Amenable & Resource



Your Brand is Telling a Story

Introducing a guide on learning how important a brand story is and how you can shape it for your organization's benefit.

November 2026

Amenable Resource &

We are always telling stories. Knowingly or unknowingly, the things we do create a narrative that we only partly control. We tell stories to share what we've experienced, what we've witnessed, and what we find meaningful with others. Storytelling precedes all of us by many millennia, and it will succeed us indefinitely. As our world changes, and the mediums through which we can invent and share expand, we have a responsibility to define what makes storytelling beautiful. Because narrative can be an artistic form of expression, creativity is important.

People can tell when a story is not authentic or is muddled. When the meaning of your story is lost, it could be due to a lack of creativity or purpose in the roots of your organization. Everyone in your organization needs to grasp the story to understand why your service or product is so valuable. Without that shared clarity, newcomers hearing about you for the first time might find your mission murky or struggle to discern your purpose. If newcomers can't understand your mission, they'll find another organization to support.

To understand the story that your organization tells, start with your brand. At some point in the life of your organization, someone spent time curating a logo and other identifying features. These features leave a first impression and can connect with people on a deep level. Every aspect of your brand, from language to logo, carries meaning and creativity.



Let's talk about where your story should begin.



For nonprofits and small businesses, identifying your story and implementing it in every way is vital. Christel Quek writes in a Harvard Business Review article, “Stories that start with ‘why’—that articulate the organization’s purpose and passion—are able to get more consumers tuning into the brand and what it stands for” (Quek, 2013). Even assigning meaning to colors and phrases you use regularly can help to form the story you want your brand to tell.

This remains true, even as trends change rapidly and creativity loses meaning. Your organization matters, so keep it recognizable and purposeful. Don’t get lost in the noise of convenience and instant gratification. A brand story can take time to develop.

If you’re starting from scratch or rewriting your story, then you have a long road ahead. Start with the “purpose and passion” that Christel Quek writes about. Depending on how long you’ve been with your organization, you might have varying confidence in what that is.

If you already have the details of your story nailed down and are looking to solidify it, turn to your branding. Refreshing your brand can help you create and maintain clarity around your organization’s story.

Before refreshing your brand, consider who is representing and communicating on behalf of your organization. Do they understand the ‘why’ of your story?

Is your story muddled by too many voices?

Change makes consistency harder. New people join your organization. People who carried the founding passion of your organization leave. Everyone wants to share how your work has impacted them. The more voices that speak, the muddier your brand story gets. If this cacophony is creating confusion or conflict, it’s time to simplify.

You can limit who speaks for the organization, or train new employees in your mission, values, and history. You could ask those who are leaving to share the passion they had with you, and make attempts to implement it in long-lasting ways. Ask departing staff for their success stories and personal motivations, then build that into your materials. Before you can develop strategies for improving your brand story, you have to start with an accurate picture of everything it includes.

Give your speakers creative and meaningful language so they all describe your organization to the public in the same way. This can help when people are misrepresenting your organization but are unwilling to give up their platform. Kindness goes a long way in updating approved language. Starting with your organization’s shared values may alleviate the discomfort of a conversation like that.

If you’ve inherited a muddled story and are not sure where to begin, start by learning the organization’s history. Learn from the people in your organization who have been around the longest, and also see what is bringing the newest people to it. Combine what you learn from both groups into a clear story, then build a strategy on it.

Does your logo help tell your story?

Something as simple as a logo can do a lot of legwork in storytelling, but it might also communicate something you never intended. Rapidly changing trends can be loud and unnecessary, yet your brand still needs to stay current. A logo can become dated because of when it was created, or because your organization has changed.

When a logo looks dated, it communicates that your organization itself is dated. A dated nonprofit, no matter how purposeful, may struggle to bring in new donors, volunteers, or clients. A dated look can tell donors that your cause isn't as important as other nonprofits' causes, especially if you haven't invested creative resources in your marketing.

Even your logo's color can either help or hurt your story. In a 2025 study, researchers asked participants to share which emotions they felt when looking at logos, and color played a key part. Certain logos brought forth negative emotions when their colors sparked fear or unease, but other logos evoked a sense of calm and even trust (Luffarelli et al., 2025).

You may not want to change your logo's color, and that is completely understandable. Still, evaluate whether the color actually serves your organization. If it doesn't, it may be time to give your logo a refresh.



WILL REBRANDING HURT OUR RECOGNITION OR GIVING?

If at this point you're starting to think a rebrand or a brand refresh would serve your organization well, be encouraged that these things, done well, should enhance your image and marketability. A refresh could be the exact piece of the puzzle that's missing in developing buy-in for your organization.

Change like this is good and necessary sometimes, but it needs to be managed well. Handled poorly, change can divide supporters and cost you their buy-in. Make sure you're having good conversations about how changes will benefit your organization and take a consistent temperature on how people feel about these changes. If you hit roadblocks, it's okay to reevaluate what you're doing.

In your refresh, if you begin to emphasize passion and mission, people will relate in new ways. Building a strategy around this should, again, start with the story. But most importantly, your strategy should start with your "why." Ask those who have benefited from the impact of your organization firsthand to share their experience for printed materials or your website. Individual stories of hope can change how your community sees you.

Maria Alonso, an accomplished expert in marketing, argues in her article for Forbes that storytelling builds distinctness. She writes, “By sharing unique narratives, brands can highlight their values, mission and the people behind the products, creating a distinct identity” (Alonso, 2024).

Find and share the stories that set your organization apart. As you do, ask yourself these five questions:



→ **Why should donors give to my organization rather than another?**



→ **Who do I know with a deep connection to my organization, and how does their story reflect our larger mission?**

→ **Can my staff articulate our organization’s story, and do they share its purpose and passion?**



→ **What makes my organization different from similar organizations?**



→ **When and where should we tell stories to make the greatest impact?**

Every organization holds individual narratives and one overarching story. The key is making the two flow seamlessly together, so that the organization is recognizable, trusted, and relevant. A brand refresh can bring those stories into harmony and help everyone who has bought in maintain that commitment.

Maybe this is the start of implementing stories in your branding, or maybe you'll be refocusing the stories you already tell so they represent your brand well. We would love to join you in this endeavor.



Amenable has supported many nonprofits through brand updates—see some examples of how we've helped other brands here, or reach out today to start a conversation about how we can support your brand story.



amenable