



Those who tell stories, rule the world

Authored by:

Mehul Mehta



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“What unites people? Armies? Gold? Flags? Stories. There’s nothing more powerful in the world than a good story. Nothing can stop it. No enemy can defeat it. And who has a better story than Bran the Broken?... Who’s better to lead us into the future?” -*Tyrion Lannister to the Dragonpit council justifying who should rule the Seven Kingdom*



In the corporate world, ruling a realm is akin to being a great value creator. However, value creation is not just about the numbers, and many of those who believed that, are often condemned of chasing them, and sometimes fiddling with them.

Business owners and corporate CEOs must take Tyrion seriously.

In the end, it was not the most powerful, not the bravest, not the wisest, not the most cunning, nor the most rightful heir that was chosen to be the ruler and the protector of the realm.

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A superior quarterly or an annual financial performance is an outcome of series of actions undertaken correctly and better than the peers. For investors, financial score card is a qualifying criterion that must be continuously met for them to stay invested. For lenders, it's an assurance for the safety of their capital. For talent, it signifies progress and for shareholders it implies a promise of value creation.

But what unites shareholders, potential investors, creditors, business partners or current and future employees? A good corporate story. Tata Group and Reliance had good stories, and so did Birla and Bajaj. Infosys told a good story and so did Amul and Asian Paints. Globally, Apple, Amazon and Google have all

shared strong stories, as in the past Microsoft and McDonald's had.

These stories are made of vision, imagination, passion and grit of the entrepreneurs. Their stories were also about quality, rigour, planning, manufacturing excellence, marketing acumen and customer service. And most importantly, some stories are also about rewarding shareholders, protecting the planet, having a purpose and benefitting society.

While consistent performance supports value creation, good stories build formidable reputation. This very unshakable reputation guards the value when the performance takes a temporary hit.

Stories cannot become legends in short spurts. They need to be baked in the oven of time, conversations and retelling. Many mid-size or small companies tend to think that their stories are not mature enough, and that they are still half-baked and therefore too early to communicate. Companies need to understand that stories don't mean announcements of success. They are a culmination of milestones, achieved one day at a time. Many will be skeptical or won't show interest in your story in the beginning, but if you continue to build on it, the story becomes powerful enough to bring countless stakeholders together.

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