Speakers: Michael Margolis, GetStoried and Rob Kershaw, Center for Digital Storytelling

Facilitator: Kami Griffiths, TechSoup Global.

Chat Assistants: Kevin Lo & Evonne Heyning, TechSoup Global.

Slide 1: How to Tell Your Digital Story

This is How to Tell Your Digital Story: Empowering learners to constructively share their voices on the global stage!

Slide 2: TechSoup Global

Before we get started I want to say a little bit about TechSoup. For those of you who are new to our organization, we are working towards a time when every nonprofit and social benefit organization on the planet has the technology, resources, and knowledge they need to operate at their full potential.

Slide 3: TechSoup Homepage

Here's a screen grab of our homepage. And there are a few things I wanted to point out. We've got a Learning Center where you can see articles about plenty of different technology related topics. We have our online seminars, recorded seminars that you can find in that section as well. We have our blog. And we have our community forum. There are a couple of newsletters that you can subscribe to. So please take the time, take a few minutes to check out our website@TechSoup.org.

Slide 4: Digital Storytelling Event

And one last thing before I announce the speakers and introduce them. This is the kickoff for our Digital Storytelling Event. We are collecting stories that will be part of a challenge. And there are prizes involved and there will be winners chosen. So for more information go to this URL which of course I will send to you in our postevent message. For more information on how you can submit your story, we will be doing another webinar next Thursday to go over the tools for digital storytelling.

Slide 5: Today's Speakers

Without further ado I would like to introduce Michael Margolis and Rob Kershaw. So let's start with Michael. Tell us a little bit about yourself.

Michael:

Hey everybody, well I am really thrilled to be a part of the Digital Storytelling Challenge and the great work that the folks at TechSoup are doing. I am a teacher and storyteller, and media entrepreneur. GetStoried does lots of different things. We have a story university online and a range of different courses specifically helping change makers and innovators around getting others to believe in their story. And we encourage everybody to check a whole bunch, a wealth of resources of things that we are doing there. And we have a slide that is coming up a little bit later. We do have a storytelling manifesto for change makers that is available for anybody to download for free on the Internet. If you go to GetStoried.com you will see a link for it there, or if you go to believemethebook.com.

And the only other thing I will quickly just say is I started my career as a social entrepreneur and helped launched 2 nonprofits before the age of 23, and have just seen a lot of both the exciting potential of innovation and technology for telling one's story, and I have also struggled and really been frustrated with so many different times and situations in my own life and work, and in others where really great ideas and important work gets lost in translation. And that in many ways is what brought into this work around storytelling and
helping others in that process. So thanks for having me be a part of this.

Kami:

My pleasure, so happy to have you here. And Rob, from Center for Digital Storytelling, can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

Rob:

Likewise, as Michael said, I am really happy to be virtually here. I work for the Center for Digital Storytelling. I am the Canadian Projects Director, mostly because I was born in Canada, and my heart still somewhat lies there. But this is kind of a departure for me, although I was involved in the TechSoup webinar last year, we do most of our workshops in person. In fact, there are 10 people in another room in our space that I am co-facilitating a workshop right now on digital storytelling. So they have come in person to learn the way that we talk about and produce digital stories. So bear with me as this somewhat technophobe in this kind of world steps forward through it.

And I would just say if you want to know more about the Center, just go to www.StoryCenter.org, and there is a whole array of what we do, why we do what we do, and the people we've worked with, and the people who do the work. And I look forward to answering questions as they flow through. And working with Michael has been a pleasure, and look forward to the next one hour with all of you.

Kami:

Great, thank you so much.

*Slide 6: What motivates you to take on the digital storytelling challenge?*

Now a quick poll just to see where people are at in this audience. We've got around 655 of you out there. So please click on which one of these best describes you, what motivates you to take on the Digital Storytelling Challenge. So please select any one of those. I will give you a couple of seconds to complete that, because it is kind of interesting for us to know where folks are coming from.

And by the way, we've got someone, or at least one person from Nigeria on the call. And I know that there was someone from Australia who at 9:00 PM tonight they are listening in. And yes there is only one selection. Sorry about that Phyllis.

So we are going to skip to results. You can see where people are at. Lots of folks wanting to engage their supporters and shift public perception. So I am going to close the poll so we can move on. So thank you all so much for submitting that. It's interesting to see where people are coming from.

So what I'd like to do — I did that one already.

*Slide 7: Storytelling Manifesto*

And here is a little image of the Storytelling Manifesto that Michael mentioned. I'm just going to jump right into our interview here. Can you define what we mean by story, and explain how digital storytelling is different than regular storytelling?

*Slide 8: Define*

Rob:

Ah, Michael?

Michael:
Well Rob, we've got a slide here about — I think you are going to talk about this first slide, The Universe Is Made up of Stories.

*Slide 9: "The universe is made up..."

Rob:

Right. I mean I think what I love about that quote — that was me that decided to use that — is that this idea that the universe is made up and in a way stories are made up. And so there is a construction, there is a production, there is a process to stories.

And you know, I'm thinking of universe in the humanity sense, the human sense. And if you think about it, each one of us can reflect on our own personal universe and how that is constructed. And I guarantee not many of us go into the micro-organistic kind of world. We actually talk about our experiences. We think about people, our favorite teachers, or the experience of books we've read. Those are all to me somewhat centered in the idea of story. What I would consider the foundation of our whole human communication is through story and how we share ideas, experiences, and explain why we do something and why we don't. When you think about that universality of all of that learning and stories being at the heart of it, I think it is an appropriate quote.

And for me, digital storytelling is taking that energy. It is a particular medium of putting words along with audio and visuals, and the kind of layering of all these different mediums together, and putting it in a format that is digital. And with digital it has many ways to be shared. And I will leave it at that, Michael.

*Slide 10: Story*

Michael:

So when we talk about what is a story, it is something we all get a little tongue tied about. And especially the work that both Rob does and I do, we are pushing the boundaries of expanding the way the people think about the role and relevance of storytelling.

So this is a definition from a colleague of mine, Robert Dickman, that to me is one of the more evocative definitions of what is a story. And he describes it as a fact that's wrapped in an emotion that compels us to take an action that transforms our world.

And you can certainly — there is a great little point here in this definition. Stories don't always have necessarily a fact. Sometimes it is an experience. Sometimes it is a perception. There are a range of things there, but the point of it is a story has a truth. It has a message. It has a meaning. It is a perspective, right? And you are wrapping that into an emotional experience for people. And there is something that happens in the story that changes. There is something in the story that shifts, and ultimately that transforms people's world.

Here is a way to put it in very brass tacks terms in today's marketing sort of environment. People want to know, are you just trying to sell me something, or do you actually believe in something, and you want to change the world, ideally my world for the better?

That's what you're trying to communicate in your story. And getting into sort of more of the general — the slides aren't advancing right here. Oh, here we are.

*Slide 11: Story Structure - Chart*

Getting more into the general structure of a story, right? All stories have a beginning, middle, and an end, right? We think of this classic 3 act structure. In the beginning is the set up. There is an inciting event, something that builds things up. You've got to have a character, something that is happening that people can get invested into, and a sense of resolution. And we are going to be exploring this in far more detail, but just to kind of paint a picture in your mind, if you are starting brass tacks square one, think about beginning, middle and end. And you need to have a sense of progression of going from somewhere — or rather, you are coming from someplace, and you are going somewhere in the story.
Slide 12: Digital storytelling

And how that translates in the digital environment, digital storytelling just basically allows you to tell, package, and share your story so it can travel while you sleep. That's the power of digital storytelling.

Slide 13: Tools

And now of course there are all these incredible tools for telling one's story; YouTube, everybody's got a blog, a video camera. That is part of the power of this whole storytelling challenge that you can grab a camera, create a 60-second video that will start to tell your story and share that with the world while you sleep. You don't need to be in the room. And you are going to empower your supporters and your believers to help spread the story for you.

So there are some great — by the way — chatter in Twitter. And I just want to mention, any of the things that you are hearing, if you want to reference Rob, you can reference him at StoryCenter. You can also reference me at GetStoried. So feel free to reference those as we are going along with some of these other great references.

Slide 14: Twitter

Oh great. Here are the references, and then of course TechSoup and the hash tag tsdigs.

Kami:

Great. So what are some of the bad habits that get in the way of nonprofits really telling their story?

Slide 15: Challenge

Michael:

There is so much that is there Kami, around this topic. One could literally spend the entire webinar focusing on this.

Slide 16: People aren't believing

And a big part of the challenge is that people have stopped believing and identifying, and buying into the old stories. So there are a lot of struggles to this, because the old story of philanthropy, the old story of we are down and out, we're doing God's work, doing the best we can, please help us, that is a story that falls on deaf ears.

Slide 17: Stop Shilling!

And along those lines the other big challenge is, most of the time we are used to nonprofits communicating to us basically asking for money. We are constantly out there saying, give us money, and not only give us money, but it is usually a crisis. It's usually the house is on fire. Something terrible is happening. And the challenge with that is we are all being bombarded by so many of these pitches and appeals we just drown it out. We can't pay attention to it anymore. And that is part of the challenge that we face right now in so many incredibly worthy causes out there.

Slide 18: Andy Goodman

So this is the slide actually — our slides are jumping back and forth a little bit here. This is from Andy Goodman who talks about, we have a huge reliance on statistics. And this is one of the challenges. So many nonprofits today we're playing this game of outcomes measurement. We have to prove and legitimize the value, and what is the importance of our work, and what's the case for change. We end up drowning in numbers in jargon that completely disconnects people from the story. We over rationalize the story to death.

Here is a great quote from Andy Goodman which is, "Numbers numb, jargon jars, and nobody ever marched
onto Washington because of a pie chart."

*Slide 19: Invite people...*

Instead, what people are looking for is they want to be part of something. They want a bigger story to buy into. I see here in the text, funders want numbers, but here is what you have to keep in mind. At the end of the day, it is just like in regular marketing and sales, people buy on emotion, then they rationalize through logic. So even your funders, you need to be able to paint a picture in their minds of something that is evocative of why your work matters. And a number doesn't matter. It is the story that's behind the number.

And there is all sorts of research that supports this. And there was a great study that was done in the last few years that actually looked at fundraising techniques. And there actually is a psychological sort of process where the moment you start to talk in big numbers, the human mind goes into abstraction. We disconnect. And they have done studies at a fund raising level. We donate when we have a picture of a single human being in front of us, and we are told the story of that single human being. The moment it turns into 10, 100, a million, it moves into abstraction and we actually care less. It is how the human brain is wired. And there is some great research on this. In a second, Rob is going to be sharing some slides. And I will go ahead and post a link to some of that research.

*Slide 20: What makes a story compelling?*

Rob:

I just want to add, I don't know what the time is left on the question. I mean I do think there is a challenge of history. And I think also part of it is almost on a human scale of the idea of finding your voice and being creative. We just don't give ourselves that opportunity. We don't think about that as a valuable resource, what we've experienced within an organization, or what the organization has experienced, and the particular awareness and insight that has come from that experience.

The world of not-for-profit, the world of organizations is vast, and everybody seems to be kind of like chirping at the same song. And I think part of that has been how the media has been centralized. There has been this centralized sense of what media is, what media should look like, what digital media should look like. And what's happened is I think people have kind of been lemmings down that road, and kind of like well, this is what mainstream has been doing. We have to kind of like be the same. It's like following that lead as opposed to like saying, what does our organization — what is unique about it?

And once people think in those terms of uniqueness and what kind of knowledge that uniqueness springs. Then it's like, how do I want to share that knowledge? That opens the door. It kind of puts the ownership of the knowledge back in the organization. And I think that is an important place to start, knowing that there are these carrots out there. There're these expectations out there, but if organizations first do kind of a self reflection about what it is they do and why they are different than maybe the organization that's down the hall, or what they do in concert with that organization down the hall.

And I think that starts to develop a kind of story, foundation to story, and not just go chasing the dominant paradigm. And I think digital story telling has started to make that shift, whether it is the way we do it, or the way the social media is starting to operate. It is shifting the paradigm from this sort of rarefied kind of centralized world into a kind of more dynamic world. It creates some confusion about what the process is about. But I think what will come out on the other end is like what Mike was saying, is a kind of re-shift in how story is used, how story is viewed and considered whether it is a funder or a politician at the policy level.

*Slide 21: Seven Steps to Digital Storytelling*

Kami:

So Rob, let's go over your 7 steps so that we can understand what makes for compelling story.

Rob:
Well first of all, I just want to put some general terms out there. For me, again we work in first-person. This is an important part of our work, as people exploring story first and foremost from their perspective, what experiences they have and how does that translate into a story. And if so, how does that translate into a story that is about the organization, or the purposing of an organization.

I just want to — they are not on the slide, but things I think to be aware of for compelling story means it has to be listenable. Someone has to watch, has to get it, want to stay with it; honesty, creativity, thoughtfulness, and insight. So it's like what does your story have differently than the person or the organization next to you, and just stick with those.

In our world we have 7 steps. Hold on. My computer just…

Kami:

Sorry, that was me. I just changed new to co-presenter. I should have warned you. I can move your slide forward for you.

*Slide 22: Nothing Is Written in Stone*

Alright. So we have these — People do need to see a kind of a process. In our workshops we have come up with this thing called the Seven Steps. These are not prescriptive. They are not even linear steps. These are points of consideration, as you are starting to assemble, think about your story. And there is what we consider 7 critical areas that digital storytelling producers, creators, need to kind of sit with as they start to write their script, think about images, start to put the pieces together.

*Slide 23: Seven Steps of Digital Storytelling*

So the first — just go to that slide the has the quote. So this idea that stories is multifaceted, it's complex depending on context and culture. You know, people are calling story many different things. We have these what we call Seven Steps.

Here is this set of circles in kind of unison, in kind of connection. "Owning Your Insight" and the "Your" can be the collective "Your," but in this case it is the individual "Your." That's kind of the core. Once you grasp what it is — let me just go forward.

*Slide 24: OWNING YOUR INSIGHT*

So this idea of OWNING YOUR INSIGHT is a kind of foundation, a kind of core part. So really it's just an exploration. Before you kind of get pulled down the road because of funders, because of all these expectations out there, put the brakes on and just sit with the idea of awareness, perception, points of view, what is meaningful to you within your organization or you individually, before you start. Put the ownership of the purposing in your hands, not in the external environmental world, the external environment.

And since these are all available, I won't go into all the details of them.

*Slide 25: OWNING YOUR EMOTIONS*

The 2nd one is the idea of OWNING YOUR EMOTIONS. Once you have insight, there are many ways you can convey that emotionally. Depending the context, depending what it is that you are trying to convey, the knowledge, the wisdom, the experience that you are trying to convey, will have a series of emotions. And so stories can — in our world, we try to get the storyteller to think about what best suits the purposing of the story, and what emotion. So this idea that it can be something. If it's kind of a human rights issue, it can be a very, very — you can come from a place of deep anger. Or you can come from a place of reflection. Or you can come from a place of invitation. So finding the emotion is a critical part of that.
Slide 26: FINDING THE MOMENT

And in that, there may be the moment of an experience. And again, our world is an array of moments, an array of experiences. But there may be one key moment where it all sort of gels where this why we do what we do is very, very apparent. It is apparent to you, and it is easily conveyed apparent to the audience member. So they go, oh, I never thought of your organization that way. That's new information.

So there's a moment that was an ah-ha for you within the organization which will convey an ah-ha awareness learning to the audience. So it is this idea that your learning can be transferred into another person's learning. And again, sitting with some of these points of change thinking in the context of what will happen before, what happened at that point of change, and what has happened since, are important to show there has been a transformation.

This idea of stories, there are 2 ways of looking at it. Universally, stories are about change and you can think about it. Someone went on vacation or a visitor came to town. So as your organization moved forward you hit bumps in the road. You hit kind of synergies. You've hit connectedness. Right where those things happened are important things to talk about. Those are unique to that organization, and people need to be aware of those. Or something happens, the bump in the road, and it was the learning out of that that is equally as important for an audience member to kind of learn that.

Slide 27: SEEING YOUR STORY

Then of course once you sort of have this idea, well I have a moment. I have a series of moments. I have a kind of continuum of events or experiences that I want to convey. I kind of know what I learned out of those, or the organization has learned how we shifted through that learning, and the idea that we have an emotional core to it. It's like coming from some soulful place as an organization, a kind of a place of honesty.

Then it is kind of like, what is the way that we can see that story. What are the images that would maybe come to the fore. And again, there are all sorts of visual aids to this and a way of thinking visually. And I won't go into the details, but just know that there is a way of seeing your story as a way of telling it through words.

Slide 28: HEARING YOUR STORY

Equally, how you hear your story is important. And primarily what we consider is the voice of the storyteller is critical, so not having someone coming out that is not associated with the association or organization telling the story, that the organization, the voice of that organization is crystal clear. And when that happens audiences understand the connection. They say, this person is speaking from a core part, whether you want to call it the heart or the soul. That is an important part. Any other layering of sounds that can add information if you are trying to get people to think emotionally where you are coming from, find the sounds whether it is music that actually allows the audience to kind of enter into that emotional space.

Slide 29: ASSEMBLING YOUR STORY

Of course what we have now is all these pieces, bits of writing. We have ideas. We have images. We have sound. And then there is kind of an assembly to that. And the idea in digital media, one of the things that we didn't talk about — we talked about the purposing of that, and kind of the packaging of that — is with digital media you layer, you have layers of information, and the written word. And of course, everyone is aware of the funding RFPs and how everything is in kind of written format. There is only so much dimensionality to that. And in the digital media world you can add dimensions. So with words you can have associated images and associated sounds. And that expands the communicative power of that word just through the layering of other elements that the digital media world allows you to do.

Slide 30: SHARING YOUR STORY

And finally, this idea of SHARING YOUR STORY, and in our world we don't necessarily right away want
people to sort of go into that world, because that shifts the expectation from an internal reasoned purposing to an external world that you are being pulled into a direction. And typically as I mentioned earlier in the mainstream world of media, there has been kind of a predominant voice in all of this.

And Michael spoke well about that, we call it the old stories, or the old way of telling stories about organizations, the kind of public relations. You still hear it today. And again, the undercurrent in the social media is kind of like rattling that. And I think part of the reason why social media is so successful is people are saying I've had enough of following that horse. I need to speak out for myself. And I think following that path is critical, so the idea of sharing your story at some point, yes it has to, because if the rubber doesn't hit the road you are not going to get that connection.

But again, if you come from an honest place of where your story telling is coming from, an audience, we crave honesty, and we crave truth in this world. And once we connect into that the idea of a story that is centered in your own personal experience is critical. It's the missing link in so far as my opinion, in this world of organizational media. It's that kind of bring you down to a human level where we all can understand, cross culturally we can understand that language.

*Slide 31: What Brings a (digital) Story to Life?*

Kami:

Great, thank you so much Rob. So let's talk about what are the elements that will help bring a story to life. How do you get your audience to see themselves in the story?

Michael:

I think Rob, you've got one more slide here.

*Slide 32: A story that comes from the soul...*

Rob:

Oh, okay. I think it just reiterates this idea that starting from a place of self-awareness or exploration of self-awareness. And Michael's quote about nobody marched on Washington with a pie chart, and how soul-less the pie chart is, even though how that data was come by was through probably some really interesting questions and responses, especially in the world of social justice, and environmental justice, those areas that are critical right now on the world stage.

And when the story comes from someplace deep within, it's like it cannot be denied. If it's denied it is because it is now on the shoulders of the person that has turned their back on the story. But I think what we are striving for is people to stay with that story, to be connected to that story. And if they feel it is just another talking head speaking in some kind or rarefied conceptual world, that is the kind of disengagement that Michael was talking about.

But when there is something that comes down, and sometimes it is just the smallest of things — I can give you an example. I think this is important to give an example. I think this is important to give an example.

I remember doing a workshop with Foster Youth, four Foster Youth organizations. When that person told me about what it was when they got pulled from their house as a 3 or 4-year-old, they remember the trip to McDonald's. In all my work with Foster Youth, I've asked that to others. They said yes, there is this place where we go. That little bit of information tells me a whole bunch about family services, and social services. The idea that there is this kind of, it's not just well this person we'll take them there. There is a systematic kind of approach to removing children from homes.

It's a very specific case, but you can start to translate that into the universality of power, and lack of power and a way of kind of mitigating that power dynamic. And so it's the little things that I think we lose focus on that are actually critical to our understanding about big issues. The little things are coming from deep within. They are
not about the big outside world conceptual stuff.

Michael:

So there's a great book for any of you who are interested in storytelling in the context of presentations and giving a really good speech. And actually, let's stay back here on slide 36. And it is a book by Nancy Duarte called Resonate. And one of the things she talks about in that book — and we don't have a slide for it. But in that book she talks a very simple concept which is when she broke down many of the world's most famous speeches — and she pays a lot of attention to Martin Luther King's speech, or Steve Jobs unveiling the iPhone, and looks at others. There is a core basic pattern. The author is Nancy Duarte, and her book Resonate is a true masterpiece around the role of storytelling and presentations.

And here is the basic concept. You talk about what is, and then you talk about what could be. You talk about what is, and you talk about what could be. And it swings back and forth, back and forth. The book is called Resonate by Nancy Duarte. It just recently came out in the last couple months; phenomenal, phenomenal book.

And think about that in the context of Martin Luther King's great famous speech. He didn't just talk about having a dream. That was the part of what could be. He also first in that speech, he talked about what was going on in America at that time, and how shocked he was. He talked about an experience of alienation, of America's core promise, and yet here were the experiences that young blacks were having down in the South. And he described those experiences. And then he talked about what could be. And he pointed out, look, here's the contradiction. Here's the challenge. And that's what really touched people at such a profound deep level and the way that Rob speaks about here of a story that comes from the soul that cannot be denied.

And I think the link just got shared there by the chairperson. So the link is there in Amazon for Nancy Duarte's book Resonate.

So here's another way to think about this. What Rob just shared is really powerful. And I'm glad everybody is going to get these slides, because what folks at the Center for Digital Storytelling are doing is phenomenal. And I encourage every single one of you, if you are really interested in getting into the nuts and bolts of working with a story and producing it, they have an extensive curriculum that they have developed and have been teaching for many, many years in working with many grassroot organizations and really getting to the heart of the stories. So there are a lot of signposts here for doing the competition, and answering the challenge.

I want to offer a couple additional things for you that like, how do you get to this piece of the soul? It's like, okay, so get to the story of the soul. How do I rap my hands around that? That's like the invisible stuff. I mean that's really deep stuff. So here's what I want to share with you.

*Slide 33: I see you*

So here is the scene from Avatar. And this to me was the redeeming moment in Avatar if any of you guys saw that great movie. It's that scene where you have two love struck characters who are looking into each other's eyes, and they say "I see you. I see you." Like that is the heart of storytelling. That's what you're doing.

*Slide 34: Tell a story people can identify with…*

And the way that I describe that myself is tell a story that people can identify with as their own. If people can see themselves in the story, then the need to persuade, convince, or sell them on anything disappears. Like that right there, is the big magic secret to storytelling.

This is not about coercing people, convincing people, or persuading them. It's really thinking about your audience, thinking about who you want to be in relationship with, thinking about your own passion, your own natural authority, what you most care about. And how do you tell a story that bridges those worlds in a way that they can identify?
And if they see themselves in that story, then it becomes their story, and then there is nothing you need to convince or sell them on. It just becomes, wow, your story is my story. Let's create something together. That's the art and the secret when you really start to dig deep as Rob says, telling the story that comes from the soul.

**Slide 35: Hawai‘i Women's Org**

I'll give you an example of this. A few years ago I worked with the largest women's organization in Hawaii. And they were a 100-year-old organization. They were going through a major business transformation. And what they were struggling with was, they had lost relevance in their story. Their old story was the traditional social service agency story. They had a lot of very wealthy donors in the community that gave money to then support women who were sort of the classic sort of women who are less fortunate and dealing with a range of various different challenges in their lives.

But what was happening was this organization was frankly, bleeding red. And they had a visionary CEO who came in, realized they needed to reinvent the story of this organization. So part of what we did, we went in and did some narrative driven focus groups. And here is what we discovered.

Number 1, Hawaii has the highest rate of working women of any State in the US. And as we started to listen to women's stories, and we asked them, what is going on in your life, what we found was the biggest challenge that women were facing was balancing work and family demands. Because in Hawaii "ohana," family is King. It comes first. And yet, because also the world that we live in today, this generation as well as the economic climate of Hawaii, many Hawaiian women have to work, or choose to work.

So there was a new story that emerged for the organization which was it didn't matter whether you were an executive in the board room, or you were just working to put food on the table and to take care of your family, but there was a more universal story which is what does it mean to be a working woman living in Hawaii in the 21st century.

That became the new universal story. And it allowed them to actually reinvent their organization. They completed a multi-million-dollar renovation of their downtown facility. They rebranded it into a downtown women's club with a mission. And they've aligned the rest of their programs and operations all around this new concept and bigger story. They've actually shifted from being a traditional philanthropic donor organization to becoming a member driven organization, and one that transcends boundaries. That's the power of this.

And this is the YWCA of Oahu. Michael, thanks for asking the question. So just to give an example of this notion of looking for the bigger story, there's always a bigger story hiding in plain sight.

And here is the key. The bigger the story, the more universal and transcendent the story, the more room there is under that tent for people to locate themselves in that story.

I'll give you another example, and I don't have a slide for this. But take the issue of like homelessness. Okay, you know what? I'm noticing we've got to manage time here, so let's keep moving along.

**Slide 36: HOW to tell the story**

So real quick, what's more important, it's less about how you tell the story. And I saw some questions in here about quality issues. It's not about quality. It's having a story that is worth telling. When you have the story that is worth telling, the story tells itself and travels.

Alright, so we can maybe go back to that homelessness piece, but I want to keep moving along here.

**Slide 37: Help people locate themselves in the story**

So the point again here is, you want to think about how do you get people to locate themselves in your story. That's the set up. How do you get them to really feel and see, and be able to relate to what you are talking
about? They need to locate themselves in that story.

*Slide 38: As a storyteller...*

Because at the end of the day, as a storyteller we are forever at the mercy of our audience. And this is what we are talking about, Rob and I both.

*Slide 39: Your Audience*

You really need to be thinking about your audience. Who are they really? Why would they relate to what you are sharing? What is universal and transcendent about that experience? And what is the gift that you can offer?

Causes — philanthropic organizations, we are too use to and comfortable to asking for things. We are asking for money instead of giving people a gift. It's hard to build a relationship when you are asking people for money versus when you are giving them a gift. Really think about what is the gift that you have to share. Everybody has a gift to share.

*Slide 40: Every story need a set-up — LCD*

So in terms of getting started, one real quick thing to think about is your story needs a step-up. So this is a real simple little acronym here, LCD. This is what is going to bring your story to life. You want to think about location, how do you set up your story? Really think about the environment. How do you describe the setting? Because that setting sets up where the story is going to go. If I tell you it was a dark and stormy night. You know where that story is going, don't you? It's going to be a horror like story I'm about to tell you. So think about how do you set the mood? How you set up the environment so people know what kind of story this is?

You also need a character, or a hero. And we are going to talk about this some more in Q&A, because I think this is really important. In the hero part of this — I'm sorry. In the hero part of this, you want to think about who is the hero that people are going to identify with the most?

Your organization is not the hero. The hero needs to be the beneficiary of your organization. You need to tell the story of that beneficiary in a way that your donors can also relate and identify with it.

And then you want to think about the drama. There needs to be like a creative tension to the story. There needs to be something that that character is striving for, is trying to achieve, is trying to reconcile. Otherwise, why am I listening to the story? Who cares? What's interesting about this?

*Slide 41: Go Capture the Energy*

And you can go capture the energy. This is the key. Every organization has energy. What motivates your organization to do what it does? And if you want to collect good stories, you need to look for the energy. You need to ask questions that people have energy around. Because if people don't have energy around the question, you are not going to get a good story.

So here are some of the questions. Why are you involved? How do you relate to this cause? What motivates you? How is your life now different? What does it mean to be a part of this? These slides are going to be available for you guys to review these.

*Slide 42: Start with a small idea...*

Rob, I think you've got a couple more suggestions as well on this, right?

Rob:

Well, sure. Multi-tasking is not my strength obviously. There is such a stream of chat and questions that I was trying to — yeah. So again, this idea that the issue of quality seems to be a dominant one. Maybe that can be in
the Q&A.

But starting with a small idea, something that is truly meaningful to you, again trying to just get a handle on something that is doable. I mean again, if we are thinking about it's got to be to compete, to get distribution, we are already thinking about an expectation, about production quality. Again, I would suggest starting small, small ideas, some small kind of nugget, some diamond in the big rough of the world.

And then at that point, that just sort of gels ideas about visuals and sound. Make notes to the visuals that correspond to that. Even though it's like what Michael was saying, it doesn't have to be going into some kind of high production value. But I think being very confident and clear about your purposing and also about the connection to that small idea to the visuals and audio will make it high-quality.

People go past the kind of tech bells and whistles when they see a simple story told well. It will trump a kind of very slick presentation. Just look, the people that turn off to most political speeches, or kind of CEO speak, they get turned off because they have all the right quality issues, but they do not have the connectedness in their actual narrative.

So again, looking — and this also just helps you kind of get a grasp on the scale. It's not — it looks simple. And this outcome might seem simple, but it's not necessarily simple to kind of rap your head around this. So start small. Start doable.

And a 250 to 350 word script, we were just talking about this in the workshop. In this format in the digital media world, when it is coming from a small idea, or small awareness, a kind of soulful place, we actually can't stream a kind of ah-ha moment into an hour-long documentary. Aha moments are these bright lights, and we want to just call attention to those illuminating points. That can be done in a very short script, especially when you are layering your images and your sound on top of that, that actually allows that small little bit to start to resonate out, ripple out into a kind of like visually appealing, something that people will gravitate to and pay attention to.

And the other thing is a Storyboard, however you want to do that. There are all sorts of online ways to kind of storyboard your story, to kind of link images so the connection, and again the compelling going back to this idea of what makes a compelling story. Where there is a connection to what is visually shown, to what's being said, whatever the narration is, there is a connection. And it could be an explicit connection, or it can be implicit. It can be symbolic, and kind of poetic. Or it can be kind of, you know, you need to see this, because if you don't see this you are not actually going to understand where I'm coming from directly. So that is the idea of explicit imagery.

But really, start with a small idea, because all of this is in context anyway. You can't solve everything. One story does not solve all the problems. In some cases, it just raises the issue that there is a problem, and that's important too. So stories aren't the solution. They are kind of the way to get people dialoging, communicating between. So again, keep it small.

*Slide 43: Questions?*

And then on that…

Kami:

Sorry, I'm going to move us along. I'm sorry to interrupt there, unless there is one last thing you want to say, but we have about 7 min. left and I'd like to answer a few of the questions.

Rob:

The only thing is, on that smallness, it is just like, be gentle on yourself. Don't try to compete to the high-quality, again going back to the quality issue. Be gentle on yourself as that slide says.
Slide 44: Be patient and compassionate with yourself.

And just give yourself some space. Allow someone in your organization the time to be creative and kind of think about this. And just don't do it to follow some kind of norm.

Kami:

Sorry to cut you off there Rob, but there are quite a few questions that have come through the chat. And I wanted to address one that has come up a few times regarding funders, and how they are always looking for numbers. So how can we demonstrate to them our impact through digital stories? Is there a way to somehow appease the funders through our stories?

Rob:

Well, again, most of our work is done in conjunction with funded projects and proposals. So there are agencies out there that are starting to see qualitatively. And stories don't necessarily bring numbers. It's just too early on. I'm sure there's — and how things have shifted, but I just think the paradigm is shifting. And if funders are just worrying about numbers, they may be aren't the ones that are necessarily going to grasp this this way. But I would point to people, and again, on our website some of our case studies will direct you to the work we've done in the qualitative kind of assessment world, and qualitative analysis, and participatory research and things like that. So again, it's shifting. So stay with it.

Michael:

If I can quickly add to that, because I am really passionate on this topic. And I think this is one of the biggest obstacles and hurdles in this sector right now. When you look at a financial statement, a financial statement has numbers on it. Those numbers are meaningless until you put a story to the numbers. What do these numbers actually mean?

And that again, all of these things go back to the same point which is you have to get to the core meaning of what is your work about. That's what people care about. And the drive train of the social sector is emotional capital. So focus on that. You are going to have numbers. You are going to need numbers. And oftentimes your funders and if you are getting government funding, you've got numbers up the whazoo.

But the biggest challenge right now is most of you as organizations are over rationalizing your story to death. You've got all the logical analysis, but what you are missing is telling the bigger evocative story that's not the moralistic story. It is not the guilting and shaming story. But it is the story that really excites people to say, I want to be a part of that. I believe in that. That's something that excites me. That is the story you need to figure out that you are sitting on. And I guarantee you in every single organization you have that at your core.

Kami:

You're exciting me. I love the energy. Thank you so much. One great question is, if there is more than one moment of change, how do we choose one? Do we choose the one that is more emotionally evocative, or the one that connected to the issue that is in the public forum?

Rob:

Again, you don't ask that question totally without looking at — if you look at our Seven Steps, everything is in sort of concert. Something that is the most connected to the issue is like what is the emotion within that? As long as the story that you tell is true to that emotion, to that issue, to what it is you are trying to convey, again the honesty, the audience sort of picks up on the emotion of that. It hits them at the same level that it is coming out of you.

And I don't think you necessarily choose one over the other. A lot of it is sort of to do with contextualizing it,
and what is the purpose of it to make a decision. But I wouldn't say one is necessarily more powerful than the other or is going to get people to change attitudes or shift. They are both realms of possibility. In our workshops people will explore the 2 options. And at that time given the resources and the images they have, the one story will prevail over the other, but not because it is the best story, or the better story. It's the one to tell at that time.

Michael:

And what I would add to that as well is what makes a great story, what we all look for is point of view. And so think about your organization, the cause that you work on. Odds are, you are not the only organization working on that cause. So what is your organization's point of view on the issue? What do you think is most important as an organization? Go back to your mission, your motivation, your values, the way that you look at the issue. That's what needs to show up in the story. And that is how you make choices as to what is the magic moment that you want to focus on. You want to focus on what you think is the most important moment as it relates to your point of view, and how you as an organization see the world, and how you want others to relate to the issue that you care about.

Kami:

Well, thank you both so much. We are out of time. My apologies to those of you who didn't get your questions answered. We did have a lot of answers given via the chat. So hopefully you got some of your questions answered.

I'm trying to pull up a link here. I too am multitasking.

Slide 45: Upcoming Webinar

But I want to remind everyone that we have a second webinar next Thursday, and this is Tools for Digital Storytelling. So some of the questions that had to do with how do you get emotion in your pictures, those kind of questions will be answered then. So if you haven't yet registered for that, please do so. I will include a link in my postevent message.

Slide 46: Digital Storytelling Event

And again, here is more information about the Digital Storytelling Event and the Challenge. Please do consider creating a short one minute video or a collection of photos, and submitting them to the challenge in order to win some great prizes. More information can be found on our website.

Slide 47: Thank You!

So thanks again for everyone who attended today, great crowd, and really great presentations.

Thank you Rob and Michael, what a wonderful presentation. And hopefully you will all be able to go in and submit a video to the challenge. And we did record this call so you can watch that recording later as well. So expect a message from me this afternoon. Please do take a minute to fill out our postevent survey. And again, thanks everyone this has been great. Rob, Michael, have a wonderful day.

Michael:

Thank you everybody, great connecting with you all.

Kami:

Bye -bye.

Rob:
Bye.