

WCITechnology Insider

Insider Tech Tips - Written For Humans, Not Geeks

Stories That Stick:

How Storytelling Can Captivate Customers, Influence Audiences, and Transform Your Business

by Kindra Hall

"People want a purpose. If you don't give them one, they'll make their own. Tell your stories first, otherwise, someone might tell them for you, and you might now like their version." - Kindra Hall

Whether at the dinner table, around the fireplace, or while watching our favorite Netflix series, we all love a good story. In her book, *Stories That Stick*, Kindra Hall breaks down four types of storytelling and how businesses can use them to communicate better and drive more engagement. Although the book is written primarily for business owners and entrepreneurs, it's easily applicable to HR and marketing leaders who want to get started on a path to more effective messaging.

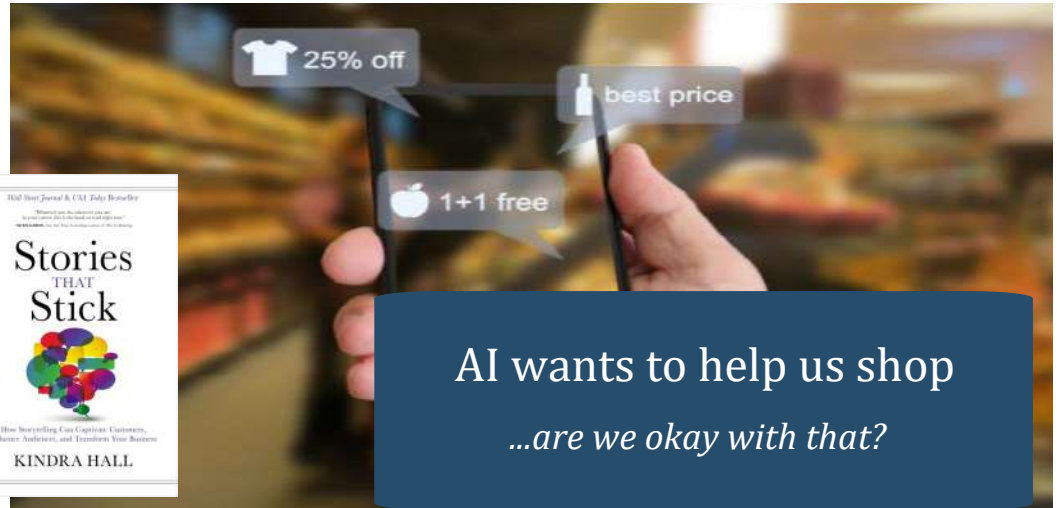
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Our Mission:

Technology systems that anchor your business and protect what you have built, from a company inspired to make the world better.



AI wants to help us shop

...are we okay with that?

You've probably noticed the little elf helping you around retail stores this year. No, it's not the teenager at the mall in red and white stockings and a green felt hat. It's AI.

Log in to Amazon, and you'll see suggested products like winter decorations, novels or toy recommendations for kids. Add that remote-controlled car into your cart for your nephew, and you'll get recommendations for batteries and gift wrapping, too. This is no accident - generative AI uses your past purchases and recent searches to curate this personalized display. At the end of your shopping affair, you can share your experience, which is data fodder for AI to learn and improve your next shopping venture.

One in six shoppers use generative AI to inspire shopping decisions, according to a 2023 Salesforce survey. However, data by SAP Emarsys report

that barely more than half of consumers feel it positively impacts their online shopping experience. What is generative AI, and what does it mean for our holiday shopping - and our privacy?

What is generative AI?

Generative AI takes data (provided by humans) to create something new, like music, text, images or even personal shopping recommendations. Beyond simply following commands, generative AI can study existing data on the Internet to "think up" entirely new content.

How AI is used to shop

Imagine hiring a personal shopper who also happens to have your entire Internet shopping history - searches, views, shopping carts, purchases and online interactions (including third-party data) - PLUS every product review and insight available online, handy in seconds. Thanks to this nearly endless supply of data, generative AI seeks to "help"

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consumers shop in multiple ways, including:

Creating a (creepily) personalized shopping experience: Generative AI can curate personalized shopping lists or recommend products based on an individual's preferences by analyzing past behaviors and predicting future interests.

Providing chatbots and customer support: Generative AI-driven chatbots can assist customers with queries, recommend products or help troubleshoot problems, often in a more sophisticated and human-like manner than traditional chatbots.

Improving fraud detection: AI can recognize and learn scammer behaviors using its predictive and deep learning capabilities. This helps payment platforms pinpoint problem purchases without impacting legitimate ones.

Cons and privacy concerns
AI is only as good as its data. It's not perfect, and there are some ethical and privacy concerns to be aware of, like:

Data collection: For generative AI to offer a personalized experience, it requires data - lots of it. This could include shopping habits, product views, search queries, etc. The question is: How much data on consumers is too much, and where is it stored?

Potential for misuse: With the ability to generate realistic content, there is potential for misrepresentation or misuse, such as creating fake product reviews.

Implications for business owners: opportunities and responsibilities
There are several benefits for business owners who opt for AI to improve their customer's experience. Personalized recommendations lead to longer site visits and potentially higher conversion rates. Automation via AI can streamline operations, particularly in customer support and product visualization.

However, you also have a responsibility to your customer's privacy. Businesses must ensure they're transparent about the data they collect and how they use it. This includes providing clear opt-in and opt-out options for consumers. Additionally, with the increased collection of consumer data, businesses

have a heightened responsibility to protect that data from breaches and unauthorized access.

Be a smart AI shopper
It's crucial that you understand the terms of service and privacy policies of online platforms. Know what data you're sharing and with whom. Periodically check and manage the data permissions you've granted to different e-commerce platforms, and always secure your accounts with multifactor authentication.

Enjoy the benefits of AI recommendations, but diversify your sources of information and your shopping platforms. For example, you'll want to verify AI-powered recommendations on other product review websites like Wirecutter or Consumer Reports.

AI chatbot or not, demand excellent customer service
Even though a growing number of people are happy to interact with and benefit from generative AI, most people still expect excellent customer service from a human, according to Salesforce. As online platforms harness data to tailor experiences and predict behaviors, consumer should remember they have the power to drive the standards.

Byte-Sized Brain Challenge

One gigabyte is equal to how many megabytes?

- A. 1,000
- B. 10,000
- C. 100,000



Answer: A. 1,000

What We've Been Chatting About This Month



Protect your business from these cyber security threats in 2024

Want to join the conversation? Our new guide is up on our website resource page now!

#1

The name Wi-Fi was coined by brand-consulting firm Interbrand when asked to come up with a name that was "a little catchier than 'IEEE 802.11b Direct Sequence.'" The term Wi-Fi was ultimately chosen as a pun on hi-fi.

#3

File hosting service Dropbox was founded by MIT students Drew Houston and Arash Ferdowsi in 2007. It's now thought to be worth over \$9 billion

#2

in 2021, an Apple II computer Manual signed by Steve Jobs sold for almost \$800,000 at auction

**TECH
FACTS**

Bill's Favorite Business Gadget of the Month

Logitech Wireless Ergonomic Keyboard

When you spend hours at your computer, it's not just your eyes that get tired. Your hands, wrists and should can begin to ache, and you may even develop issues like repetitive strain injury.

This Logitech Wireless Ergonomic Keyboard is the answer you've been looking for. It lets your hands move in a more natural way, reducing stress and increasing comfort.

Get it on Amazon for \$213.98



Inspirational Quote of the Month:

"You don't need to have a 100-person company to develop that idea."

-Larry Page, co-founder of Google

Jesse Itzler's Approach to Fight Off Complacency and make 2024 the best year yet

The WCI Team's Favorite Everyday Gadget of the Month:

Snow Leopard Heated Vest

If you happen to be one of those oddballs that loves being outdoors during the winter, you'll love this Winter-focused wearable gadget. Made to keep you nice and toasty for all your winter outdoor activities - from picking out the Christmas tree, to skiing, hiking, or anything else you find yourself getting up to - this stylish vest utilizes a well-hidden, long-lasting, and easily rechargeable battery pack to heat up different areas of the garment, even including the collar. And, with three different heat levels, you're sure to find the right amount of warmth for whatever you do this winter. Beyond the heat, the water-resistant fabric will keep you dry from melting snow or rain, and zippered pockets will keep your phone and other valuables safe.

Check it out today on amazon, available in both men's and women's sizes



After a handful of pull-ups, Jesse Itzler dropped down from the bar and, panting, said, "Okay, I'm done." In a spark of insanity or genius (you decide), Itzler had invited a Navy SEAL to live with him for 30 days. Step one was a fitness assessment - or so Itzler thought. After a few pull-ups he was maxed out. He asked the SEAL, "What's next?"

"What's next?" the SEAL barked. "What's next is we're not leaving until you do 100 more." Itzler threw his hands up, saying, "That's impossible!" "I already know what your biggest problem is," the SEAL said. "The limitations you put on yourself are self-imposed."

Two hours later, Itzler did what he thought was impossible: 100 pull-ups. He asked himself, "If I'm underestimating by 100 pull-ups, what other areas in my life am I underestimating?"

It wasn't a physical endurance test the SEAL was running. It was a *mental* fitness test. After his 30-day experience with the SEAL, Itzler wrote a NYT bestselling book about his personal and professional transformation. Today, he travels nationwide helping others get the most out of their lives and careers.

Itzler asks us: What areas of our lives are we underperforming in because we BELIEVE we can't get any better? Our business? Relationships? Health? When was the last time you did something you loved, regardless of how busy you were at work or home? If you're not getting the most out of your life right now, you're not alone. Itzler shares four ways we can kick complacency out of our lives for good.

4 Ways to Get the Most Out of Our Work and Lives

When your mind tells you to stop, keep going. This philosophy has many names: grit, persistence, perseverance or resilience.

Itzler calls it the 40% rule. When your brain says, "I'm done," it means you're only at 40%. Our brains are biologically wired to stop when we experience discomfort, but we're more capable than we think.

Keep the momentum

When you hit an important goal like closing a high-paying client, dropping 30 pounds, or hitting a salary milestone, Itzler says that's precisely when you press on the gas pedal. Don't stop. Make a new goal: one more client, one more pound. When you create small wins, your momentum never stops.

Pressure is a privilege

As business leaders, we play for pressure. Pressure makes great things happen. If you don't have enough pressure on your shoulder, Itzler says, you need to put some on by doing what people expect PLUS the things they don't. Go the extra mile.

Self-doubt is the #1 enemy of success

We put limits on ourselves because we doubt our abilities. The time is never "right," or we don't have enough experience. Itzler's approach is Ready. Fire. Aim. It'll never be the right time to start the business, ask the crush out, run the race, etc. But do it anyway because, as Itzler reminds us, "We didn't come this far to only come this far."



Jesse Itzler is a serial entrepreneur with 30 years of experience. He's built and sold five companies,

including Marquis Jet, Zico Coconut Water and 29029 Everesting. He's a NYT bestselling author, ultra-marathon runner, father of four, husband, son, brother and friend.

Should your team *follow Google's security lead?*

Google has introduced a new security strategy - but is it right for your business?

It has put some employees on a cyber diet, restricting their internet access to limit potential threats.

On the surface, it sounds like a smart move. Google's approach is like building a taller fence around your house to keep out burglars.

By reducing internet connectivity, they're effectively shrinking their digital footprint and making it harder for cyber criminals to find a way in.

But is it foolproof?

Well, not exactly.

While this strategy does limit external threats, it doesn't entirely eliminate the risk.

Think of it this way: you've built a towering wall around your house, but your teenager leaves the back gate open. Similarly, internal systems might remain connected to other devices that can access the internet, providing a potential entry point for cyber threats.

In other words, you can't just focus on keeping things out.

Yes, there are very real threats from external hackers using all sorts of

techniques like phishing, zero-day attacks, and malware. But the security industry often overlooks significant threats from within the perimeter.

Research shows that insider threats account for 62% of all security breaches. These insiders - disgruntled employees, careless staff, or malicious actors - often have legitimate access rights, intimate knowledge of the system, and can bypass traditional security checks. It's like having a burglar who knows where you hide your spare key.

So, what's the takeaway?

While Google's strategy has its merits, it's not a one-size-fits-all solution. Just as you wouldn't wear shoes that are too big, your business needs a cyber security strategy tailored to fit its unique requirements. A robust cyber security strategy should focus on both external and internal threats and have measures in place to mitigate risks from all angles.

Our advice? Instead of simply following in Google's footsteps, consider your own business's needs and vulnerabilities. And, of course, if you need help with that, get in touch - we'll be happy to help.

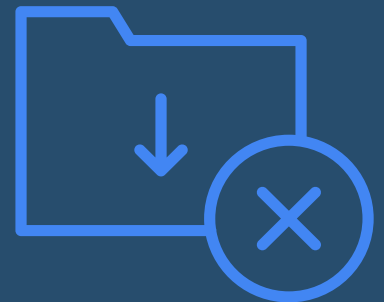


Did You Know

not to download third party apps?

New research has found that an Android app is actually a trojan (a type of malware) that can record your video and audio calls. The SpyNote banking trojan is typically delivered by a phishing SMS, and once installed, it's very hard to get rid of.

How do you avoid it? Simple. Only download apps from official app stores - never via third parties.



New to Windows 365

Outlook could soon be writing your emails for you

Thanks to Copilot (Microsoft's AI companion), you'll be able to draft more concise, professional emails in Outlook, with suggested edits for clarity and inclusive language.

And if there's a long email thread you need to respond to, Copilot can even summarize it and draft suggested replies.



It's time to turn the tide on phishing attacks

Phishing attacks have reached record highs this year. Worryingly, in the third quarter of this year alone, phishing attacks skyrocketed by a staggering 173%, compared to the previous three months.

And malware? It's not far behind, with a 110% increase over the same period.

Let's put this into perspective. Imagine you're on a quiet beach, enjoying the sun and the surf. Suddenly, the tide starts to rise rapidly. Before you know it, your picnic basket is floating away, and you're knee-deep in water. That's what's happening in the cyber world right now.

According to a report, the 'phisherfolk' group were the most active in August, casting out more than 207.3 million phishing emails. That's nearly double the amount in July. September wasn't much better, with 172.6 million phishing emails.

But who are these cyber criminals targeting? Old favorites Facebook and Microsoft continue to top the charts, with Facebook accounting for more phishing URLs than the next seven spoofed brands combined.

So, what's the bottom line here?

Your business could be next.

Phishing attacks are like a rising tide, and if you're not careful, they can quickly sink your business. They target everyone - from tech giants to financial institutions, and even government agencies. The question is - are you prepared?

Take a moment to consider the authenticity of emails. Are they from a trusted source? Do they contain suspicious links? Are they asking for sensitive information?

Make sure your employees are aware of the risks. Encourage them to think twice before clicking on a link or downloading an attachment. After all, a moment's hesitation could save your business from a devastating cyber attack.

And don't forget about integrated email security solutions and phishing awareness training. They could be the think that best helps you prevent an attack.

So, as the tide of phishing attacks continues to rise, remember: it's better to be safe than sorry. If you need any further help or advice, get in touch.



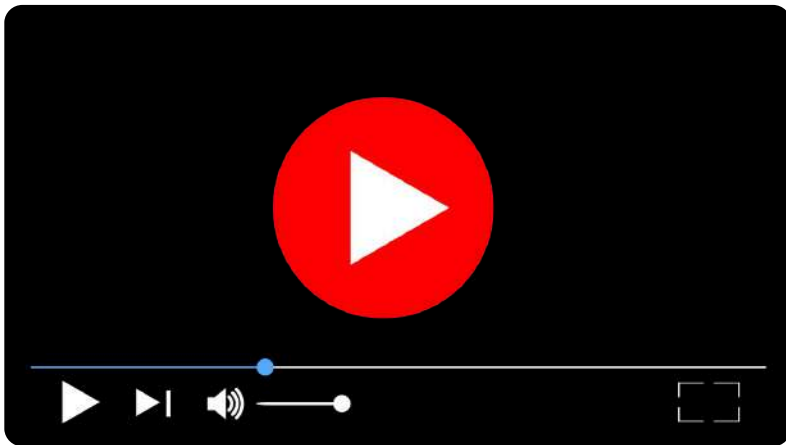
Technology Update

It's now easier to grab video stills from YouTube

If you use Chrome, Edge, or a similar browser called Arc, there's a new tool that will help you grab high-quality stills from videos.

Why might you need this? To highlight key points from presentations, training videos, or even for making note-taking simpler.

Just right click on the paused video and select "Copy video frame"



December's Fun Tech Quiz

Loser wears the Santa hat!

1. Often pronounced 'gooey' GUI is short for what well-known three-word tech term?
2. What does CAPTCHA stand for?
3. What popular operating system, launched in 1991, also has its own mascot, Tux the penguin?
4. Which movie was not just the final Pixar movie to be released on VHS, but also the first to be released on Blu-ray?
5. Which famous tech giant had the company motto "THINK" for over 40 years?

The answers are on page 8.

Question: If I accidentally close a tab in Chrome, is there an easier way to get it back than searching it up again?

Answer: Yes, you can bring back the closed tab with a simple keyboard shortcut. If you're using Windows, ChromeOS or Linux, it's CTRL+Shift+T; for Mac, it's CMD+Shift+T.

Question: I'm finding ChatGPT is not giving me great answers and is inaccurate - what am I doing wrong?

Answer: You're probably not being specific enough with your question. Also check your questions for typos and slang... too many and you won't get great responses.

Question: I'm fed up having to minimize my windows when I want to look at my desktop - surely there's an easier way?

Answers: If you're using Windows, there is! Look all the way to the bottom and right, beyond the date and time and you'll find a sliver of a secret button. Click it to minimize all your open windows at once, then click it again to bring everything back.



QUIZ Answers

1. GRAPHICAL USER INTERFACE
2. COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC PUBLIC TURING TEST TO TELL COMPUTERS AND HUMANS APART
3. LINUX
4. CARS
5. IBM



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WCI Technology
Solutions



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Finding the perfect last-minute gift without compromising quality can be challenging. Here are five of our favorite tech-inspired gifts that are bound to leave an impression!

Aura Digital Photo Frame

Revamp an office or home with memories using this sleek digital frame. Users share photos from their phones directly to the frame over WiFi, no matter where they are. It's super simple to set up (gift givers can even set it up remotely so it's ready to go when it's opened), and the app includes free, unlimited photo storage. It's like a personal digital art gallery!

eQuinox 2 Telescope for Urban Astronomers

This telescope is perfect for hobby astronomers, bringing users closer than ever to the night sky, even in brightly lit cityscapes. It may not be cheap, but the ability to make deep-sky observations with no astronomy experience is priceless. Users can also collaborate on research with professional scientists via

a Unistellar Citizen Astronomer program. It's a stellar gift if you ask us!

Electric Skates by AtmosGear

Whether commuting or just out for a leisurely ride, users effortlessly roll up to 15 mph (20 mph with the Pro Pack) on these sleek electrified in-line skates. Riders control the speed with pocket-sized remote: speed up, slow down, brake - it's all at your fingertips. The coolest part? They recharge while you're skating. It's like the future on wheels!

Hasbro Selfie Series Customizable Action Figures

Make someone's childhood dream of being an action hero come true with the Hasbro Selfie Series that allows you to create a 6-inch super mini-me for only \$60. Put a new fact on G.I. Joe (or Jane), "Power Rangers", "Ghostbusters", Marvel or "Star Wars" characters, and your friend or family member can become a character in their favorite story!

Mebak 3 Massage Gun: a Quiet and Effective Massage

You know those pesky knots and sore spots we get after working out (or, you know, trying the latest viral TikTok dance or sleeping in the wrong position)? This gadget is a champ at sorting them out, especially on the shoulders and legs. IT's like a mini-spa in your hand. The best part? It's practically whisper-quiet! No more feeling like you're in a construction zone while trying to relax. It's also handy and great for tossing in a bag when heading out for a round of golf or traveling. It's a fantastic little addition for anyone looking to expand their self-care toolkit.

HOLIDAY
Gift
GUIDE