

THE COMMS AVENUE CHAT WITH A COMMS PROFESSIONAL

The Comms
Avenue

HIGHLIGHTS FROM LANRE ADISA'S SESSION

HOW TO HARNESS THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

I didn't plan to be in Advertising. All I wanted to do after leaving the University was to write.

I stumbled on a Copywriting opportunity towards the end of my service year and I've been stuck since then.

The fact that I could write, and I was aware that my ideas could make a difference in the fortunes of brands, made me stay in Advertising.



WHY STORYTELLING IS IMPORTANT

Every piece of communication can only have an impact when it is designed to speak to a particular person.

People by nature would prefer to listen to stories instead of listening to plain information or facts. That's what makes stories stick.

In other words, man has been telling stories right from his days in the cave.



DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO TELL A GOOD STORY

I did Creative Writing in school. I was involved in writing drama and campus journalism. All of these helped me to hone my writing skills and my love for stories.

A good story must have the following;

- Delivery of a clear message that solves a business problem. This should not get lost in our attempt to entertain.
- Relevance and relatability. It is also important that it surprises us by not being predictable.
- It must take its cue from consumer insights for it to stay relevant and on message.



STORYTELLING TECHNIQUES COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONALS MUST PAY ATTENTION TO

1. A good story must have a hero and a villain or an antagonist as the case may be.
2. Stories are about conflicts and how you resolve them.
3. Stories also need focus and movement. You need to avoid unnecessary details so we don't get bogged down with dialogue with no movement.
4. Stories are better when they are visual. Whoever is watching will be taken in by the intriguing nature of the visuals.
5. Stories work better when you write like you're having a conversation with your audience. It helps you to focus on one person.
6. Stories thrive on surprises. No one should see you coming.

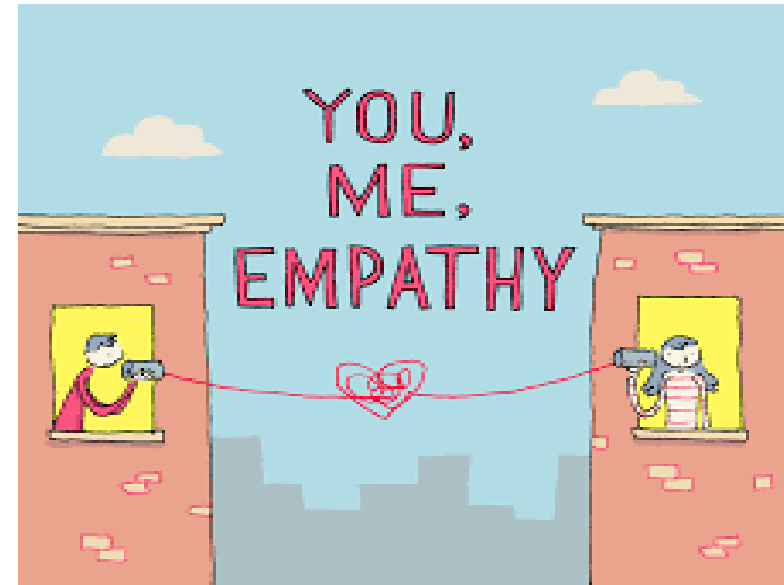


EMPATHY, EXCLUSIVITY, EXPERIENCE

Empathy is a necessity at all times, especially at a time like this. Every piece of communications should seek to elicit the understanding of its audience. That way, they can easily welcome you to their world.

It adds to your brand's goodwill. When you make any mistake for any reason, the goodwill of your brand will be the reason your audience can forgive you.

You also need optimism in these times. Things are tough; brands should not add to people's worries.



CHALLENGES

I've had instances where for some reason, things didn't turn out as expected.

Most times, the client may also understand the need for this and agree to rest the material as I've experienced on some occasions.

The most radical of my experiences was when we had to rewrite the script and shoot all on our own and represent to the client after one year of shooting.



HOW COMMS PROFESSIONALS SHOULD RESPOND DURING COVID-19

Marketing budgets are the first to be slashed during times like this.

I think what agency owners need to do is to ensure that whatever they get paid can keep their team going. Otherwise, it won't make business sense.

The budgets may go down but the ideas shouldn't. We need to find smarter ways of working with smaller budgets. I guess that is the essence of creativity.

If we compromise, we'll have ourselves to blame when things go back to normal.

