

the fold



TELLING BETTER B2B STORIES

A strategic marketing playbook for 2026.

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Introduction

HOW STORYTELLING SHARPENS IMPACT

For decades, B2B marketing sat apart from B2C—distinct in its tone, its tactics, and even its assumptions about what audiences value. While consumer brands embraced creativity, emotion, and brand-building as core disciplines, B2B leaned heavily into rationality.

B2B positioning centred on product functionality and brand communications revolved around features and capabilities. For the most part, potential buyers were treated less like people and more like decision-making units within an organisational machine.

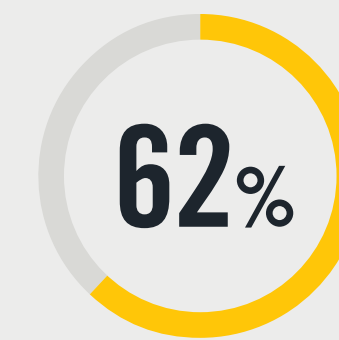
At its simplest, the B2B vs B2C divide was considered a matter of head vs heart—logic for businesses, emotion for consumers.

The result? A landscape of beige, transactional communications—messages stripped of personality, empathy, or narrative meaning. In trying to appear rational and credible, many brands inadvertently stripped away the very thing that makes communication compelling: the human element.

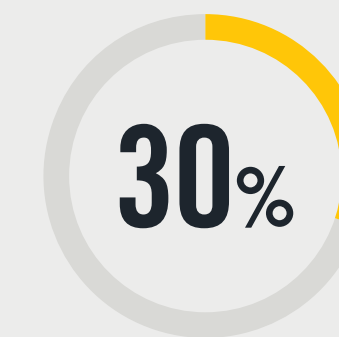
But this division (between B2B and B2C) has always been somewhat misguided. Because, even in the most complex enterprise sale, it is people who make the decisions. People with ambitions, anxieties, preferences, blind spots, internal politics to navigate, and a desire to feel confident that they are making the right call. Logic drives justification, yes—but emotion drives momentum.

In recent years, B2B marketers have increasingly recognised this truth. The once rigid boundaries between B2C and B2B have softened. Forward-thinking brands are rejecting generic, sanitised messaging in favour of richer, more expressive storytelling—borrowing techniques long used in consumer marketing to inject humanity, empathy, and clarity into their communications. Instead of relying on lengthy feature lists or technical jargon, these brands are crafting narrative-driven experiences that highlight outcomes, real-world scenarios, and the meaningful impact their solutions create.

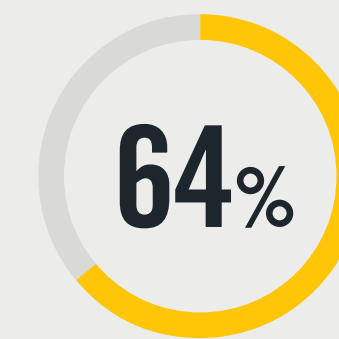
This shift is not about making B2B marketing ‘fluffy’ or sentimental. It’s about making it effective.



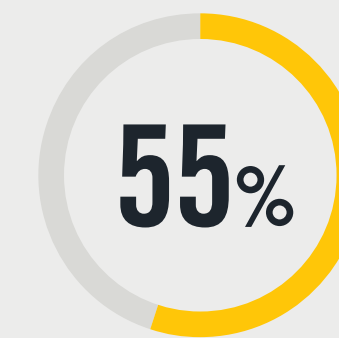
of B2B marketers think storytelling is an effective technique in content marketing.



increase in conversion rates for companies that use engaging stories in marketing.



feel that storytelling helps brands establish a better connection with customers.



of consumers are more likely to remember a story than a list of facts.

<https://www.higocreative.com/blog/storytelling-marketing-statistics>

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WHY IMPACT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

Today's B2B landscape is more crowded, competitive, and complex than it has been at perhaps any point in history. Buyers are inundated with information across digital channels, events, peer networks, analyst reports, social platforms, and internal recommendations. They face sprawling product categories, overlapping technologies, shifting regulations, and increasingly high expectations for operational efficiency.

In this environment of abundance and overload, a clear and compelling narrative is no longer a nice-to-have to stand out. It's a strategic necessity.

A strong brand narrative cuts through complexity. It helps buyers make sense of what you offer, why it matters, and how it fits into their world. When supported by memorable stories—such as championable customer moments, before-and-after transformations, or relatable scenarios—your narrative becomes more than corporate language. It becomes a meaning-delivery tool.

Stories don't just convey information; they shape understanding.

- They transform abstract ideas into tangible value.
- They make intangible solutions feel real and relevant.
- They communicate purpose, not just product.

By avoiding storytelling, B2B brands limit their own potential. Many organisations still assume their audiences prefer dense, technical, jargon-heavy communication, and that anything more conversational might feel frivolous or unserious. But this assumption doesn't hold up. Business buyers want clarity, not clutter. And they want to be able to make decisions confidently—which requires both rational evidence and an emotional sense of trust.

Done well, B2B storytelling does not dilute seriousness; it enhances it. It sharpens differentiation and blends expertise with emotion, ambition with authenticity, and elevates complex ideas by making them intuitive and memorable. With storytelling, you can signal clarity of vision and confidence in your value. And, crucially, show that you clearly see (and understand) the human beings at the centre of every buying decision.



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Before we start

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

This workbook is designed to help you bring the power of storytelling into your own B2B brand and marketing efforts. Throughout the chapters ahead, you'll find structured guidance alongside hands-on exercises that move beyond theory—providing tools and strategies that you can implement immediately within your organisation.

Whether you're shaping a new brand narrative, refreshing product messaging, or trying to build more cohesive go-to-market stories, these worksheets will help you:

- Identify the underlying tensions your audience feels
- Translate product value into human-centric impact
- Build narratives that evolve across the buyer journey
- Reverse-engineer a messaging umbrella that unifies content, campaigns, and sales conversations

The goal is simple: to give B2B organisations the confidence, clarity, and structure to craft stories that stand out—and sell.

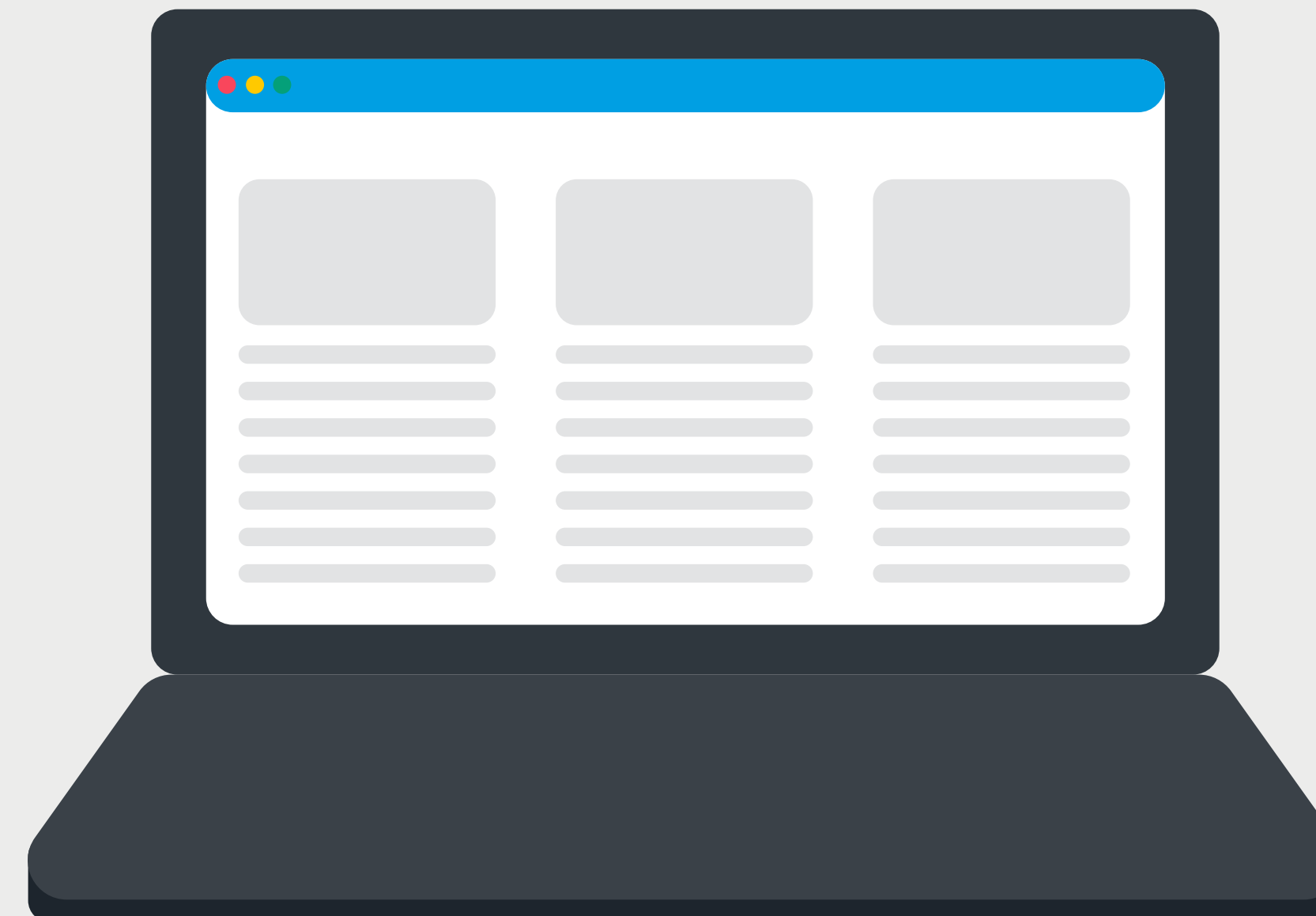
Better stories > Stronger understanding > Deeper trust > Greater commercial impact.

WHY US?

We're The Fold, a London-based creative content agency. Collectively, we bring decades of experience from both B2B and B2C backgrounds, specialising in brand strategy, design, communications, motion, and digital channel execution.

It's easy to say we've been there, done that—but we have. Our mission has always been to bring colour and clarity to B2B comms, combining beautiful creative with strategic thinking to create more impactful marketing for our clients.

Learn more:
thefoldcreative.com



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Chapter 1: finding the story

TURNING INSIGHTS INTO NARRATIVE CONCEPTS

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Chapter 1: finding the story

TURNING INSIGHTS INTO NARRATIVE CONCEPTS

In B2B marketing, the default instinct is often to lead with product features, technical differentiators, and service capabilities. It's understandable; these are the tangible things your business offers, the elements your teams know best, and the attributes that feel easiest to articulate. But features alone rarely inspire action. They speak primarily to buyers who already recognise the problem, already understand the category, and already believe they need a solution like yours.

That leaves a much larger audience unaddressed: the buyers who are problem-aware but not yet convinced. The ones who feel the symptoms but haven't named the cause, and who don't yet know (or believe) that change is necessary (or possible).

If your goal is to evangelise, differentiate, or reshape how a market thinks, leading with features won't get you to where you need to be. You need a story that does more emotional and conceptual heavy lifting. And that story begins not with your product, but with your audience's friction.

FRICION: THE START OF EVERY STRONG STORY

In B2B, friction is the lived experience that sits between a buyer's intentions and their reality. It might be an operational bottleneck, an internal misalignment, a regulatory shift, or (often) a legacy tool slowing progress. Whatever form it takes, friction creates tension—and tension is the seed of every compelling narrative.

When you identify the frictions your audience feels most acutely, you uncover the emotional and practical drivers that make your solution meaningful. These are the human stakes hidden inside functional problems—AKA: a reason for your story a reason to exist

3 STEPS TO FIND YOUR NARRATIVE

STEP 1: DETERMINE EXACTLY WHO YOU'RE SPEAKING TO (OR WHO YOU WANT TO BE SPEAKING TO)

Before you can find the friction, you need to know whose friction you're solving. That's where a well-defined Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) becomes invaluable. An ICP is not a broad category—it's a concentrated description of the organisations and people most likely to benefit from your solution, and who are most likely to find your story compelling.

To identify your ICP, consider:

Firmographics:

Industry, business size, revenue band, geography, growth stage, operational complexity. These basic descriptors establish where your message should (and, crucially, shouldn't) land.

Technographics:

What tools are they already using? How sophisticated is their existing tech stack? Are there any technological dependencies? What internal capabilities do your audience need in order to operate your solution? Technographics reveal both current constraints and opportunities for improvement.

Business pain & desired outcomes:

What systemic challenges do they face? What is currently driving them mad? What pressures are shaping their decisions? Most importantly: what outcomes do they want to achieve that your product can genuinely deliver? This is where friction begins to take shape—and a route to your story can form.

Buying triggers & disqualifiers:

What triggers them to make a purchasing decision? Are there any pressing external pressures that would prompt a need? What would disqualify an organisation or team from needing your product? These questions can help you identify where you can accelerate buying journeys and determine how your story will land most powerfully—and when it simply won't.

You don't need to have an answer to everything, but you should be able to fill out enough to determine create a strong baseline. And remember: a strong ICP doesn't limit your market. It sharpens your focus and enables you to anchor your storytelling in real, observable truth.

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STEP 2: UNCOVER THE NARRATIVE TENSION

Once you know who you're speaking to, the next step is identifying the tension that defines their current reality. In storytelling terms, tension is the gap between where your ICP is and where they want to be. This is where the emotional centre of your narrative lives.

In B2B, tension often emerges from:

OPERATIONAL BOTTLENECKS

Inefficient processes, overworked teams, or manual tasks that no longer scale. These frictions create frustration and slow down progress.

LEGACY SYSTEMS OR OUTDATED PROCESSES

Tools that once worked but now hold the business back. These frictions are often the easiest to spot—and the hardest for organisations to admit to.

SHIFTING REGULATIONS OR MARKET DYNAMICS

A new compliance requirement, a change in buyer behaviour, or an emerging threat in the competitive landscape can create pressure and uncertainty. Your story can help to make sense of that change.

RISK, UNCERTAINTY, OR MISALIGNMENT

Internal politics, unclear ownership, or competing priorities often stall initiatives before they even begin. Stories that acknowledge this reality feel instantly more human.

To uncover real narrative tension, go beyond generic pain points. Ask: what is bothering your audience most consistently, personally, or urgently? This will become the backbone of the thread your story should follow—and will be the push your audience needs to overcome the oh-so-tempting urge to just do nothing.

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STEP 3: TURN THAT FRICTION INTO A STORY THAT TRAVELS ACROSS YOUR BUSINESS

The goal isn't to identify friction for its own sake, but to use it as the bones to a narrative that can connect the dots across your entire solution suite. When you anchor your message in tension, you reveal how your products and services move your audience from a problematic 'before' state to a better 'after' state.

The trick lies in starting your story with the friction and exploring how it creates rippling effects across the team or organisation. Demonstrate how your solution can interrupt this tension and introduce a better way of working. Done right, the story flow should naturally lead to your brand without forcing the connection.

Once established, this story can be adapted for every audience sector, every vertical, and every stakeholder group. The core narrative stays intact, while the details become tailored, precise, and highly relevant (more on that later).



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Exercise 1

FINDING YOUR STORY (BY LOOKING AT CUSTOMERS AND OUTCOMES)

This exercise helps you find the most compelling elements of your brand and product stories by directly linking them to audience pain points and desirable outcomes.

STEP 1: DEFINE YOUR ICP (IDEAL CUSTOMER PROFILE)

Summarise the segment you're focusing on.

Role / Title:	
Company Type:	
Key Responsibilities:	
KPIs that define success:	

STEP 2: MAP THEIR TYPICAL DAY

Break the ICP's day into 5–10 moments or activities.

Time / Stage	What They're Doing	Tools/Processes Used	Friction or Irritation Present
Morning			
Midday			
Afternoon			
End of day			

Consider:

1. Where do delays, bottlenecks, or reworks occur?
2. Where are they forced to use workarounds?
3. What triggers stress, uncertainty, or risk?

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Exercise 1 continued

STEP 3: IDENTIFY NARRATIVE TENSION

Using the friction points above, create a narrative statement that encompasses the situation. Such as:

“Our ideal customer keeps running into [redacted]. Because of it, they end up [redacted], which makes [redacted] feel a lot harder than it should.”

Or:

“Every day, our customer faces [redacted]. It creates [redacted], and stands between them and [redacted].”

Write 3-5 of these:

1. [redacted]
2. [redacted]
3. [redacted]
4. [redacted]
5. [redacted]

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Exercise 1 continued

STEP 4: CONNECT PRODUCT BENEFITS

Map product value to friction hotspots.

Friction point	Feature/function that resolves it	Emotion the feature alleviates

Alternatively: start with the outcome/win. What does the most efficient use of your product look like? Now, walk it backwards; what are the specific snapshots of the customer's day that leads to this?

STEP 1: DEFINE THE IDEAL OUTCOME

Describe what success looks like when your product is used expertly.

- What is faster?
- What is easier?
- What is clearer?
- What becomes possible that wasn't before?

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STEP 2: REVERSE-ENGINEER THE STEPS TO SUCCESS

List the behaviours, tasks, or moments that contribute to the outcome.

What's the win?	How does your ICP get to this point?	Why does it matter?	What was different before?

STEP 3: USE THESE STEPS TO BUILD STORY SNAPSHOTS

Each step becomes a short, vivid story moment.

Snapshot example template: “Before, they were . Now, they because .

Write 3-5 of these:

-
-
-
-
-

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Chapter 2: building cohesive narratives

STORY ACTIVATION ACROSS THE BUYER JOURNEY



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Chapter 2: building cohesive narratives

STORY ACTIVATION ACROSS THE BUYER JOURNEY

The honest truth is that creating the story isn't the hard part. Marketers know how to spin a yarn. The challenge comes later: in maintaining the coherence and strength of your narrative consistently across every touchpoint a buyer encounters—and that's becoming harder.

B2B buying journeys are more fragmented, non-linear, and self-directed than ever. Prospects bounce between channels, consult multiple internal and external stakeholders, and often revisit older content before making a decision. This fragmentation means brands must not only tell compelling stories but also curate those stories and make them comprehensible when viewed out of order, so the narrative stays intact no matter where or when the buyer encounters it.

MAKE YOUR STORY TRAVEL—EVEN WHEN YOU'RE NOT IN THE ROOM

The true test of narrative cohesion is simple: can someone who heard your story second-hand still articulate the core idea? Because, in B2B, stories get retold constantly—between colleagues, to executives, across teams, and to other stakeholders.

If your narrative is too complex, too fragmented, or too inconsistent across channels, it breaks the moment you're not present to manage it. Having a cohesive (and, crucially, memorably simple) narrative ensures that your story stays intact even through word-of-mouth chains of communication.

THE 3 KEY STAGES OF A MARKETING FUNNEL

A cohesive narrative doesn't mean a static one. As prospects move through the three broad stages of the B2B funnel—awareness, consideration, and decision—their emotional and informational needs shift. Your story should follow suit, flexing its focus while keeping the core message intact.

Think of your story as a through-line: the core narrative remains constant, but how you tell it (and which parts you emphasise) will shift in response to where your buyer is mentally and emotionally at that moment.

This feeds into the “Know, Like, and Trust” element: the core marketing principle that suggests people will buy from brands they recognise (know), feel a connection with (like), and believe are credible and will deliver (trust). Having an authentic story helps in this.

AWARENESS: REVEALING THE PROBLEM AND THE POSSIBILITY

At the top of the funnel, many prospects don't yet recognise the root of their challenges—or know that solutions like yours even exist. Your story here should help them see themselves in the tension you describe.

This stage is about:

- naming the pain or friction they may have normalised
- painting a picture of how things could be different
- establishing early emotional relevance

Your job is to move them from indifferent to alert, helping them realise it doesn't have to be this way. This stage also serves the dual function of proving that you truly understand your audience.

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CONSIDERATION: PROVIDING CLARITY AND BUILDING CONNECTION

Once prospects acknowledge the problem, they begin exploring options. The story must now deepen, offering context, differentiation, and credibility without losing the human element.

This is where the “Like” in Know, Like, Trust takes shape.

Your story should:

- explain why you do what you do—and how you do it
- highlight the value behind your solution
- build emotional affinity through relatable, human-centric moments

Here, the narrative needs to shift from awakening a need to helping prospects understand why your way of solving it stands apart.

DECISION: REDUCING RISK, REINFORCING CONFIDENCE

At this stage, the biggest barrier isn’t information—it’s risk. Prospects want reassurance that choosing you is the safest, smartest move. To deal with this, your story needs to become more:

- proof-driven (“We’ve done this before.”)
- specific and outcome-focused (“We’re good at what we do.”)
- centred on trust and follow-through (“You can rely on us.”)

Case studies, testimonials, demos, benchmarks all matter, but they must reinforce the same core narrative the buyer has encountered all along. This final shift is about turning belief into confidence. Buyers need to trust not just your product, but you.

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Exercise 2

IDENTIFYING THE STORY TO TELL AT DIFFERENT SALES STAGES

Explore how to evolve your narrative to meet audience needs at different points in the funnel. What job does it need to serve at each point? How does it change?

STEP 1: DEFINE THE NARRATIVE SPINE

Before adjusting the story by stage, articulate the core thread that must remain consistent.

Core Narrative Elements

Primary tension:

Desired transformation:

Core value pillars:

Emotional insight:

This spine does not change. Everything else adapts around it.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE JOB OF THE STORY AT EACH STAGE

AWARENESS STAGE

What must the narrative accomplish?

1. Spark recognition?
2. Build emotional relevance?
3. Highlight the tension shaping the ICP's world?

Awareness job to be done:

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CONSIDERATION STAGE

What does the audience need to understand?

- How solutions differ?
- Why your approach makes sense?
- How credible or trustworthy you are?

Consideration job to be done:

DECISION STAGE

What concerns or barriers must you reduce?

- Risk?
- Internal objections?
- Technical uncertainty?

Decision job to be done:

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STEP 3: ADAPT THE NARRATIVE EXPRESSION BY STAGE

Fill in how your story evolves while preserving the narrative spine.

Stage	How the story feels	What it says	Evidence needed
Awareness			
Consideration			
Decision			

Things to bear in mind:

- Awareness leans emotional
- Consideration leans toward needing clarity + credibility
- Decision leans toward needing proof + specificity

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STEP 4: MAP TOUCHPOINTS TO NARRATIVE EXPRESSIONS

List key places your ICP will be looking for you at each stage (what channels/what sources) and define how the narrative comes through.

Stage	Touchpoints	What needs to be done:	Narrative expression:
Awareness		Emotional articulation of tension	
Consideration		Clear explanation of approach	
Decision		Risk reduction + evidence	

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STEP 5: CONDUCT A COHESION CHECK

DECISION STAGE

Answer the following:

- Is the narrative recognisable at every stage?
- Does it build logically from one stage to the next?
- Will the “second-hand version” of your story still be correct?
- Are any stages introducing new ideas that don’t connect back to the core tension?

Document any narrative weak points:

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Chapter 3: strengthen stories

REINFORCE B2B STORYTELLING WITH SOCIAL PROOF



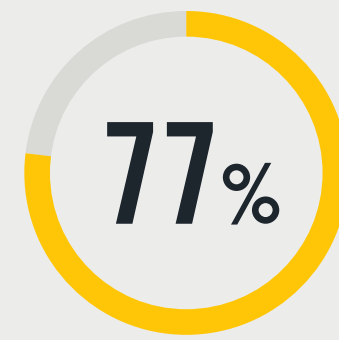
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Chapter 3: strengthen stories

REINFORCE B2B STORYTELLING WITH SOCIAL PROOF

Great B2B storytelling isn't built on emotion alone—it needs evidence. While narrative draws buyers in, proof is what gives them the confidence to move forward. The strongest B2B brands understand that credibility isn't a supporting detail at the end of a pitch; it's a critical element of the story itself that should be threaded throughout.

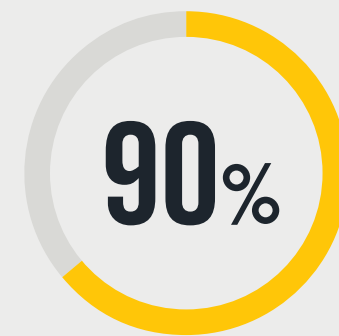
Yet many marketers struggle to strike the right balance. Lean too far into emotion, and the story feels unsubstantiated and fluffy. Lean too far into data, and it becomes dense, dry, and forgettable. The goal is to blend both—so the narrative resonates and reassures.



Over three-quarters of buyers read user reviews, and more than half (54%) speak directly with current users before purchasing.²



The average buying group for complex B2B solutions involves 8.2 stakeholders.²



Peer validation is a silent decider: 90% of buyers consider it important.³



This shift is part of a broader pattern where B2B buyers do more independent research and use social proof to de risk complex purchases.

² <https://sopro.io/resources/blog/b2b-buyer-statistics-and-insights/>

³ <https://mixology-digital.com/blog/top-factors-influencing-b2b-purchase-decisions>

WHY PROOF MATTERS SO MUCH TO B2B BUYERS

In B2B, decisions carry weight. A single purchase could involve multi-year commitments, high switching costs, or millions of dollars in investment. With that level of responsibility, buyers naturally gravitate toward defensible, low-risk choices.

This creates a psychological bias toward the familiar and the “safe”—which is why the status quo, or the market leader, is often your biggest competitor. As the saying goes: “Nobody ever got fired for buying IBM.”

To overcome that inertia, buyers need:

- confidence that your solution works
- evidence that businesses like theirs have succeeded with it
- validation from sources they, the human buyer, trust

But they don't just need information. They need information framed within a story that helps them understand what that proof means for them.

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TYPES OF PROOF—AND WHEN TO USE EACH

Different stages in the buyer journey call for different forms of validation. Building a varied proof library equips you to reinforce your narrative wherever a prospect encounters it.

Common and effective proof elements include:

- **Quantified outcomes:** percentage improvements, time saved, cost reductions, operational efficiencies. Best for buyers who are close to making a decision and who want concrete, defensible justification.
- **Performance benchmarks:** comparative metrics that highlight speed, accuracy, scale, or resilience. Useful in competitive evaluation moments.
- **Customer quotes:** short, emotive statements from real users that humanise the story. Ideal early in the journey to build empathy and relatability.
- **Analyst recognition:** Gartner, Forrester, IDC, or other third-party assessments from trusted institutions. These help mid- to late-stage buyers reassure internal stakeholders.
- **Independent validation:** security audits, certifications, compliance reports. This is particularly important in highly regulated or technical industries.

- **Adoption data:** these signal market traction (“Trusted by 1,200+ teams” or “Powering 4 of the top 5 banks”) and encourage the psychological assurance of safety in numbers.
- **Technical metrics:** latency, uptime, throughput, error rates—this is the evidence that help your story carry weight with evaluators and technical gatekeepers.

Each of these elements reinforces your narrative differently—but their impact is greatest when they feel woven in, not bolted on.

USING PROOF AS A NARRATIVE DEVICE

The real power of social proof comes when it supports the story rather than interrupts it. Proof should feel like a natural progression of the narrative; an “of course” moment rather than a hard pivot.

Two simple techniques can help to bring this to life:

Before and after evidence helps to anchor the metric in a moment of change.

- “Before: teams spent four hours reconciling data each day. After? Twenty minutes.”

This pairing lets your data do emotional work by showing transformation in context, not just numbers.

Translating technical metrics into business meaning can make them easier to digest. Many figures only ‘click’ when contextualised.

- “99.99% uptime” becomes “Your team loses less than five minutes of productivity a month.”
- “35% reduction in compute load” becomes “A lower cloud bill without sacrificing performance.”

When storytelling and proof work together, they create a narrative that is both compelling and credible. Buyers feel emotionally engaged and intellectually reassured, which gives them the confidence to get internal stakeholders onboard. Most importantly, the story becomes easier to believe—because it’s backed by evidence that feels real, relevant, and accessible.

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Exercise 3

MAKING PROOF PART OF THE STORY

Learn how to identify, structure, and translate social proof so it strengthens your B2B story instead of sitting beside it.

STEP 1: NAME THE MOMENT OF DOUBT

Think about where your buyer hesitates most. At this point, they're thinking:

STEP 2: CHOOSE ONE PROOF POINT

Pick one piece of evidence you already use (metric, quote, stat, recognition). The proof I usually rely on is:

STEP 3: TRANSLATE THE PROOF

Rewrite it in terms of what changes for the buyer. For the buyer, this really means:

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Exercise 3 continued

STEP 4: SHOW THE CHANGE

Frame the proof as movement, not measurement.

Before:	
After:	

STEP 5: SHOW THE CHANGE

Blend emotion + outcome + proof into one line.

“When [redacted], teams can [redacted], which shows up as [redacted].”

STEP 6: SENSE CHECK YOUR NARRATIVE

Read your sentence back and ask:

- Does this feel reassuring, not promotional?
- Does the proof support the story... or interrupt it?

If it feels bolted on, rewrite it until it feels natural and inevitable.

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Chapter 4: scaling up and out

CREATING NARRATIVE CONSISTENCY ACROSS LARGE ORGANISATIONS



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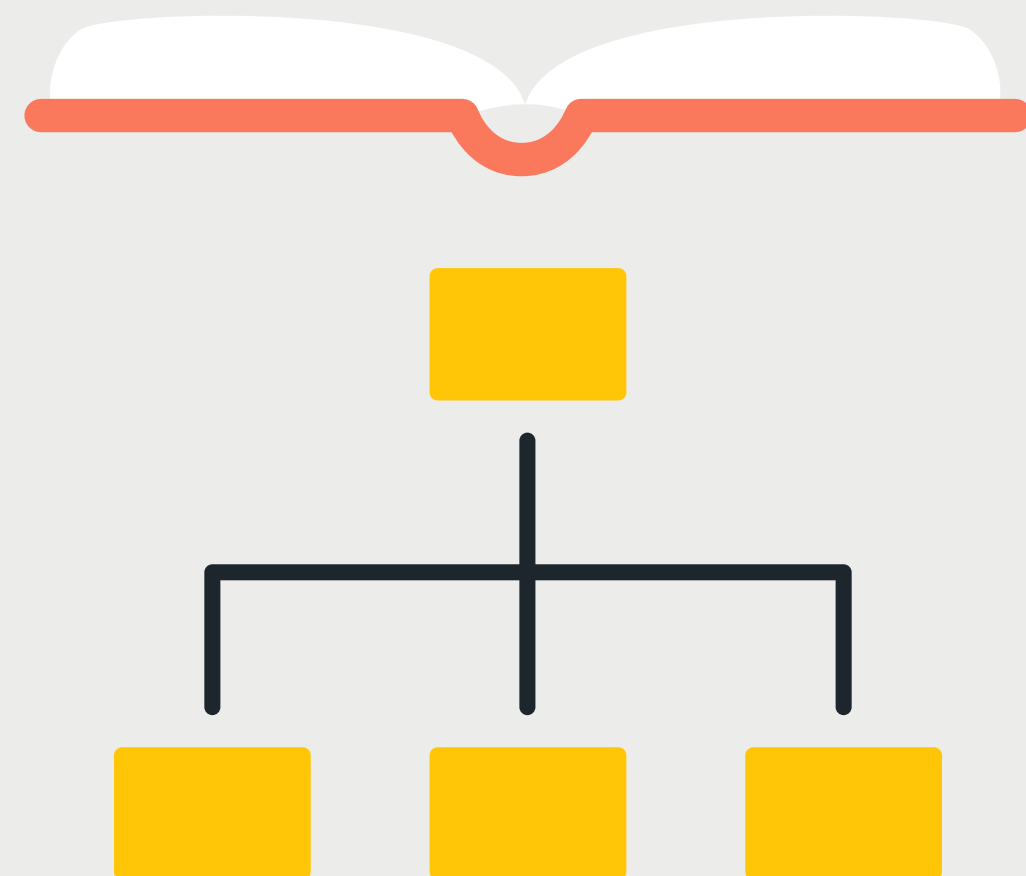
Chapter 4: scaling up and out

CREATING NARRATIVE CONSISTENCY ACROSS LARGE ORGANISATIONS

Even the strongest story can weaken as it passes from team to team. In B2B organisations, narratives naturally degrade as they travel from brand comms to demand generation, to content, to product, and finally to sales. Each handoff creates the risk of misinterpretation, oversimplification, or conflicting emphasis.

The result? Buyers hear a noisy, confusing mess of a message.

At the same time, marketing can't be so restrictive that no one feels empowered to act. Striking the right balance between guidance and flexibility is key to maintaining narrative integrity without stifling creativity.



WHY CONSISTENCY IS SO HARD

Large B2B organisations face structural challenges that make storytelling difficult:

- **Silos:** teams operate in isolation, developing their own interpretations of the brand story.
- **Competing priorities:** product launches, campaigns, and quarterly targets often overshadow narrative alignment.
- **Exploding channels:** with buyers encountering your brand across email, social, events, sales calls, and more, controlling the story becomes exponentially more difficult.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR NARRATIVE GOVERNANCE

Maintaining cohesion requires clear guardrails and a shared framework that ensures everyone is telling the same underlying story, even if the execution differs.

- **Narrative essence:** define the core idea at the heart of your brand story—the single thought you want every buyer to remember.
- **Supporting narratives:** identify secondary stories that illustrate your core idea in context, tailored to different audiences or solutions.

- **Message pillars:** establish the key points that should appear in any story, providing consistency without rigidity.
- **Proof pillars:** decide on the types of evidence or social proof that should reinforce the narrative in all communications.
- **Channel adaptations:** offer guidance on how the story should flex across email, sales decks, social, website, and other touchpoints while maintaining integrity.

By establishing these guardrails, organisations can reduce narrative drift, strengthen credibility, and ensure that the human, story-led element of the brand is present wherever a buyer encounters it. Even in complex, distributed organisations, a cohesive narrative is possible—and essential.

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Exercise 4

REVERSE-ENGINEERING YOUR MESSAGING UMBRELLA

The big story informs the smaller, granular narratives for different audiences/solutions. However, it's often easier to think of the smaller moments of storytelling. So here, we work backwards. Think of strong stories that will demonstrate the power of your product/solution—and, from there, find the connective tissue that leads back to the blanket umbrella idea.

STEP 1: GATHER MICRO-STORIES

List 5–10 real or hypothetical moments that demonstrate your product's power:

Prompts:

- How a customer unlocked unexpected efficiency
- How a painful bottleneck disappeared
- How a risky manual process became automated
- How a team collaborated more effectively
- How a team lead gained clarity or confidence

Micro-stories:

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STEP 2: EXTRACT THE VALUE THEMES FROM EACH STORY

For each micro-story, identify the underlying benefit.

Micro-story	Value theme	Emotional impact	Supporting proof

Common value themes often emerge here.

STEP 3: IDENTIFY THE CONNECTIVE TISSUE

Look across all value themes and ask:

- What pattern repeats?
- What overarching transformation are these stories pointing toward?
- How does your product consistently change the customer's world?

Emerging connective tissue:

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STEP 4: DRAFT THE MESSAGING UMBRELLA

A strong umbrella message should:

- Capture the overarching transformation
- Be broad enough to hold multiple products/solutions
- Be crisp enough to feel memorable
- Translate into campaign ideas, sales narratives, and product messaging

Example: “We help [] to [] by enabling [] .”

Write 2–3 umbrella candidates:

[]

[]

[]

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STEP 5: STRESS-TEST THE UMBRELLA

Evaluate each umbrella message.

Questions to test each option:

- Does it embrace all the micro-stories naturally?
- Can it stretch across segments and industries?
- Does it reflect real customer language?
- Is it a story someone else can retell accurately?
- Does it differentiate us?
- Is it emotionally meaningful?

Notes:

STEP 6: LADDER DOWN

Once you've chosen the umbrella, ladder the narrative back down to smaller messaging blocks.

Audience / Segment	Key Message	Supporting Story	Proof Point

This ensures the umbrella isn't theoretical—it becomes a working framework for campaigns, sales, product, and ABM.

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Summary

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER—AND WHAT COMES NEXT

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Summary

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER—AND WHAT COMES NEXT

Storytelling in B2B isn't a luxury or a creative flourish. It's a practical, measurable way to cut through complexity, build trust, and help buyers make confident decisions. When your narrative is clear, purposeful, and consistently expressed across every touchpoint, it becomes one of the most powerful assets your brand can own.

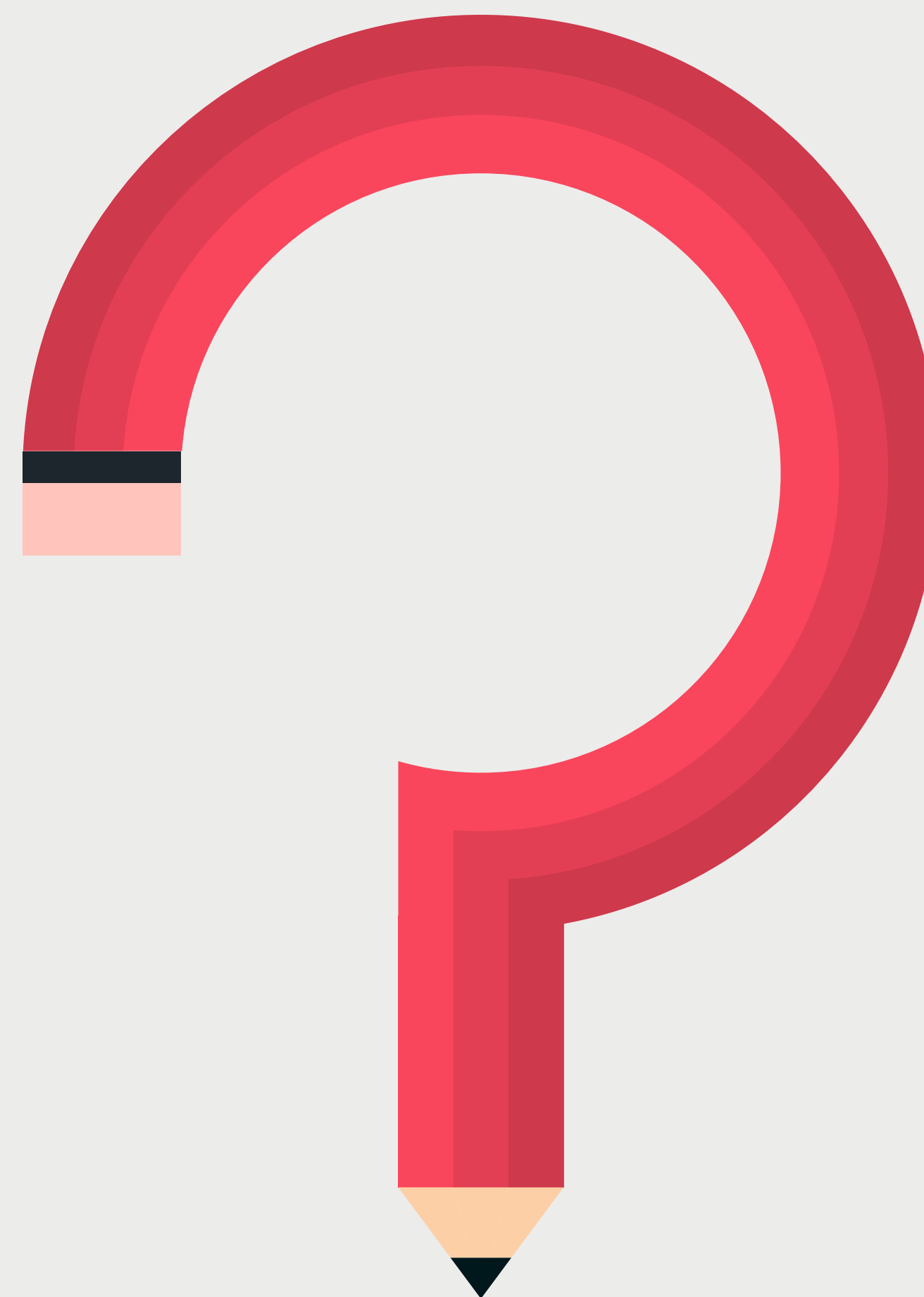
Across the chapters in this workbook, we've explored how to spot narrative tension, craft stories that meet buyers where they are, reinforce your message with credible proof, and maintain coherence across even the most complex organisations. These aren't abstract ideas—they're tangible tools that help to transform how your brand shows up in the market.

But putting storytelling into practice is an ongoing discipline. It takes time, clarity, and a willingness to keep the narrative alive as your audience, your product, and your category evolve. And while many teams understand the importance of strong storytelling, the day-to-day reality of deadlines, deliverables, and competing priorities can make it difficult to build stories that are both strategic and beautifully executed.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP YOU BRING YOUR BRAND TO LIFE

If you'd like support in building (or revitalising) a story that carries across your entire organisation—from brand to product to sales—we'd love to help. Our agency specialises in thoughtful B2B content: the kind that blends clarity and creativity, business logic and emotional resonance.

Whether you need help crafting a narrative, developing a full content engine, or simply making your marketing feel more human, we're here to collaborate—not just to produce content, but to strengthen the story that sits at the heart of your brand.



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Our agency

LEFT-BRAIN LOGIC MEETS RIGHT-BRAIN INSPIRATION

The Fold unites creative spark with logical precision and a consultative approach—much like the two hemispheres of the brain. Our approach, sharpened over time, enables compelling brand messaging and measurable results for our clients. We don't just create content or design assets, we craft strategies that connect businesses with audiences through logical reasoning and emotional resonance. Our specialism is turning technical complexity into bold, vibrant, and relatable communications.



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the fold

LET'S COLLABORATE

Start your creative journey with The Fold.



hello@thefoldcreative.com
+44 (0)20 8995 9431

Somerset House
Strand, London WC2R 1LA

