

# Based on a true story: The transformational power of integrating storytelling lenses in the business curriculum

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*When a child is born the first thing the child requires is safety and love. The next thing that the child asks for is,  
“Tell me a story.”*

— Salman Rushdie, novelist

# The shortest distance between two people is...



*"We live in a sea of stories...and like the proverbial fish who will be the last to discover water, we have our own difficulties grasping what it is like to swim in stories."*

— Jerome Bruner, psychologist.



# The class: Brand Storytelling & Identity

- + *Everybody* is a storyteller (show, don't tell)
- + Hands-on ([digital storytelling](#))
- + Participatory (story circle)
- + Inductive (to *do*, you first need to *see*)
- + Multi and intra -disciplinary

= Facilitator ≠ Teacher



# Students' outcomes: Digital Stories

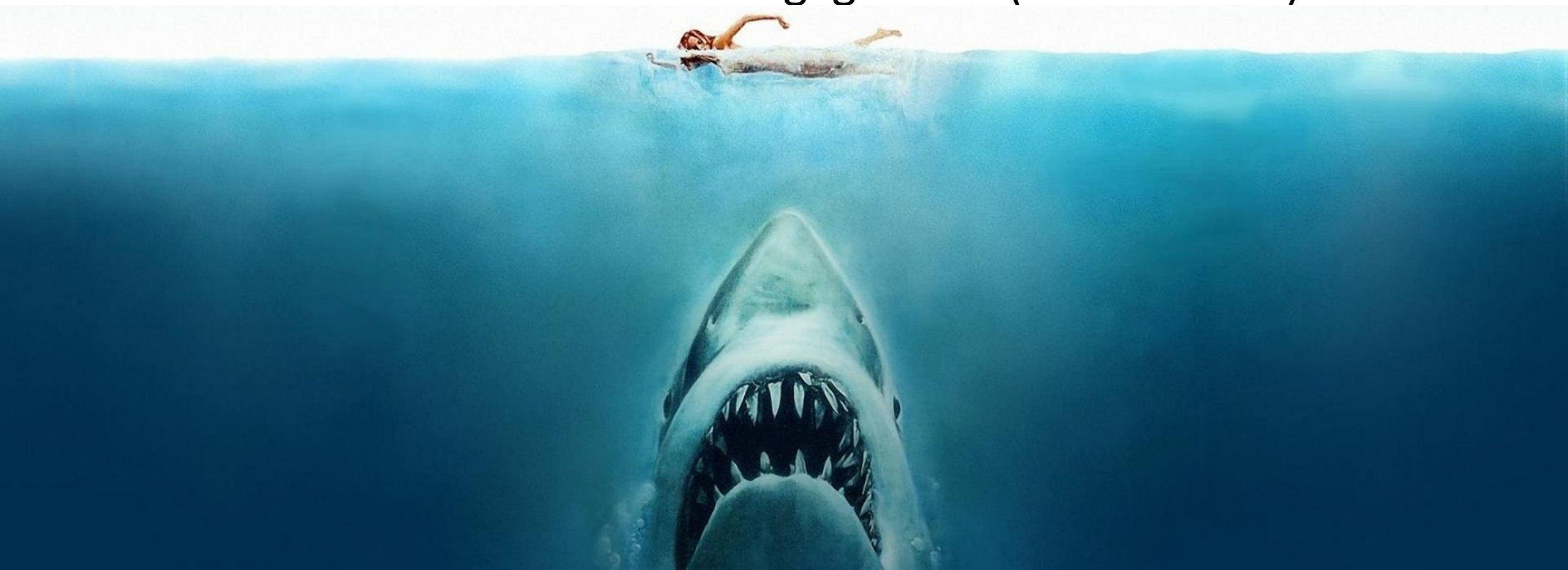


# The secret recipe...

Change (or conflict)

Tension (suspense)

Engagement (involvement)



# Work your storytelling muscles

- + A story about your name...
- + Picture/graph carousel
- + Tell me you are \_\_\_ without...
- + Six-word story challenge
- + Prompts: change, transformation...
- + Peer-to-peer draft review
- + Share evolution of drafts
- + Story circle: *How can we help?*



*“All great literature is one of two stories; a man goes on a journey, or a stranger comes to town.”*

— Leo Tolstoy, **writer.**

# Business applications

- + Business communication skills
- + Data analysis – interpretation
- + Strategy formulation
- + HR management
- + Internationalization of business



*“If a story is not about the hearer he will not listen. And here I made a rule – a great and interesting story is about everyone, or it will not last.”*

– John Steinbeck, writer and Nobel prize winner.

# The lab: The brandnarrative sandbox

- + Summer *undergraduate research* fellowships (SURF @ Trinity)
- + Three waves, three current studies
- + Committed space: focus on *experiments*
- + *Proofs of concept* on the road (SMA, CUR)
  - x Storytelling channel
  - x Landscapes of consciousness
  - x Choose-your-own-adventure

= Scaffolded Pipeline





*“Tell me a fact and I’ll learn. Tell me a truth and I’ll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever.”*


— Native American Proverb

Thank you!  
Questions? Comments?

**Extra content**



## CREATIVITY AS A REFLECTIVE LEARNING EXERCISE: INFORMING STRATEGIC MARKETING DECISIONS THROUGH DIGITAL STORYTELLING

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### ABSTRACT

As educators we strive to facilitate knowledge and ways of learning that serve students throughout their lives, but we also recognize their sometimes short retention span. The innovation we present in this article consists of the use of digital storytelling as a conduit for students to construct a narrative of their experience in a marketing simulation throughout the semester. We explain the innovation's implementation as well as the results observed throughout the years in the digital stories developed by students. Finally, we discuss further applications of this innovation in other courses and future research avenues.

# Buyer personas and buyer journeys

[Adele Revella's book *Buyer Personas*]

Built around a story about your customer's buying decision: reveals insights into buyer's expectations; narrative reveals language and phrases that will resonate with other buyers with similar concerns.

Five rings of buying insight:

- **Priority Initiative** *Tell me about the problem you were having before you discovered our product.*  
(Subject matter, trigger leading to search, moment when pain got buyer's attention)
- **Success Factors** *What were you expecting to change/to get solved/to improve after finding a solution?*  
(expectations for the outcomes that matter most to buyers, scenarios expected to change after purchase — object of desire)
- **Perceived Barriers** *Tell me about any concerns/fears/pushback that resulted as you search for solutions.*  
(situations/scenarios moving away from TOD, possible villains, plot "thickers")
- **Buyer's Journey** *So, once you decided to search for solutions, what was the first action you took? And then...?* (influencers involved at each phase, decision/evaluation process —the HOW, supporting characters, plot/arc, turning points)
- **Decision Criteria** *What is important to you when looking for a solution? Why is that important?* (capabilities buyers evaluate for solutions under consideration, attributes buyers believe they need to achieve Success Factor outcomes —protagonist's values)