HELLO

JESSICA HILT
@BZZTBA
UC SAN DIEGO, GEEK, STORYTELLER
AWESOME PERSON
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING
Who is this woman?
Who is this woman?
Who is this woman?
Who is this woman?
Who is this woman?
Who is this woman?
What is storytelling?
STORYTELLING

Cavemen sitting around telling stories.

Fairy tales, books, fiction.

Every Radiolab ever.
Freytag's Pyramid

- Exposition
- Rising Action
- Climax
- Falling Action
- Resolution
Why storytelling?
But Jessica...

Data!

Facts!

Science!
A story is the only way to activate parts in the brain so that a listener turns the story into their own idea and experience.

Storytelling activates the Broca's area and Wernicke's area.

80%

More generous to a stranger.

Oxytocin Increases Generosity in Humans.

65%

of our conversations are personal stories and narratives.
Stories conveyed information
Stories helped us bond
Increased neuro-cognitive organization
Simulated dilemmas with no risk
“...a dispassionate brain that reasons through issues; a brain that weighs evidence, follows chains of reasoning, pursues its best interests – a brain that apparently does not exist and never has...”

- Brian Jackson, Neuroscience and The New Urgency of Emotional Appeals
University of Massachusetts Medical School Study

Problem: Uncontrolled hypertension
Hypothesis: Real patient stories.
Result: Experienced a 10 mmHg advantage

Houston et al. Culturally Appropriate Storytelling to Improve Blood Pressure: A Randomized Trial. Annals of Internal Medicine, 2011
Fine… But wasn’t your talk about strategic storytelling?
STRAategic STORYTELLING

Commercials.

Marketing, mission statements.

Kickstarter.
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

Founders stories
Impact stories
Client impact stories
Your employees impact stories
Your personal story
WELL...

TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF!

WELL...
Nailed it.
of 450 organizations surveyed said their employees did not understand their strategic direction.

Consumers bought products that provoked an emotional response.

- Psychology Today

Storytelling is its universal appeal to culturally diverse audiences who have a range of interests and learning styles.

3-to-1

Consumers bought products that provoked an emotional response.

- Psychology Today

80%

of 450 organizations surveyed said their employees did not understand their strategic direction.
We know that people are substantially more motivated by their organization’s transcendent purpose (how it improves lives) than by its transactional purpose (how it sells goods and services).

– Paul Zak, Claremont Graduate University
I’m on board. But HOW do I tell a strategic story?
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

The truth

The Audience

The Narrative
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

The truth
The problem with Pollyanna
The Truth
“It was not our finest hour.”

- Steve Jobs, iCloud Keynote
Embrace your failures. They make great stories.

-Jessica Hilt
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

The Audience
Push Verses Pull Strategy
Problem: Canadians don't think Canada is exotic enough.
Objective: Get Canadians planning trip to travel at home and not abroad.
Where is this?
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

The Audience

Interaction with the brand
Provided the company with content
Told their own stories
Result: Half a billion dollars spent in Canada.
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

Are your stories all top-down?

Who we are, not just what we do.

You are not Aesop's Fables.

The Audience
STRATEGIC STORYTELLING

The Narrative
Freytag's Pyramid

Exposition

Rising Actions

Climax

Falling Action

Resolution
To fully understand poetry, we must first be fluent with its meter, rhyme and figures of speech, then ask two questions: 1) How artfully has the objective of the poem been rendered and 2) How important is that objective? Question 1 rates the poem's perfection; question 2 rates its importance. And once these questions have been answered, determining the poem's greatness becomes a relatively simple matter.

If the poem's score for perfection is plotted on the horizontal of a graph and its importance is plotted on the vertical, then calculating the total area of the poem yields the measure of its greatness.
1. **SET THE STAGE**
   Rising action - How did we get here?

2. **DRAMATIC CONFLICT**
   This is our turning point.

3. **RESOLUTION**
   Call to action.
SET THE STAGE

Rising action - How did we get here?
What has it been in the past?

What’s changing?

What are the external pressures?

What is the challenge?
DRAMATIC CONFLICT

This is our turning point.
Unknown territory.
The What-ifs.
This is the change.
RESOLUTION

Call to action.
Don’t tell them you’re King of the North.

What if this works?

Why we have to take the risk.
(Why failure is a risk and okay)

Benefits. How this aligns in the bigger picture.
Is this going to be easy?!
P.S. Remember this?
But Jessica…

Data!

Facts!

Science!
Still valid.
Still important.
Still part of the story.
I hate Q&A

- jessica@ucsd.edu
- @bzztbaa
- I love to talk.