



CRAFTING YOUR STORY

For Collaborative
Conservation Groups and
Support Organizations





INTRODUCTION BRETT PRETTYMAN

- Communications director with TU for 6 years
- Outdoor editor/columnist and environmental writer at Salt Lake Tribune for 25 years
- Producer/director/host of the Utah Bucket List television show



“Show, don’t tell”

What Makes A Good Story?



— Once upon a time there was _.
Every day, _.
One day _.
Because of that, _.
Because of that, _.
Until finally _.

—
The Story Spine



P X A R



THE STORY SPINE

THE STORY SPINE	STRUCTURE	FUNCTION
Once upon a time...	Beginning	The world of the story is introduced and the main character's routine is established.
Every day...		
But, one day...	The Event	The main character breaks the routine .
Because of that...	Middle	There are dire consequences for having broken the routine. It is unclear if the main character will come out alright in the end.
Because of that...		
Because of that...		
Until finally...	The Climax	The main character embarks upon success or failure
And, ever since then...	End	The main character succeeds or fails, and a new routine is established.



WHEN YOU ARE IN LOVE ...

YOU COULD ALWAYS TAKE THE MAD LIBS APPROACH

1) You greet each other with a/an _____ NOUN _____ in your heart
and a/an _____ NOUN _____ on your face.

2) You see the whole wide _____ NOUN _____ through rose-colored
_____ PLURAL NOUN _____ and loving _____ PART OF THE BODY (PLURAL) _____.

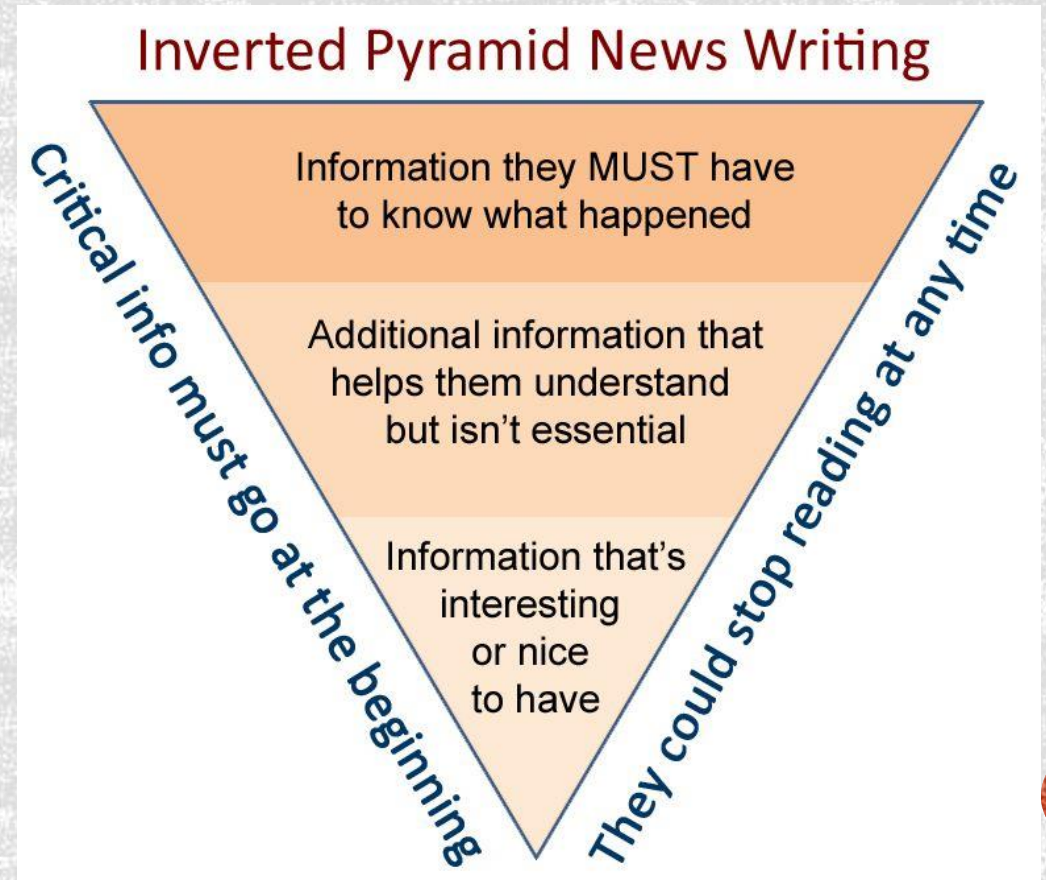
3) You walk by a babbling _____ NOUN _____, spontaneously remove
your shoes, roll up your _____ PLURAL NOUN _____, sit down, and dangle
_____ NOUN _____.

Hip2Save

Journalistic style



- The 5 Ws and an H – one of the first things they teach in journalism school.
- The inverted pyramid. All the important information first, followed by less important, but still interesting.
- Don't bury the lede



DETERMINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

- Partners may have different targets
- Consider targeting various audiences through different social media platforms (age, interest).
- Reach out to people in the demographic for their reactions to your work.



**GOLDFISH NOW
HAVE A LONGER
ATTENTION SPAN
THAN THAT OF
THE AVERAGE
CONSUMER.**



9 seconds for goldfish and 8 seconds for the average consumer





SET THE HOOK!

- Headlines are key in catching the eye of potential readers, viewers and even listeners. Focus on the headline/video title and try many different versions to find one that works the best with your audience.
- Images help draw people to your work. Never underestimate the value of a good picture. The saying about a good picture being worth 1,000 words is true, but the opposite can also be true. One lousy image used as the main feature of any medium may turn people off before they even look at the headline.





Getting good photos

- Consider hiring a professional photographer.
- Smartphones can provide high quality pictures and video, but field staff expected to use their mobile phone for work-quality images should get training on how to make the most of their devices.
- Did you know you have to have a pilot's license to operate a drone on most public lands? Permits are also required in some instances. Do your homework to prevent sudden obstacles to a project.
- Remind field staff over and over and over again to take a few minutes from their work to document the progress of their project. There is no such thing as too much reminding in this case.





“If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.” — **Yogi Berra**

Start planning early

In a perfect world, outreach and communications efforts will start before the field crew brings in the heavy machinery. Make a media plan in consultation with those who will be doing the work. Ask for a schedule of the project to time visits from media, funders, photographers, drone pilots and videographers.

Ask field staff what will provide the best pictures to help tell the story.

Ask those working on the ground to come up with a list of possible interviews (landowners, partners, volunteers) for media, press releases and video.

Before and after images/video of conservation work are effective storytellers, but not always. The landscape often looks a little bare after some work.



Photomontage 9-18-18



Photomontage 10-13-18



 **RYAN**  **UAS**
SOLUTIONS INC. OPERATIONS
CIVIL 2014



“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” — *Maya Angelou, author, Civil Rights activist and poet*

Film provides an opportunity to marry the power of ideas with the power of images.

STEVEN BOCHCO



“We live in a world where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning.”

— *Jean Baudrillard, sociologist*

- Write a script, even if it is for a 10 second social media video
- Consider creating different lengths of videos for different needs. Longer feature videos for YouTube and Vimeo; a shorter version for social media. Think about videos specifically suited for partners and funders.
- Include diversity.
- Avoid using similar quotes from different people. Let partners speak to their strengths.
- Find people comfortable in front of a camera.
- Go through an interview with the people appearing in the film beforehand to make them more comfortable when the record button is hit.





Tribesin Fish Passage





Field Day Friday

with Ticks Unrated





I WROTE A BLOG
POST



BUT NO ONE
COMMENTED

memegenerator.net

- Press releases — Does anybody still do those? They do still have a place and are often listed as deliverable in grants. What I like to do is write a story for our website on the project and then share it with media. Can let them know they can use the story as it is or we can help them write their own. This way we also have the story available on our site and for social media.
- Blogs — Feed the beast. The TU comms team is officially known as TROUT Media. We consider our team, comprised largely of former newspaper folks, as a news service for TU. Blogs have many purposes, including what our CEO and president calls “Troutipedia”.
- Podcasts — About the time it looked like podcasts may have made their run there was a resurgence. More and more nonprofits or creating niche podcasts.

“Stories create community, enable us to see through the eyes of other people, and open us to the claims of others.”

– Peter Forbes, photographer and author





- Facebook has 2.740 billion monthly active users
- YouTube has an advertising reach of 2.291 billion
- WhatsApp has around 2 billion monthly active users
- Instagram's potential advertising reach is 1.221 billion
- TikTok has 689 million monthly active users
- Snapchat's advertising reach is 498 million
- Reddit has around 430 million monthly active users
- Pinterest has 442 million monthly active users
- Twitter's potential advertising reach is 353 million



Tag, you are it. Get social media handles/tags from all partners and include them in all posts. Encourage sharing.

Hyperlink to similar stories on your website – it helps with Google searches.

LEAVING PARTNERS OUT: THE IMPACTS

A young girl with blonde hair and freckles is the central focus, looking down with a sad expression. She is wearing a light blue shirt. In the background, other people are visible but out of focus, suggesting a social gathering or event.

- Jeopardize future collaborative efforts
- May develop a reputation for not being a good partner
- Not all partners may want to be a part of every release, video, effort
- Always ask if they want to be involved even if you know the answer



Thank you

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