom. Shell's logo is always incorporated in the advertisements. In the visuals for the new corporate story, we used the same basic design that Shell uses in their current advertisements.

The visuals of the new corporate stories will be published on Facebook and Instragram, therefore we kept in mind the sizes and colors. Instagram mostly uses square sizes, 640x640px. This has recently changed, but we will stick with the older heights. For Facebook's RSS-feed images, they use the size 403x210px. The visuals of the new corporate story are the required resolution for both social media platforms. The visuals will be published online, therefore we used RGB-coloring. The colors used in the advertisements are the Shell colors, their shades of yellow and red.

Advertisement 1: Facebook

The background image is a picture of a newborn turtle, making its first steps to the sea. This picture represents the words in the quote in the advertisement, "A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step". At the top of the advertisement, we placed a sheer white rectangle. Within the rectangle there is the quote about change and the tagline of the new corporate story. In the right bottom of the rectangle, there is extra information about the meaning of the advertisement and also the Shell logo.

Advertisement 2: Instagram

The background is an image made in 2012 in Sunninghill, Gauteng, which is a suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa. We chose this image, because it shows the donation Shell made in 2012. This picture is an example of what the corporate story is about, helping and being involved with the community. At the bottom of the page, we placed the sheer white rectangle with the quote, tagline and logo. Next to the logo, we explained the story behind the picture.

Text

Advertisement 1: Facebook

Heading:
A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step. Shell Cares.

Text
The leaders of an organization have the responsibility to share their vision and nurture it within the hearts and minds of their people and consumers, to keep them energized throughout the journey of change and to bring the group safely to their destination. If executed with wisdom and sensitivity, the group's purpose, beliefs and attitudes will have been changed by the journey, not by the destination.

Advertisement 2: Instagram

Heading:
People coming together as a community makes the difference. Shell Cares.

Text
The crime rate in Sunninghill drastically went up in 2012. The community was not able to help prevent these crimes because of a lack of money and resources in their security department. To help the community, Shell donated R26.000 to the Sunninghill community security. Thanks to this donation, the Sunninghill community is able to strengthen their crime prevention infrastructure.

Videos

We can also convert our visual ads into videos that can be showed on TV and Shell's social media platforms. For this, we will use audio and different text (for voice-over) than on Facebook and Instagram. The videos will be about 30 seconds long.

Advertisement 1: Facebook

Suggestion Voice-over:

The journey to change can only begin when you make the first step. More than a half-a-million people are looking for refuge in Europe this year. People who left their home and came with nothing to find safety. Shell made first step and donated supplies to the refugees center in Hamburg, Germany. Many volunteers are willing to help. Join us and let's make the difference. Shell Cares.

Suggestion Setting:
To illustrate the journey to change and helping each other, we decided to use a recent trending topic, which is the many refugees coming to Europe this year and also helping refugees. Currently, the topic is discussed often all over the world.
The video will be shot at a refugees center in Hamburg, Germany, where volunteers of Shell help the refugees by giving them supplies, such as water and food. Also shots of the refugees, the women, children etc.

Suggestion background music:
The atmosphere that we want to create with the music is motivational and inspiring.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5Vdy7yLMEo

Advertisement 2: Instagram
Suggestion Voice-over:
As a community, you can achieve much more than when you stand alone. Without a sense of caring, there can be no sense of community. Shell cares about its communities and lends a hand when needed. Sunninghill is a small community in Gauteng, South Africa. The crime rate in Sunninghill drastically went up in 2012. Shell donated 26.000 South African Rand to help them strengthen their crime prevention infrastructure.
Coming together makes the difference. Shell Cares.

Suggestion Setting:
The video will be shot in the suburb Sunninghill. We will show the community of Sunninghill, their security department etc. There will also be a shot of Shell giving the donation cheque to the Sunninghill security department.

Suggestion background music:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaDxmt9UiMY

Evaluation of the success of the story

In order to get a clear view on the success of the new corporate story, we need to analyse several different metrics. In order to measure if the plan is being implemented as it should, the activity metrics need to be researched. Reach metrics help in assessing the size of the audience and if the audience is the right on for the message. Engagement metrics are important in understanding the effect of the message on the people it is reaching. Audience interaction is also important in this area of measurement. Impact measures are the most important, as it measures what you are really trying to achieve, and if this is done in the most effective way. (The NonProfit Times, 2014)

Since the story will be spread using social media platforms, it makes sense to track the success of the story using Google Analytics. With Google Analytics, we can collect deep customer and business insights, without much work. As Shell is such a large company, we would use Google Analytics Premium as it offers analytics more suitable and easier to use for large companies. (Google, 2015)

Conclusion

In order to build a gripping, cohesive storyline, it has been strictly obligatory for Shell to commit to its values, goals and objectives. Without its own commitment it would be impossible to mediate a credible narrative to the audience. The whole process takes time, and as did the old campaign from the 1970's that we tried to emulate and outdo, creating a new, modern and more caring narrative takes years to build up. Especially for a company whose goals and visions contradict each other, it is crucial not to downplay causes or effects for the ongoing story. In other words, articulating goals and pompous declarations is easy for everyone, but taking real action - making it to the climax of the narrative, and yet further down to gain rewards - takes more effort. This is exactly the attempt of Shell, and we firmly believe that the company can manage to convince more and more people, as long as it stays honest and real to its clients and target audience. The timing for this is more than favorable - even longed-for - so the new story will be a success as long as it has been done with an eye to humanity's interests, also and especially that of the disadvantaged with scarce resources.

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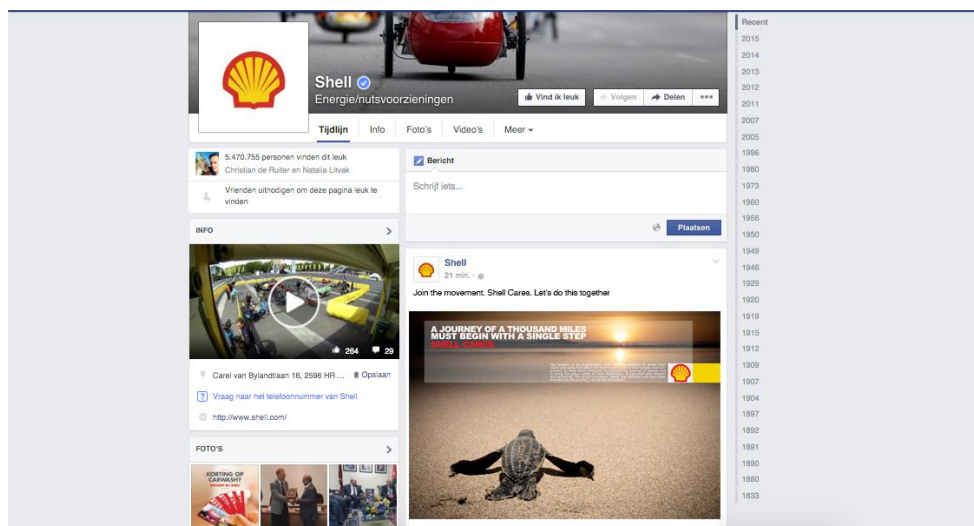http://thedesignbender.com/2013/11/03/the-future-of-storytelling-chapter-1-review-continued/

Appendix
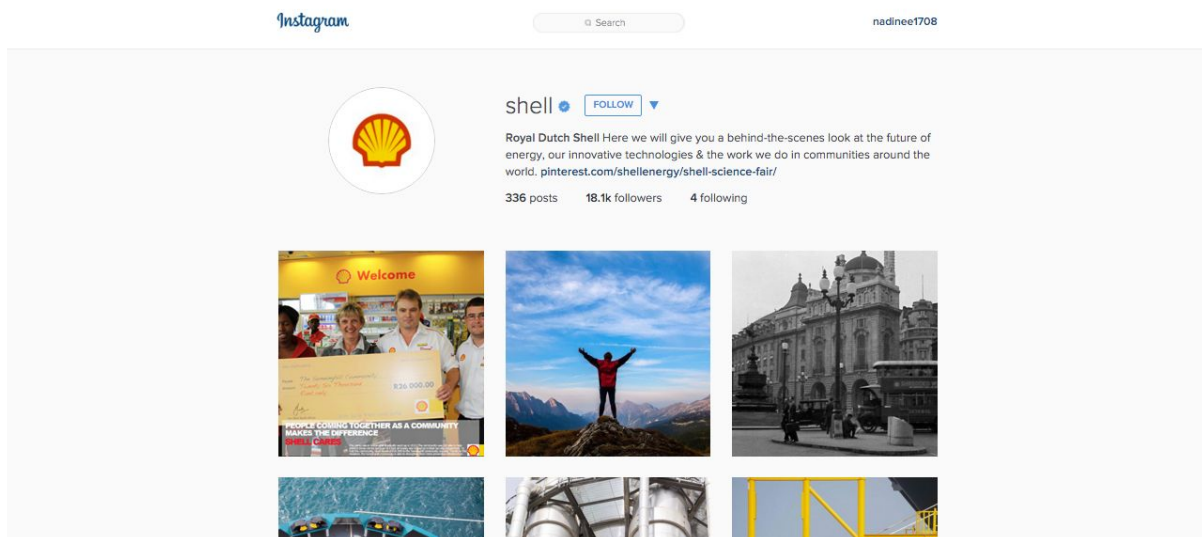
Appendix 1: Visuals

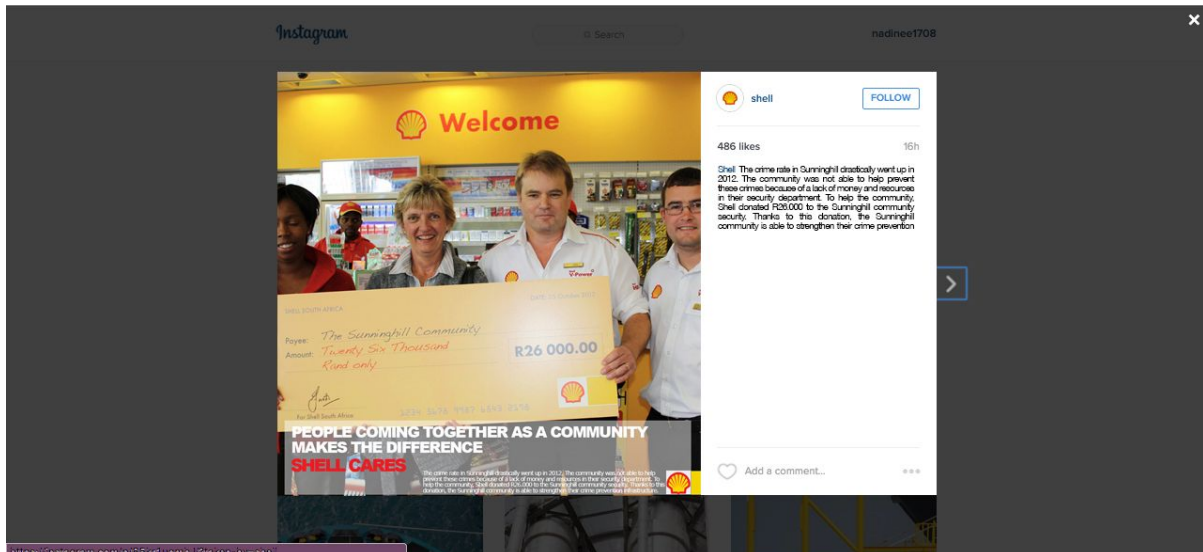1.1: (Facebook advertisement)

1.2(Advertisement in Facebook template)

1.3 (Instagram advertisement)

1.4 (Instagram advertisement, Instagram template)

Appendix 2: Weekly assignments

2.1: Week 1

2.1.1: Task 1

Gustav Freytag created Die Technik des Dramas, which elaborates on a structure for dramatic works. Later named Freytag's pyramid, the model consists of seven steps that most storylines follow. To elaborate on this model, I will apply the movie Idiocracy (2006) to each step in Freytag's pyramid.

According to Freytag's pyramid, a story starts out with the exposition, in which the themes, setting, major characters and background information are introduced. The movie Idiocracy starts out with the narrator explaining how stupid, irresponsible people out-breed the intelligent as natural selection is indifferent to intelligence, which results to, over the course of five centuries, a dumb and sexually motivated dystopia. Right in the start of the movie, the major themes are introduced. The plot then continues onto introducing the main characters, Corporal Joe Bauers, labeled by the US army as the most average soldier, and Rita, a prostitute scared of her pimp. The two characters are chosen to be guinea pigs in a secret military hibernation project, but the project was forgotten about when the officer in charge was arrested and the military base was demolished. Five hundred years later, in the 'Great Garbage Avalanche of 2505, the hibernation chambers are opened and both characters are revived. This part of the story elaborates on background information vital to the story. A new character is also introduced, Frito Pendejo, as Joe crashes into his house. Some hints of early conflict are also introduced as the movie elaborates on how the world has changed in 500 years.

The rising action phase of Freytag's pyramid consist of an increase in tension that comes out of the conflict the main character, in this case Joe, faces. Frito is watching a popular TV

program, but Joe lacks the discretion to allow Frito to watch the program, which results in Joe being thrown out of the window. He winds up in a hospital, where Dr. Lexus simply diagnoses his as "tarded" and "fucked up". Dr. Lexus panics when he notices that Joe has no barcode tattoo, thus making it unable to scan him for automatic debt payment. All these scenes create a rising action in the story, which leads up to Joe finally realizing what year it is. This realization increases tension in the story as the main character comes to realize his situation and problem. The story line goes on to build more on the rising action by showing the main character's worry about the sights of the collapsing world. Joe then flees the hospital, but gets arrested at a junk food vending booth for not having a barcode tattoo or paying his hospital bill.

Joe goes to trial, but his public defense lawyer is Frito, who helps convict him, which results in Joe being imprisoned. In prison, Joe is renamed "Not Sure" because of a poorly-designed ID tattoo machine. During an IQ test, he realizes how stupid humanity really has become. These scenes build on the conflict that the protagonist faces. Joe escapes prison, and returns to Frito's apartment to ask for help to find a time machine so he can return back to the past. So far in the storyline, the characters have been introduced and the main conflict has been elaborated.

The climax phase of the pyramid is where the turning point in the story happens. This is the moment in the story with the most tension or uncertainty. In this part an event or crisis marks a change in which the protagonist's affairs turn for the better or worse. In this movie, this part is where Joe goes out on a mission to find the time machine and attempt to return home. While looking for the time machine, Joe and Frito find Rita. Frito leads them to a city-sized Costco, where Joe is arrested again, but instead of going back to prison, he is taken to the White House. After seeing Joe's IQ score, the president appoints him as Secretary of Interior to fix the United States and its problems. Joe learns about the biggest problem, the fact that water has been replaced with Brawndo, a drink similar to Gatorade, and it is being used for crop irrigation, which is the root to their food shortages. Joe reintroduces the concept of watering plants, but this results in many more problems such as unemployment, which causes the population to riot and name Joe as the scapegoat. Joe is sentenced to rehabilitation, or an execution. All these scenes are part of the climax of the story, as it is the part of the story with the most tension and crisis.

The falling action phase in Freytag's pyramid comes after the climax as a moment of reversal. In this phase of the storyline, the conflict unravels. The falling action in the movie Idiocracy comes when Joe is saved from execution. To save Joe, Rita and Frito bribe a television camera crew to film the sprouting crops. The president sees the thriving plants and grants Joe a pardon just as he is about to be killed. The conflict in the story, between Joe and the future state of the United States, unravels, as Joe is pardoned from his crime.

The last phase in Freytag's pyramid is the resolution or the catastrophe. This part of the storyline includes events between the falling action and the actual end of the narrative, and it serves as a conclusion for the storyline. In the resolution phase, Joe decides to stay and help fix the American civilization and is named Vice President of America. Joe learns that "Time Masheen" is only an amusement park ride. Shortly after Joe becomes president, he

and Rita marry, and have the world's three smartest kids. These scenes serve as a conclusion to the story as they elaborate on how Joe's life turned out in the end.

2.1.2: Task 2

Cheap Beans conveys a lot of symbolism within its story line. This British short film produced by Lithium Heart Productions is a story about a guy who goes to a supermarket to buy cheap beans and falls in love with a cashier. The beans he buys make him feel self-conscious about himself, and he perceives that other mens' groceries give them more value in front of the cashiers' eyes. From his perception, the woman ignores him and even looks down on his purchases, whereas other guys who go to her cash register gain more attention and admiration from her.

Cheap beans could in this context be a verbal metaphor, signifying that the protagonist sells his beans for a low price (sells his soul), i.e. repeatedly returns to the supermarket to buy beans for cheap as an excuse to see the woman. Each time he begins to appear as more creepy and more jealous a person, and this can be associated to his 'cheap beans' manifesting themselves as shallow and uncontrollable behavior. Once he thinks that the beans affect the amount of attention he gets from the cashier, he decides to upgrade his status as a customer by exchanging the beans to a more superior-looking selection of products. In the end he indeed manages to catch attention of the cashier because his physical appearance is more attractive than his former outlook, and he buys wine and other more expensive and interesting products. This would suggest that money can buy love, but in the end we see that all of that has been just an illusion happening inside the protagonist's head as a result of his hopeful but desperate expectations; the cashier isn't interested, and actually has a boyfriend, so she had very unlikely flirted with any other customers, either.

According to the general principles of storytelling (Robert McKee, 1941) there needs to be an inciting incident that shakes the life of the protagonist and makes his previous situation more unstable. This is called placement of the incident. In this short film, it happens in the beginning, which is good for the viewer, because he/she does not need to wait for a long time to get the hang of the story's principal rope that carries it forward. However, first there is just an intriguing image of beans on a stove, and the viewer has no idea what the story could bring along. So the effect of the incident functions well, when the placement is set to a good timing; thus not to the very first minute of the film. Otherwise it could be too boring and foreseeable for the spectator. The believability factor is reasonable in that the given place is very narrowed down (supermarket) and the action that takes place within the given timeframe is realistic and understandable.

The hook of this film is the moment when the guy sees the woman and visibly start liking her. The story keeps its viewer at hold by deepening the customer's feelings, implying that there will be a remarkable event at the peak of his repeated visits to the store. As a payoff, answers and a conclusion will be provided to the story. These don't necessarily turn out to be particularly happy, since throughout the film the story content has intimated that the ending wouldn't be glorious, otherwise it would remain unrealistic, vague and naive.

2.1.3: Task 3

For this assignment, we chose to look at Harry Potter's journey in the Harry Potter series. The Harry Potter series consist of seven books and eight films, therefore we decided to only focus on the first book, Harry Potter and the Philosopher's stone. The Campbell theory consists of three stage, which include seventeen steps.

Stage 1: Separation/Departure

1. The call to adventure:
Harry Potter is not happy with his situation. He lives with his aunt and uncle who despise him. The call to adventure gets set in motion when Harry meets Hagrid. Hagrid tells him that he is a wizard and that his parents were as well.

2. Refusal of the call:
In the beginning of most hero stories, the hero refuses the call to adventure. Most of the time because of fear or insecurity etc. In the Harry Potter's story there is not really a clear refusal of the call. The only thing that comes close to a refusal is when Harry tells Hagrid that it is impossible that he is a wizard, "he is just Harry". His Uncle and Aunt also try to stop him from going to Hogwarts by throwing away the invitation letters, which also can be a refusal of the call.

3. Supernatural aid
The supernatural aid in Harry's story is Hagrid. Hagrid provides Harry with an object that he will need throughout the entire story, his wand. Hagrid also plays a huge role in getting Harry to Hogwarts. Anoth

4. The crossing of the first threshold
With this step we could not decide. There are two situations which fit this step. One of them is when Harry goes to the train station to actually go to Hogwarts. The moment that he has to go through the wall of platform nine and three quarters is to us crossing the first threshold. But another moment in the movie can also be fitting to this step. The moment that Harry goes to Diagon Alley for the first time and meets the wizard world.

5. Belly of the whale
The belly of the whale is the moment that the hero shows willingness to undergo a metamorphosis. To us the belly of the whale is when Harry moves into the Gryffindor house and settles in.

Stage 2: Initiation

6. The road of trials
Harry faces many trials in the Harry Potter series. Some of the trials that Harry encounters is ,for example, when the hat has to choose in which house Harry belongs, or when he and his friends get attacked by a troll, or when Harry meets new enemies for the first time, such as Voldemort, Snape and Malfoy.

7. The meeting with the Goddess.

The meeting with goddess is the point when the hero experiences a love that has the power and significance of the all powerful and unconditional love that a fortunate infant may experience with his or her mother. In the Harry Potter story it is the moment his mother sacrifices herself to protect Harry from Lord Voldemort. This unconditional love that his mother gives him, gives him strength throughout the entire Harry Potter series.

8. Woman as Temptress

This step was very hard to find out, because Harry doesn't really stray from his path. The only person who tries to stray Harry from his path is Professor Quirrell, because of his loyalty to Lord Voldemort.

9. Atonement with the father

In Harry's story, it is not the father which is a very important figure to him, it is his mentor Dumbledore. Dumbledore guides him and protects him from the evil he knows is coming.

10. Apotheosis

It is the moment when Harry, Ron and Hermione pass the three-headed guard dog, fluffy, and they enter the cave where they have to fulfill the three challenges.

11. The Ultimate boon

The ultimate boon is when Harry confronts Professor Quirrell who is loyal to Lord Voldemort and also carries Lord Voldemort on the back of his head. When Quirrel is defeated, Voldemort leaves without the stone, because he lost.

Stage 3: The Return

12. Refusal of return

There is not really a refusal of return. When Harry, Ron and Hermione are at the train station they say it is difficult to say goodbye.

13. The magic flight

There is not really a lot of knowledge of what happens after the ultimate boon.

14. Rescue from without

His mentors stay the same. They are still Hagrid and Dumbledore

15. The crossing of the return threshold

He returns back home with the train, but never forgets what happened and the experience has changed his life forever.

16. Master of two world

Harry manages to still live an ordinary life in the real world, but will always be a wizard. He is only not allowed to use magic in the Human world.

17. Freedom to live

There is no regret from Harry throughout the series. He is happy to be a wizard and to have a purpose in life

2.2: Week 2

Introduction

Digital storytelling is a relatively new form of communicating a narrative with the demonstration of modern techniques integrated as requisite and tools, such as animation, stills, video clips, and incorporation of hypertext, coding, games, automatic slideshow etc. Digital storytelling can also be partly implemented in a form of traditional advertising on press, booklets, billboards, and continued or mixed with online/software-based new technology, so that the story gets a consistent, omnipresent feel. Unlike only a couple of decades ago, there is now new space for interactivity and creativity, and the modern methods allow stories to break former conventions of storytelling. When in days of yore travellers used to share and spread stories around, now the same can be done by anyone in no time.

The purpose of this essay is to articulate a clear distinction between the typical narratives during 'the first digital wave' and those ensued after 'web 2.0'. These eras will be set comparatively side by side with the aid of two typical digital texts from each period, in order to create a concrete image of change and progression.

About Digital Storytelling

It can be puzzling to realize how far back digital storytelling expands, as the use of Internet has only been possible for all for a few decades. There were digital games with a storyline already in the 1960's. (B. Alexander, 2011) Gradually with the emergency of radio and TV, sharing stories became quicker and collectively accessible. Despite country borders and cultural differences, becoming acquainted with the same stories created connections between people. When an increasing amount of digital tools unfolded, audiences were equally able to share information and experiences with each other, so the definition of media houses and professionals has blurred - everyone can participate in digital storytelling, regardless of their skills and expertise. Thus, the development of new technologies could be described as development of liberty of speech, although this still remains dependent on cultural factors and political systems.

A very typical characteristic of the first wave of digital storytelling is hypertextual storytelling. This technique is based on content and its/their connections. Users navigate through a lexia and assemble the story in their minds by clicking on hyperlinks. Simultaneously, interactive gaming evolved around fictional stories, and these two ways of communicating narratives both relied on the user's personal experience and on text content. A third describing feature is the body of urban legends and folkloric stories, like a Nigerian prince sending e-mails based on a fictional story and asking for money from his readers.

If the first wave of digital storytelling focused on interactivity, the next wave gave it the finishing (yet evolving) touch, and this was defined as "Reinventing the way stories are told"

at an annual summit called Future of Storytelling (Gottschall, Jonathan, 2013). The audiences of our age will not merely look at the wave of stories passing by, but also jump on them and surf, in contrary to the practises that still prevailed in the beginning of the digital age; stories still had a clear share of narrators and receivers.

As its very first advantage, Web 2.0 as a storytelling environment isn't costly, and it is simple to use. Microcontent plays a very crucial role, taking up less space and effort than entire fullscale story landscapes, and much more audience can now be attracted by the use of social instrument of the platforms like Facebook and Twitter, sharing embedded blog posts and comment threads. Shortly, this "next wave" aims at maximizing human connection, collaboration and information sharing.

Narrative 1 : Delirium (Douglas Cooper, 1994)
This was the first serialized novel on the World Wide Web, and it is one of the many novels that opened a passage to the virtual world. Delirium was explicitly designed for the web. By allowing users to navigate between four parallel story strands, an individual could independently decide in which order the chapters would be read. Due to this offered freedom, the story was immediately considered "hypertext" once it was published.

Delirium is a story about an architect, Ariel Prince, who decides to kill his biographer, Theseus Crouch, since the latter mentioned has discovered a horrible secret; beneath a tower designed by Prince, lies a young woman who has been buried alive. Themes and characters from Cooper's previous novel, Amnesia, are also featured in Delirium, hence mixing up the time structure and making the narratives intertwined. Only the first part of the novel was published online and the whole print came out in 1998.
Cooper was told to have pushed the literary frontiers of cyberspace further after he had published his narratives online. Delirium isn't anymore available online, and therefore it can be defined as an ephemeral, electronic manifestation of a literary happening.

Narrative 2 : Who is Tim (Wie is Tim)?
In 2010, RTL Netherlands and Endemol became interested in the concept of transmedia experiences around narrative properties after hearing a MIP talk about The Project Factory's (TPF), delivered by Guy Gadney. This rapidly led to launching "Wie is Tim?" (Who is Tim?) during the summer of 2012, and it gained 280,000 downloads, millions of game plays and a 25% rise in the TV audience on its return. It also won 4 major awards. (Firelight, 2013) This cross platform series was part the most popular soap opera of the Netherlands - Goede Tijden Slechte Tijden (GTST), based on an Australian format of the serial called The Restless Years.

Like the name of the campaign suggests, the methodology its creators used was to arouse intrigue and mysterious feel in order to engage audiences better to the show. TV provided an authentic experience, and the apps and other integrated technology facilitated scheduling of push notifications. The app contained "9 weeks of scripted content, video mobisodes, nine games, competitions, and hidden content, all forming part of a handwritten notebook that viewers 'unlocked' week by week." (Gadney)

A consistent, coherent storyline was written, built upon the question "Who is Tim?" and mini-games, map challenges and hidden content were created as basis of the app's functions. Tim also had Facebook and Twitter accounts, and he followed his fans back when they followed him on social media. Pre-production took quite a short time, based on a small amount of brain storming meetings. A lot of people were, however, involved in implementing and creating the content, and this took place in various places. The campaign was designed and overseen in London, shot and post-produced in the Netherlands, and the build/production took place in Sydney.

In short, "Who is Tim?" provided the opportunity for TPF to lay the foundations for a strong storytelling infrastructure capable of spanning a variety of genres.

The differences between these two narratives are obviously the lack of interaction in the first one (Cooper) in relation to the strong participatory experience of "Who is Tim?". In 1994, World Wide Web was not used to as large extent as it is now, and trends and stories did not go "viral" on the same pace as they now do. Web 2.0 is very user-generated and the environment where the story takes place isn't limited between one browser window. Instead, it can occur anywhere, and different events can happen simultaneously, whereas Delirium happened only when the reader experienced it, at one place - between their eyes and the screen. Nothing more than the ongoing story was synchronised or connected to it, and "Who is Tim?", in turn, was certainly more omnipresent and therefore also more powerful. The opposite characteristic of Cooper's story could be regarded as a weakness, but it needs to be remembered that at the time of its publishing date the narrational setting was revolutionary. "Who is Tim?" could not, respectively, be read or enjoyed at once, but interaction, patience and time were required in order to get sequel. This provided more genuine sensations to the story.

Conclusion

It can be observed - partly with the demonstration of the example narratives - that the entire culture of narration and storytelling has moved towards involving the hearer/reader strongly, inviting audience to decide and affect the way they want stories to proceed, and the bond between the narrator and user / reader is crucial to take into account while making business. Stories have a big role in companies, as can be perceived in the case of "Where is Tim?" where so many different parties had an impact on how the narration would unfold. Communication is exchanged from both parties and it goes both ways, and this has been made possible only recently, by the increased number of devices providing Internet connection, including navigation, applications and never-ending selection of sharing services. Stories become more and more stirred with reality, and they take place in real-life setting rather than between pages and tabs.

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2.3: Week 4

The purpose of the assignment for this week is to offer a critical analysis of a transmedia story that relates to a well-known franchise (e.g., *Harry Potter, Hunger Games*). For inspiration, read Henry Jenkins (2006) who discusses the complex storytelling of *The Matrix* through games, movies and animation.

The Dark Knight Trilogy
The Dark knight Trilogy is a Warner-Bros movie franchise, based on the DC Comics 'Batman' and consists of three parts directed by Christopher Nolan. *Batman Begins* in 2005*, The Dark Knight* in 2008*,* and *The Dark Knight Rises* in 2012. The franchise has gained worldwide recognition as being one of the best film trilogies to have ever been produced, as well being named the number one achievement in the super-hero film genre. Each part of the trilogy was a box office success, with the second and third part, both earning $1 Billion> globally.

Highly Extensive Trans-media campaign through ARG
As with any movie franchise, traditional media were used by Warner-Bros bros '*The Dark Knight Trilogy'*. With traditional media, think of Posters, Art Work, Trailers and TV-ads, as well as partnerships with large domestic and international brands. But for the second installment of this trilogy the marketing efforts were raised to a completely new level. More than a year before the traditional marketing begun, Warner Bros partnered up with '*42 Entertainment'* to create one of the largest and most successful trans media campaigns of the time. Together they created an Alternate Reality Game (ARG). An ARG is an interactive networked narrative. It combines the real world and other media as an interactive, and viral platform. Trans-media storytelling is used to deliver an exhilarating experience, which is altered by the players' own ideas an actions.

In May, 2007, several billboards appeared in a number of major cities in the United States. It was still many months away from any Presidential elections, and the boards simply stated "I believe in Harvey Dent" and "Harvey Dent for District Attorney". The message was typed over an image of Dent (Aaron Eckhart) standing, stately, in front of the American Flag. A few days later, all the billboards in all the cities had seemingly been vandalized by identical

graffiti. Dent's eyes had been blackened, his mouth smeared with red paint like a clown, with the message: "I believe in Harvey Dent TOO!". Fans of Batman knew what they meant, and the billboards set off an ARG campaign like they had never experienced before.

Over a years time, forty different websites were launched. Some of them obviously linked to the Dark Knight Franchise, like whysoserious.com and TheGothamTimes.com and had big clues to guide the fans to them. Other sites were very subtle, like Bettyshouseofpies.com and Pasqualesbistro.com and had as only purpose to supplement the vast world of Gotham that they were creating, in the real world.

The offline efforts of this campaign were also incredibly commendable. It began with the billboards, but this was just the beginning. 'Jokerised' dollar bills, faux kidnappings, cakes with mobile phones hidden inside, bowling balls with phone numbers etched into them. All this lead to a transmedia campaign that integrated not only traditional media and temporary forms of social media. It even integrated the infrastructure of a whole nation, in its efforts to create an entire fictitious world, for their growing fan base to feel that they are a part of.

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2.4: Week 5

Corporate stories are essential for a company's brand image. It is the strategic compass of the organization and it is the beginning of all communication. The corporate story is an essential tool to differentiate one organization from another.

We are going to conduct a critical analysis and discuss the results of the corporate story of the international brand Shell. Shell has many corporate stories and it is a well-known organization to the public. Therefore, we wanted to take a closer look to their internal corporate stories. We chose a corporate video about working at Shell. We are going to

analyze the corporate video according to the storytelling model of Mckee, look at the message and purpose of the video and the target audience.

According to the theory of Robert Mckee, "Plot and principles of storytelling", there are three rules for a good plot in a story; the hook, the hold and the payoff. The hook is the part of the story which engages the audience and wins their interest. The hold is the part of the story which keeps up the interest of the audience. The payoff is the emotional satisfaction and/or final explanation that the audience gains from the story.

The hook in this corporate video is seeing employees from Shell talking about their jobs. It is interesting to see how every job, offered by Shell, is fulfilled by people with many different backgrounds and.

The hold, to keep the interest of the audience, is seeing so many employees with all different backgrounds from all over the world. Their talking about their jobs with enthusiasm, which makes the audience draw into the video.

The emotional pay-off in this corporate story is seeing the Shell employees at the end, they are telling that they are very happy with their job. Not only are they telling the audience, but you can see it in their faces. The background music enhances the feeling of happiness and gives the urge to do something. It draws you in. The emotional payoff in this corporate video is very well constructed.

Does the corporate story have a high level of engagement? In our opinion, the longer the video is running, the more engaged you are. When looking at a company like Shell, at first sight, you would not think that it would be a very excited job. But the way how the employees are telling about their jobs, actually makes you want to work there. The video draws you into their stories

The meaning and purpose of the video is quite clear. From the beginning of the video, you know it is a recruitment video, because the employees are telling about their jobs and how nice it is to work at Shell. The message becomes even clearer when the end shot is the logo of Shell with the text "Visit Shell Careers".

The target audience of this video are people who are looking for a new job and are interested to work at Shell. In the video itself, there are no criteria mentioned. It actually shows that it does not matter what your background is, or where you are from. Everyone can work at Shell. In our opinion, the target audience well-considered.

The main message of the video is "Come work at Shell". The medium of this corporate video is the internet, because it is shown on youtube, but this corporate video could easily be shown on TV. The tools are video and Youtube.

In our opinion, Shell did a good job creating this corporate story. In the video they not only focus on their organization and their purpose, but most of all they focus on the employees. The video already has a good engagement level, so it does not need any improvement there. The storyline is quite clear and the hook, hold and payoff as well. It is simple, but effective.

Shell has been very successful on their social media platforms. They have created different image for themselves online than offline. Shell has clearly stated on their social media platforms their core values, their goals and future plans. They discuss trending topics which would be interesting for their existing target audience. Shell has managed to captivate its

audience successfully on several social media platforms. They have 5.2 million Facebook fans, over 9,000 Instagram followers, 28,000 YouTube subscribers and 287k followers on Twitter. (Knight, 2015). Because of their great social media strategy, they receive a great amount of engagement from their followers from their various social media platforms. This gives Shell a huge advantage, in regards to competitors.

In our opinion, the all the social media platforms are simple but effective. The are coherent with each other and they enhance the brand image and awareness for the organization.

In conclusion, Shell has been very smart with positioning themselves on social media platforms and creating their corporate stories. The focus of their corporate video is the employees, but Shell is still able to get their core values across to the viewer. This creates a brand image that Shell cares about their people and that they are not only focussed on their goals but also the process of getting there.

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