
COMPELLING STORYTELLING

for Virtual Fundraisers



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

– Native American Proverb

What's Ahead

» THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF STORYTELLING

» STORYTELLING TIPS FOR VIRTUAL CAMPAIGNS

» SHARING YOUR STORIES

- Event Page
- Video & Livestream
- Social Media
- Text Message

How stories inspire your supporters

We are all naturally drawn to great stories and the best versions stay with us for a very long time. Sharing the story of your organization, mission, beneficiaries, volunteers and impact helps donors to feel deeply connected to your cause. It inspires supporters to spread the word of your good work and can turn one-time donors into lifelong advocates.

Great stories are told in many forms—language, images, video—all of which can be incorporated into your campaign to create an impactful virtual fundraiser. This guide will help your story stay true to your nonprofit so that it rises above the noise and engages your audience.

We’ll explore the basic storytelling structure for creating authentic content and some expert tips to keep in mind as you go along. Then we’ll take a look at the best online storytelling tools for a virtual fundraising event that helps you connect with supporters, grow your community and inspire more giving.



THE FIVE COMPONENTS OF STORYTELLING

First things first, let's take a look at a basic storytelling structure that will help keep your content focused, relatable and easily understood. You can apply this structure to your written content, videos, presentation and/or promotional communications.

- 1 Once Upon a Time** - Begin your story by introducing your main characters and their setting. You can do this by highlighting a beneficiary, volunteer, passionate board member, longtime donor or even yourself and your own connection to the cause.
- 2 The Path of Your Main Characters** - Now that you've established your beginning, you can showcase what your main character's daily life is like. Focus on their main drives and emotions. Highlight their struggle and how it impacts them.
- 3 Every Story Has a Villain** - What is standing in direct opposition of your main character? Obstacles can be more than just a lack of funding, though that is still a component. They can be legislation, access to care, adequate facilities or supplies, etc.
- 4 The Battle of Good vs. Evil** - In this step, you'll detail how your character is overcoming obstacles. How does giving, volunteering or spreading the word help? Propose your solution of how good can triumph over evil and with your donor, the hero, coming to the rescue.
- 5 Resolution** - This is where you tell how your happy ending comes together, sharing the success of your mission and beneficiaries. The resolution is also about donor stewardship and how your fight continues with their help. So don't forget to thank supporters and demonstrate ongoing impact.

STORYTELLING TIPS FOR VIRTUAL FUNDRAISING EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

To create compelling and standout storytelling that stays true to your organization, be sure your content is specific, emotional and timely. This helps deepen the connection and create urgency around your cause. Here are a few additional things to keep in mind as you plan your virtual fundraising event.

✓ **Your story can be any size to fit any format**

- Shorter stories play well in quick videos and social media posts
- Medium format stories can be used in emails or on your website/Event Page
- Longer storytelling can be used within your event program

✓ **Your story can be broken into smaller, bite sized communications**

- Try spreading out your story across multiple social posts or emails
- Give snippets of your story as you go through your virtual event
- Implement to create a feeling of both suspense and urgency

✓ **Your story components do not have to be in order, but don't skip any**

- An unconventional order to your story can make it more compelling
- This can engage supporters and keep them tuned into your progress
- Leaving out a component can deflate the emotional impact of your story

✓ **Your story should include authentic asks made throughout your program**

- Set your supporters up to be the hero of your story through their gift
- Make a heartfelt ask within your story structure
- Be sure to make appeals in a variety of ways, multiple times in your event program to catch all viewers who may tune in at different times

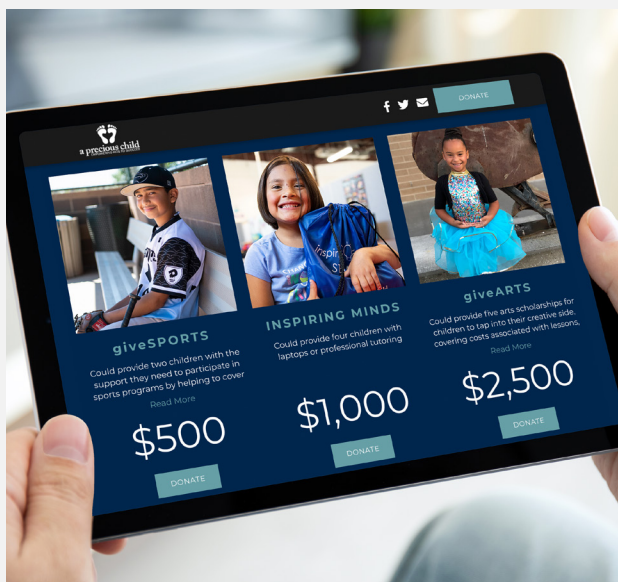


SHARING YOUR STORIES

EVENT PAGE

An Event Page is a landing page that keeps all your important virtual event details in one convenient place while allowing your storytelling and calls-to-action to stay front and center.

- ✓ **Showcase your story throughout your Event Page.** An Event Page enables you to share your story with text, images, and video all in one central location, so you are sure to connect with your audience in the way they best absorb information.
- ✓ **Tell the story of your mission and organization.** In addition to details about your event, share the story of your mission or why this event is so important for your organization.
- ✓ **Share the difference donors can make through impact metrics.** Not only does this illustrate your Battle of Good vs. Evil by showing how donors can come to the rescue, it also shows how their support is part of a specific solution.
- ✓ **Include a video for the most engaging storytelling.** Hosting a video on your Event Page makes viewing your virtual fundraiser convenient for donors and encourages replay and watching even after your event is finished.
- ✓ **Supports all your forms and call-to-actions.** Donating isn't the only way your audience can support your virtual fundraising event. On your Event Page, you can drive giving, volunteering, spreading the word and more, all in the same place.



Did you know ?

**MobileCause's
Event Page is
optimized for mobile**

**and increases your fundraising
campaign conversion rates.**

SHARING YOUR STORIES

VIDEO & LIVESTREAM

Tell the story of your organization and beneficiaries with heartfelt videos used on social media, emails, within and throughout your virtual event presentation.

✓ **Videos can show a variety of stories that will endear your cause to donors.**

Try showcasing a 'behind the scenes,' 'day in the life,' or 'program in action' type video to give an insider's feel.

✓ **Livestreaming creates an in-the-moment feeling and builds personal connection.**

Adding a livestreaming portion to your program allows you to share real-time fundraising progress and donor thank yous. This creates excitement and involves donors in the resolution of your story.

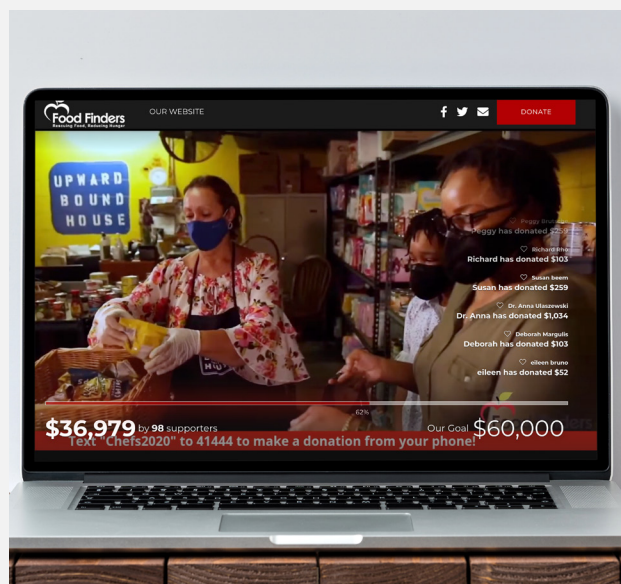
✓ **Share your livestream or shorter videos on social media.** These are great avenues for sharing shorter videos that have a high impact on your audience. Try spotlighting a beneficiary with a truly inspiring story.

✓ **Add a link to livestream or final event video in text messages and emails.** This helps share your story across platforms, increases engagement and encourages viewing of your event.

Did you know?

Video is
4x more likely

to generate an **emotional response** than other forms of communication.

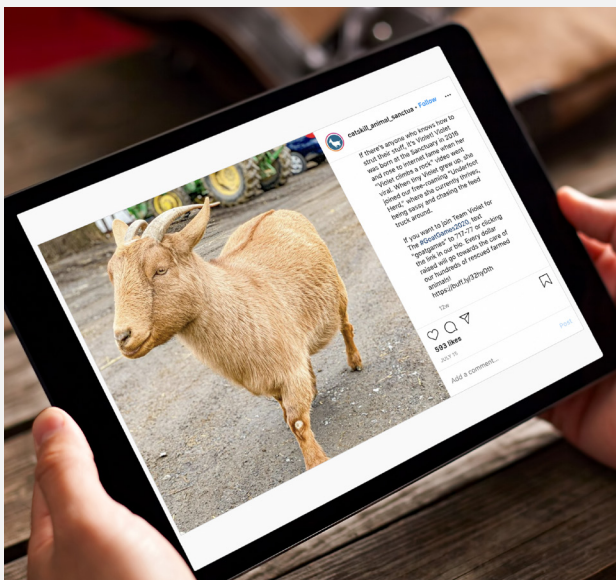


SHARING YOUR STORIES

SOCIAL MEDIA

You can share your storytelling across social platforms in a variety of ways. Here are a few things to try for your next virtual fundraising event.

- ✓ **Use compelling and powerful imagery.** Choose imagery that tugs at people's heartstrings and evokes a powerful emotional response. The right image alone can tell much of your story for you.
- ✓ **Add text that tells of the fight for your mission.** Be sure to make this brief and compelling and get to the heart of why your mission should matter to your audience.
- ✓ **Tag donors, volunteers, board members and ambassadors.** This helps build awareness, makes your post more easily shareable and encourages comments that will naturally build up your story.
- ✓ **Share virtual event fundraising progress.** Remember, part of your storytelling is about how your donor becomes part of the solution. Sharing progress is an opportunity to show the excitement of your success while encouraging others to join in.
- ✓ **Increase engagement with impact stats and hashtags.** Adding these into your storytelling posts increases reach and connection while building trust with donors.



Did you know ?

55%

of people who engage with nonprofits on social media end up taking some sort of action.¹

SHARING YOUR STORIES

TEXT MESSAGE

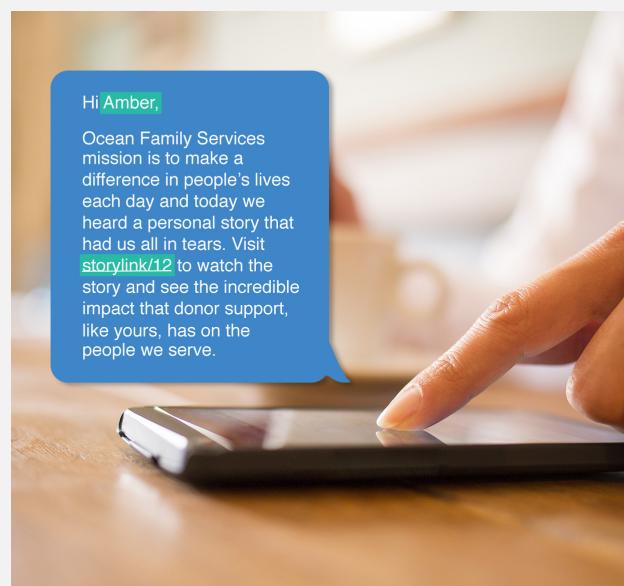
This personal communication tool brings the story of your cause, virtual event and beneficiaries directly to donors where they are most likely to see and connect with it.

Try sending:

- ✓ **Reminders to donors that the “show” is about to begin with a link to view it.** This gets your audience excited while serving as a reminder to tune into the beginning of this fundraising journey.
- ✓ **Milestones your nonprofit has reached.** This builds anticipation around your virtual event and encourages your audience to participate.
- ✓ **Updates on beneficiaries, fundraising progress or specific initiatives.** The key to sharing compelling stories via text is to make them brief and specific. Focusing on these aspects helps keep your texts concise.
- ✓ **Show how gifts are being used.** Who doesn't love knowing exactly what is being accomplished with their donation? This encourages repeat giving by showing how your story continues forward.

Did you know?

Texts have a **90% open rate** and **20% click-thru-rate**, compared to 20% open rate and 2% click-thru-rate for emails?²



Authentic and compelling storytelling should be the backbone of every fundraising campaign, including your virtual fundraising events in order to more deeply connect with your audience. With these tools at hand, you'll be ready to captivate your audience and host a virtual fundraiser that helps you build community, forge meaningful connections and inspire lifelong supporters.

About MobileCause

MobileCause is more than simply comprehensive fundraising software. We offer nonprofits one-on-one expert strategy from our Digital Fundraising Strategists plus 24/7 customer support that's there when you need it most. MobileCause believes 100% of donations should go directly to your cause, so we never charge a transaction fee.

MobileCause enables you to maximize your resources and grow your mission like never before.

To speak directly to a fundraising consultant about implementing MobileCause fundraising and communication software and strategy for your nonprofit, please call **(888) 661-8804** or visit mobilecause.com to [request a demo](#).

SOURCES

1. "Social media stats for charities and nonprofits," Ben Matthews, Empower, 2020.
2. "Guide to SMS for Ecommerce in 2020", Postscript

