

Stories that Connect Us

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Why Do We Tell Stories?

- To educate
- To drive action
- To create connection
- To show impact
- All of the above



What's it like not to have running water during a pandemic?

Many DigDeep staff come from the communities we serve. The pandemic meant some of us struggled to find water for our own families.

[Meet Shanna Yazzie](#) ↗



How do you fight Covid-19 without running water?

Navajo Nation had one of the highest Covid-19 infection rates in the world, because 30% of homes lack running water.

[Read our CEO's Op-Ed in the New York Times](#) ↗

The Elements of a Great Nonprofit Story

The Elements:

Introduce the main characters

Set the stakes

They go on a journey/encounter a problem

Someone intervenes

A change happens

They are transformed



The Function:

Personalizes the source material

Builds connection to recipients

Sets up our need/cause

Shows how we work

Defines the difference we're making

Connects us to the public/donors/
potential recipients

Imagine...



Amigo

Amigo was the only canine survivor in a devastating house fire that killed all six human members of his family. Once the cinders were extinguished and the fire trucks had pulled away, Amigo was left in the yard of his burned-out home. A few neighbors occasionally tossed food over the fence but no one came to claim him. Weeks passed. Abandoned, he began to forget what human companionship was like. And then finally, he was carefully trapped and brought to the FACE Low-Cost Animal Clinic.

Amigo needed medical care, patience, time and one-on-one professional training to get him to trust people again. We enlisted a trainer who worked with Amigo for the next four months. There were days that went just right and others with huge setbacks. But we refused to give up on Amigo. And then finally, Amigo began to trust. He spent time with the trainer's children. He played fetch, he ran agility courses, and he remembered what people and family meant.

Amigo was adopted at the first Indy MegaAdoption event. He now lives happily with his new family and the sadness and loss from his previous life are distant memories.



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Getting Great Stories from People

- Connect in the right way
- Ask the right questions:
 - What led you to our door?
 - Tell us what it was like to use our services.
 - How did it make you feel?
 - Who helped you through this process?
 - What would you want others to know about your experience?
 - Tell me more about that.

Honoring the Story

- Treat storytellers well
- Share stories strategically
- Show, don't tell, when possible
- Thank your connection

Good Stories Explain WHY

- Responding to the *need*
- Why this cause is the right one to give to
- Recipient stories
- Donor stories
- Emotional appeals
- Great for newsletters, brand videos, microsites, part of annual reports



MOTIVATION

MEET JESSIE, DERON AND MILEY

They have the food they need because of your support.

Jessie Begay never expected to have children of her own. But after her sister died, that changed.

Jessie's sister had been caring for her two grandchildren. When her sister died, Jessie wasn't going to let the grandchildren her sister loved so much—9-year-old Deron and 10-year-old Miley—go into foster care. Five years later, she considers herself their mom.

"The best thing about being their mom is just to see them happy and to see them grow," Jessie said.

However, it can be hard ensuring they have enough to eat. Despite her long hours working as a non-emergency medical transport driver, Jessie doesn't get paid a lot. So, she takes the kids to a community center and a food pantry that receive food from St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance, a member of the Feeding America network. She'll do whatever she needs to make sure her kids have food to stay healthy.

Deron and Miley know how much Jessie does to take care of them and how much she loves them. "I'm really proud of her," Deron said. "I appreciate her. She works really hard, and on top of everything else, she helps us get food."

WATCH THE VIDEO OF THEIR STORY.

MOTIVATION 2019 ANNUAL REPORT 3

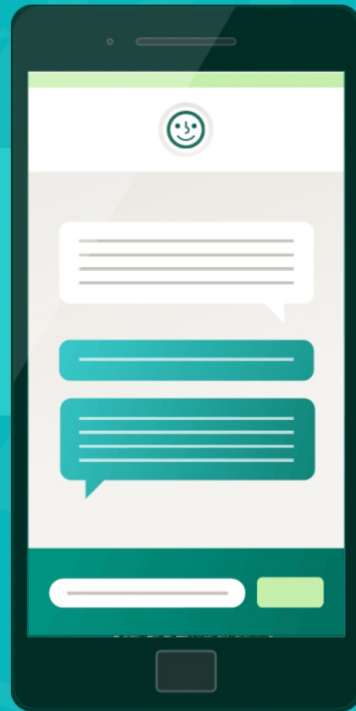
[Feeding America Annual Report](#)

ONE: Making the Connection

EVERY MONTH, OVER 560
BILLION TEXT MESSAGES
ARE SENT WORLDWIDE

USEFUL FOR...

Letting you chat with
friends and receive
reminders.



EVEN MORE USEFUL FOR...

Allowing women who
live far from a doctor
to receive advice on
how to have a safe
and healthy
pregnancy.

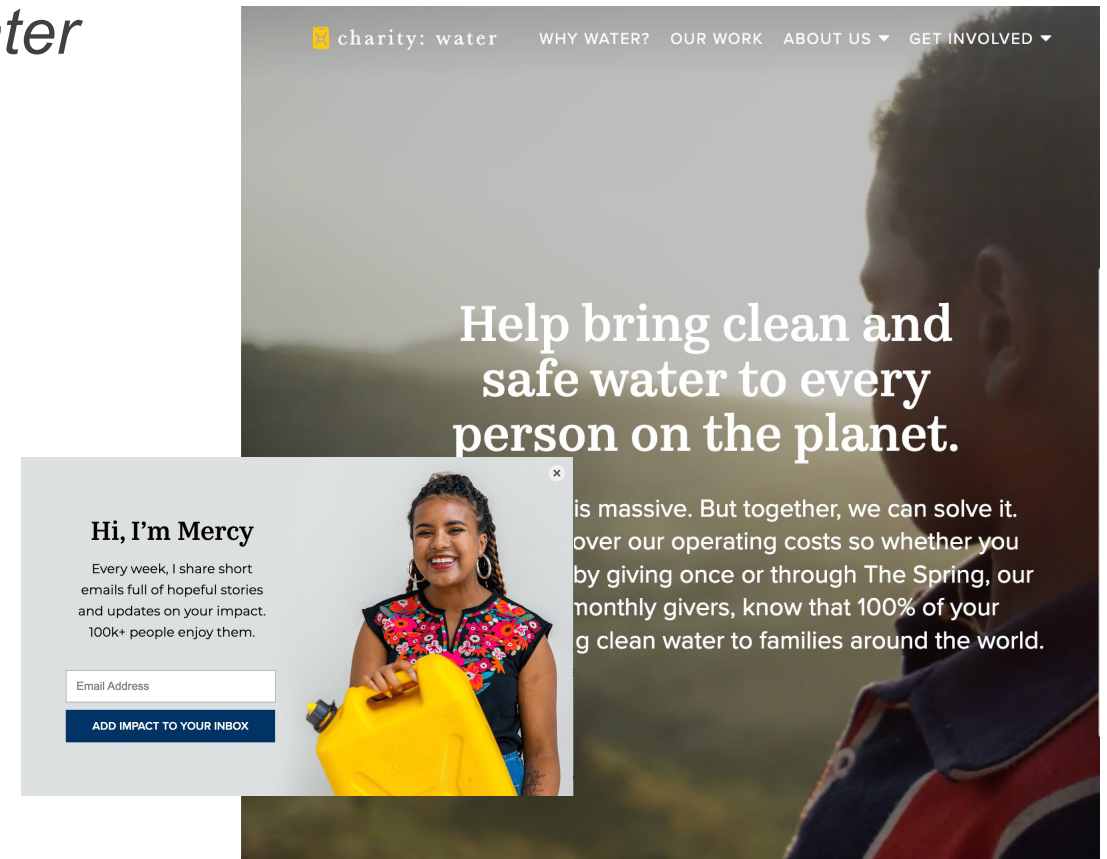


Photo credit: Morgana Wingard

Charity: Water

*“Numbers can impress, but stories are remembered.”
– Scott Harris, founder & CEO of charity: water*

“We built three wells. We fixed three wells. And then we sent the photos and the GPS and the story back to those 700 people. This was a big deal. People could not believe that a charity would bother to report to them on a \$20 gift. And that something actually happened with the money that they could see, that they could connect with.”



Charity: Water



[Video link.](#)

Dig Deep

Personal stories
bring reports to
life through the
news media.

HUFFPOST

ENVIRONMENT

What It's Like To Not Have Running Water During A Pandemic

Thwarting the coronavirus means washing hands and staying hydrated. That's not easy for the 2 million Americans still without plumbing in 2020.

By Alexander C. Kaufman

Mar 26, 2020, 05:45 AM EDT | Updated Mar 26, 2020

Two weeks ago, as the coronavirus was spreading across the U.S., Shanna Yazzie loaded the bed of her gray Toyota Tacoma pickup truck with as many empty, five-gallon containers as she had in her house and drove 25 miles on unpaved desert roads looking for a place to fill them with water.

This is a routine for Yazzie, 38, one of the 2 million Americans who live without access to running water. She lives in Cameron, Arizona, a town of fewer than 900 on the edge of the Navajo Nation, where one-third of the reservation's 350,000 residents lack running water and sanitation.

Good Stories Explain HOW

- Focus on *process*
- Why we are the right people to do this work
- Educate on your differentiators
- Great for BTS video
- Highlights particular programs
- Use in annual reports, impact web pages, videos for donors, volunteer recruitment



World Central Kitchen



[Video link.](#)

World Central Kitchen

Use a news page for longer, more in-depth process stories.



9/08/2022

150,000 gallons of potable water distributed to Jackson, MS residents

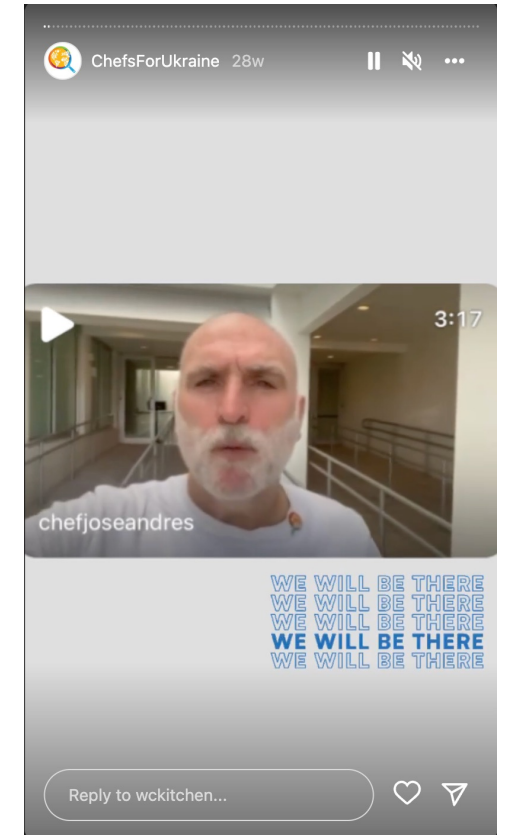
Since the beginning of September, WCK's relief team has provided an estimated 150,000 gallons of much-needed potable water to Jackson, Mississippi residents impacted by the collapse of the city's...

World Central Kitchen



Their Twitter feed focuses on highly timely stories and amplifies Chef José Andrés.

Their Facebook page spotlights the people to whom they've awarded grants.



And Instagram highlights their location-based campaigns like #ChefsforUkraine.

Make-A-Wish

You don't
have to show
your process
in order to
tell the story
of the impact
your process
makes.



[Video link.](#)

Tailor Stories for the Audience

The Audience Needs

Donors: value their money being used responsibly to reach an ideal state that aligns with their values—“A world without hunger”

Recipients: value being treated with dignity, fairness, and compassion

Volunteers: value an active role in changing the world in a way they value

Communities: value supporting neighbors in a way that supports their values

Public: value helping people with dignity, fairness, and compassion

How the Story Should Deliver

Donors: connect to the ideal state and recipients

Recipients: trust in the people and process

Volunteers: connect to the people and the process

Communities: see the local impact

Public: understand the impact and process

ACTIVITY

Using the story guide handout to walk through your best (or favorite or most affecting story) from your organization:

1. Answer the questions on your own.
2. Come together in a small group and talk about your stories.
3. Ask each other questions.
4. Bring one story back to the group to talk through.
5. Take notes back to your organization on how you can tell your story well.

How to Start a Story Library

1. Define your priorities and needs.
 - Program areas
 - Need versus process
 - Donor stories, recipient stories
2. Ask for submissions.
 - Always get contact info
 - Designate a staff contact
 - Use relevant tags to improve searchability
3. Assign someone to collect and manage a central filing system that others can add to.
4. Keep updating the library consistently.

Seven Habits of Highly Successful Storytellers

1. Treat people and their stories with respect.
2. Actively seek out stories.
3. Set up a pipeline appropriate for their content needs.
4. Have an accessible area/link for story submissions.
5. Caption, tag, and catalog photos, videos, and recordings.
6. Consistently organize source materials and keep them accessible.
7. Always log when and how stories are used and send them to those they feature.

Tell Your Best Stories

Thank you!

Feeling inspired?

PLEASE RATE THIS SESSION BEFORE LEAVING



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