

Telling Stories with Digital Content and Tools

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Narratives are ubiquitous in human experience. We use them to educate, communicate, convince, explain, and entertain. As far as we know, every society in the world has narratives, which suggests they are rooted in our psychology and serve as an important cognitive function: narratives do something for us. Although the methods have changed, the desire to tell and hear stories remains, and still impacts our perception.

Digital society has opened new opportunities to tell stories, offering new tools and environments for expression, increased by the development of social networking and mobile applications. Digital storytelling is relatively a new term and refers to the use of digital tools to tell stories. It can be seen as the modern way of telling stories, combining multimedia features.

Storytelling with digital tools dates back to the early days of personal computers and first networks. Early work on hypertext explored new ways of creating and experiencing narrative, often nonlinear and media-rich. Individual hypertext pieces offered new forms of co-creation, in which a reader would help to form the story by shaping a path through it. With the growth of the web, storytelling approaches combined hypertext with rich media and user-generated content. Stories are open-ended, branching, hyper-linked, cross-media, participatory, exploratory and unpredictable, moving from the traditional conventions of storytelling. Digital storytelling is rapidly evolving, fostering innovation and creativity, while revealing new directions for narratives to flow.

The extraordinary development of social networking and mobile applications increased the interest in interventions that make use of these technologies for storytelling. Due to the characteristics of such technologies constructivist approaches to storytelling became increasingly relevant in contrast with a previous almost exclusive focus on structuralist approaches.

We will present a variety of projects and tools supporting digital storytelling that are derived of both these approaches.