

# WEAVE

03

January  
2021 Edition

## AMEERA SHAH

"Irrespective of your gender, the biggest asset of your life is your own confidence in yourself because that is the thing that nobody can give or take away from you."

## EKALAVYA BHATTACHARYA

"I believe that attention is the new oil, not engagement."

## RAJIB GHOSH

"For me, storytelling is an integral ingredient in design, business, and technology to a large extent."

## KAVAN ANTANI

"We used storytelling to forge connections between our idea and our users. Every designer I spoke with struck a chord with our idea."

## JOHN SEBASTIAN

"The wonderful thing about stories is that they are not only powerful cognitive tools, but offer a pivotal framework to connect with people emotionally."

# STORYTELLING AND DESIGN TO DRIVE CHANGE





## Editor's Desk

Nowadays, with the pervasiveness of information overload, clutter, and hype, stories can cut through the mess and grab attention.

Storytelling has proven to be a powerful tool to make people empathize, convey messages across, and communicate fresh perspectives.

We see it conveyed eloquently through design, among other mediums, so much as to inform and influence change in people. Hence our theme 'Storytelling and Design to Drive Change'.

Join us as we unravel the nuances of storytelling by delving into the views and opinions of some of the most brilliant minds in the design, technology, and corporate world of today.

Our line up includes Ekalavya Bhattacharya, Mahendra Chauhan, Caroline Stedman, Kavan Antani, Madhavi Shankar, and such erudite personalities.

We also got to interact with Rajib Ghosh who gave us an exclusive look into storytelling at Microsoft. Moreover, our feature article in this issue is one of the nation's most empowering and successful entrepreneurs, Ameera Shah. So, look out for these gems and enjoy the third edition of Weave, brought to you by the students of Avantika University.

### Ishaan Nakate

 nustaesthetics

In design, the story is a boat through which various people can experience the same emotions and feelings. If your intentions and actions align with your design, then this story paints itself well. This is deeply ingrained in our genes. We are emotional beings and over the years, our species have understood the importance of carrying each other's burden and joy in the process of storytelling.

Reach out to us on [industryrelations@avantika.edu.in](mailto:industryrelations@avantika.edu.in)

**Miral Zafar**

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**Mahendra Chauhan**  
Head of Design at Titan

With over 15 years of experience as an industrial designer, Mahendra has indeed taken up the watch design world by storm. He is a keen observer of human behavior and loves to create products that stem from consumer insights and human imagination. His work has won international accolades like the Red Dot Design Award, Rado Design Excellence Award, and the Philips Award for Innovative Lighting.

LinkedIn: [Mahendra Chauhan](#)

# Art of Strategic Design Storytelling

The traditional design process has always focused on three fundamental tenets. The first and primary tenet is a consumer insightful process, which helps us to identify the unmet or hidden needs of people. The second being the ideation stage, which facilitates multiple ideas for the unearthed needs. Finally, the act of implementation, which converts ideas into products and brings them to the market. It is a cyclic process, and as consumers keep evolving, this chain of new products keeps ticking the economic activities of a business. While these three steps are key milestones, but most often, many good designs never reach the third stage of implementation. This is the stage wherein businesses are defined, economic activities are envisaged, and strategies are charted. There is a saying that 'Ideas are easy. It is the execution of ideas that separates the sheep from the goats.'

In most professional settings, during ideation the designs and designers are inseparable. It is the stage of implementation wherein ideas or concepts talk to other fellow stakeholders in the organization. This is the stage where the reasoning behind ideas becomes more important than the idea itself. It is also a stage of narrating the consumer and business connection; this is the stage of strategic design storytelling.

Unfortunately, current design education rarely teaches students how to sell their ideas. Strategic storytelling is as essential to a designer as the art of selling to a salesperson. Like any other art, it also has multiple facets and structures. These are the four facets that are important to deliver your message clearly to the targeted audience.

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**“Strategic storytelling is as essential to a designer as the art of selling to a salesperson.”**

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## 1. Think omnifarious stakeholders

Our role as designers, working across disciplines, means that we are often required to present our ideas to a range of different stakeholders. However, there are also times when we may need to present ideas to CXOs or marketing heads to obtain agreement or support for a concept or big idea. Whilst it is important to acknowledge that every senior stakeholder is different, I have seen that people's reactions to storytelling highly depends on their role in the organization. Higher leadership will be interested in the impact of your narrative than its attributes.

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“Consumers today, view their purchases as an extension of their identity and values.”

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Mid-level stakeholders would like to support ideas that have similarities from the past, and which would help them drive results faster. While manufacturing and development heads will mostly look for material affinity, modularity, and standardization in your storytelling. Your choice of words can have a significant impact on the message you want to deliver. Always be mindful of your audience and consider what will resonate with them most effectively without losing or altering your core idea.

## 2. Focus the distracted mind

Most decision-makers will have multiple things running parallelly. Many global studies suggest that collective attention span is narrowing due to the amount of information that is presented to the audience. Your stories should be engaging

and memorable. Having multiple versions of your stories, elevates the pitch to a keynote, and every occasion requires careful study of the audience attention span. One thumb rule is to be passionate about your content and your idea. Always be mindful that passion is infectious. Your energy, your involvement in the subject could alone influence people to appreciate your stories, concepts, or ideas.

## 3. Narrate with agility

Creating a compelling design strategy story involves much more than merely crafting and then telling the stories. It is essential to create a narrative that is fluid, evolving, and not very rigid. A story that allows people to contribute their voices, so it always becomes successful. Allowing everyone to add to your idea makes the team comfortable telling the story and weaving their own experiences through it. Most importantly, allow stakeholders to own, support, and build on your story.

## 4. Be purposefully empathetic

Consumers today, view their purchases as an extension of their identity and values. What this means for designers and marketers is, to create a purpose, culture, and community that users can be a part of. A clear purpose gives consumers a way to connect with your design and the brand. Strategic storytelling should touch upon the consumer journey by answering relevant questions: Do you make their life easier? Do you reduce their frustrations? Do you inspire them? This might alone be the most impactful outcome of storytelling, leading to charged stakeholders and highly engaged users.

Strategic design storytelling brings people to work together, explore, and chart a vision for your products and brand. It considers the opportunities and challenges you face from every angle. Furthermore, because the process creates early buy-in and commitment to your idea, it removes friction from a complex system and creates the kind of ripples that make impactful waves.

“Always be mindful that passion is infectious. Your energy, your involvement in the subject could alone influence people to appreciate your stories, concepts, or ideas.”



## Ameera Shah

### Managing Director of Metropolis Healthcare

Ameera is the Promoter & Managing Director of Metropolis Healthcare Ltd., a leading chain of pathology labs with a large network in India and Africa. For the last two decades, she has built Metropolis into a leading and reputed chain of laboratories with a wide network of over 125 laboratories and 2500+ patient service centers. An eminent industry spokesperson, she has played an instrumental role in changing the pathology industry landscape in the country, from being a doctor-led-practice to a professionally-led industry in an extremely unregulated, competitive, and fragmented market.

LinkedIn: [Ameera Shah](#)

# Learning Leadership from Ameera Shah

## Who has been your inspiration to start and build Metropolis to where it is today?

My father has always been my biggest inspiration. He taught me that we have to give our utmost effort to every venture and make sure it positively contributes to society. I am one of the privileged few in India to get a really good education and grow up in a stable family. I have always felt the importance of giving back to the country. That was the motivation to build Metropolis into a firm that offered high-quality affordable healthcare services because Indians deserve it.

## Can you share with us your entrepreneurial journey? You started young at 21; how did you overcome the challenges of the business world?

Every journey has its own unique challenges. It is important to segregate these challenges into

external and internal, rather than put them all into one bucket. Otherwise, your challenges will limit you and it may become too overwhelming to tackle. We have full control and influence on our internal challenges and by conquering these challenges, we will be able to thrive better.

## How do you ensure that you keep replicating the success every year?

To begin with, defining what success means to you is very important. For me, the meaning of success is building something of respect. This means that we are earning and bettering our reputation every year. I never stopped being a student. I feel I have to keep learning and increasing my exposure. Whether that means bringing back insights from other companies about how they work to my company, or joining a school and doing a program in the middle

of my career, where I can learn amongst other budding entrepreneurs. The key is to learn from people all around you and to keep expanding your horizon and knowledge.

## How do you deal with challenges in terms of risk and uncertainty in the healthcare industry?

My team and I have been very clear about this from the beginning, this is an industry that is about life and death and we have to recognize the severity of that. For instance, if I come to work after having a bad day at home, I have to recognize that I cannot let my emotions influence my decisions, as it can affect millions of patients. That understanding is a very critical part of moving forward. In healthcare it is essential to have that knowledge and also be able to think big, and simultaneously micromanage; to stay humane, and not to treat it like any other industry.

**You operate in an industry with a high demand for keeping in touch with medical field changes; how do you keep the innovation process ongoing at Metropolis?**

Working on something new is always very exciting for everyone and I think that is why people have a natural inclination towards innovation. But, understanding where to innovate and where not to innovate is just as important. I have seen people getting very intoxicated by the idea that they are innovating every day, but innovation is not about small changes. It is where you are thinking out of the box and then following it up with execution. Just having a great idea has no meaning, until it impacts people. Best innovation happens when you are not involved in everyday operations and you sit back and think about how things could potentially be.

**We see clean, hygienic, warm, and at the same time, a fast environment at the labs. How have you been able to set up a unique process at Metropolis?**

The crucial part of this is to decide what you stand for. As an organization, we stand for empathy. We want to make sure we have accurate results and the customer experience that people get with us. Hence at every point where you engage with a patient, you have to demonstrate the same values. It is about the amount of time you are making someone wait when they reach out to you at your call center, considering you know how anxious somebody is when they are calling healthcare. It is also about the cleanliness of your bathroom as you know that your patient will probably have to go there and give you a urine sample. Consumers are always very discerning and they understand and observe exactly whether you do what you are claiming to, or not. The minute you make a commitment you cannot keep to customers, you have broken trust, and when you break trust it is very hard to build it again.

**How do you inspire your team, and can you share the Metropolis culture with us?**

The Metropolis culture brings on board good people and then gives them space and freedom to be positively productive. I like people to be action-oriented. The values are very clear that we must be transparent. If there is a problem, I would much rather hear it from my team than find out later on. The three core values at Metropolis are empathy, integrity, and accuracy. We foster growth and support a culture that is open,

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**“Best innovation happens when you are not involved in everyday operations and you sit back and think about how things could potentially be.”**

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synergistic, progressive, and scientific.

**Can you share with us one of the unique customer stories at Metropolis that you remember? It can be related to a customer while building the team or interaction with any stakeholder.**

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**“I would suggest entrepreneurs to not get too attached to the outcome of what they believe they will get once they reach this pinnacle of success because that pinnacle of success will keep moving.”**

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Over the years, I have frequently been asked about how it feels to have won so many awards. I can genuinely say, from the bottom of my heart, that nothing beats the joy a customer who appreciates us brings, even if it is in a small way. It signifies that we have done something right, we have built an institution where we have communicated values of empathy. They mean much more than any award from any organization. Working to make sure we are keeping customers happy, is the best karma one can do.

**What are some of your suggestions to aspiring entrepreneurs?**

An aspiring entrepreneur is someone who keeps dreaming but never actually does anything. To be an entrepreneur one should actually start acting and get things moving. My message to entrepreneurs would be that entrepreneurship is a beautiful journey. The real inspiration for entrepreneurs, including myself, is that if you build a company that survives and thrives, then the journey is far more interesting than the destination because it teaches you so much about yourself. I would suggest entrepreneurs to not get too attached to the outcome of what they believe they will get once they reach this pinnacle of success because that pinnacle of success will keep moving.

**How can someone be Ameera Shah? If one of our readers aspires to be like you, what should they do?**

I think everyone should be their own authentic self because everybody has their individual strengths and weaknesses. I was never afraid to take risks, be it while trekking when I was a very young child or in life. My motto was

always, to never stop, complain, or give up, and in the process take risks and be bold. Secondly, I have learned that irrespective of your gender, the biggest asset of your life is your own confidence in yourself because that is the thing that nobody can give or take away from you. And lastly, it is crucial to face your fears and keep finding ways to come out on the other side.

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**Written by Jigyasa Dixit**

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**“I have learned that irrespective of your gender, the biggest asset of your life is your own confidence in yourself because that is the thing that nobody can give or take away from you.”**

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## Xavier Prabhu

Founder, PRHUB + President, APAC & Global board member at IPREX Global Communication

With 25 years of experience in various facets of branding and communication, he has a proven track record in helping organizations of various hues and sizes across sectors to build a credible and sustainable, reputation and equity.

LinkedIn: [Xavier Prabhu](#)

# Using Storytelling Principles to Elevate your Product into a Brand that “connects”

Having been a great admirer of Nike as a brand and what it does in marketing, saw that the admiration leap further while reading about their March 2020 “**Play inside. Play for the world**” campaign. Amidst the pandemic, as the campaign ostensibly stressed the need for social distancing, it also left itself for larger interpretations. The imagery, the characters portrayed and the treatment all sprang from Nike’s core belief that everyone who has a body is an athlete. Imagine where Nike as a brand would be without such innovative and relevant storytelling at the heart of all its marketing and communication.

Before we plunge into why storytelling matters for products of all categories, let us get some basics out of our way. A story is things that happen

to, or around, or with a central character(s). Like Yuval Noah Harari puts it succinctly in his book, *Sapiens – A Brief History of the Humankind*, “Stories have bound humans all along with their existence. When repeatedly told and absorbed, they become beliefs.” From a brand or business’s perspective, stories allow for connection with the customers, employees, and any other stakeholder, emotionally and fundamentally. In many cases, one can safely say that stories have driven the way the products are packaged, marketed, and communicated.

If one looks closely and in the right manner, every business or product is flush with stories. There is often confusion about the difference between a story and a narrative. If a narrative is a final picture, stories are the blocks strung together, forming

that picture. A narrative needs a constant telling of stories that validate or amplify it. A narrative sets the direction and stories, the path towards it. “Just do it” is a narrative and the various stories that Nike often tells through its campaigns, like the one above, are what embellish, and reinforce that narrative. Closer home, Amul is a brand that does some great storytelling around a larger narrative. For many disruptive products, like Tesla or SpaceX, a narrative is essential, as it allows one to break the status quo.

“Narrative needs a constant telling of stories that validate or amplify it. A narrative sets the direction and stories, the path towards it.”



In Daniel Pink's book, *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule The Future*, he explains that people who understand a story have, "The ability to place these facts in context and deliver them with emotional impact." The impact of stories in businesses is like design, it is becoming a key way for individuals and entrepreneurs to distinguish their goods and services in a crowded marketplace. If you want your product to be heard by consumers, it must be rooted in a story that they can emotionally connect with. In a world where consumers are inundated with choices, to stand out, products must be rooted in the 'why'.

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**"A shared story allows the product team to have a shared vision and passion for it. Without a clear understanding of the 'why,' product teams risk becoming mechanical and task focused, losing sight of the big picture."**

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With knowledgeable consumers, all products have to be seen as adding value to their lives, through fulfilling a need or satisfying a desire. Far too often, teams focus on execution before defining the product opportunity, unique value proposition, and forget to consider changing consumer psychology. This excessive focus on the 'how' and 'what' of a product, over the 'why,' is behind the failures we often encounter. Moreover, it is the 'why' that leads to a story and the ultimate emotional connect.

Current organizational structures are outdated, lacking clearly defined, and shared ownership of product value between teams. Resulting in, out-of-sync product experience, and messaging that fails to resonate and connect with consumers. Effective usage of stories as a communication tool allows companies, and brands, to drive change and broaden their perspective. With an increased focus on diversity, inclusion, transparency, and sustainability, it is suitable for organizations to be open and remain engaged. Compelling stories are a living and

breathing entity of their own, traveling from person to person, and packed with emotions that make people remember that company or brand.

Below is a checklist of five factors that your stories need, to resonate and connect:

- 1. Be authentic**
- 2. Be clear**
- 3. Be consistent**
- 4. Be human**
- 5. Be subtle**

To be frank, AI, machine learning, and automation are at best enablers or tools for better story creation, telling and distribution. Its master storytellers and narrative weavers are who will be in demand as brands try to elevate themselves, strike an emotional connect and stand out in the hyper-crowded marketplace.

**"Compelling stories are a living and breathing entity of their own replete with emotions, traversing from one consumer to another, making people remember that company or brand."**



**Rajib Ghosh**  
Design Leader (ODSP) at Microsoft

Rajib comes with a strong background of more than 20 years of experience in human-centered design, experience, strategy, and execution. His work involves solving problems, innovating, and crafting experiences, using a behavioral understanding of human beings as a critical driver. These problems are typically sector agnostic, and lie at the cross-section of business, technology, human needs, and desires.

LinkedIn: [Rajib Ghosh](#)

# Leadership, Design, and Storytelling at Microsoft

## 1. What interested you to be a part of the design domain and build a successful career in it?

I was always inclined towards the creative field. I engaged in an Apple sponsored design competition while doing my specialization in Communication Design at NID. We were invited to solve a locally relevant problem using technology. This project inadvertently took me very deep into the domain of human-centered design. It was an extremely successful project that won several awards, and in the end, I knew that this is the type of work I want to do for the rest of my life. In retrospect, I believe this was when I found my purpose, my 'why.' (Referring to the Golden Circle by Simon Sinek). From there on, I kept acting on the right opportunities that came my way, and it worked for me. The impact I can make on people's lives as a designer is my driving force.

## 2. You have had varied experiences, from being an entrepreneur, leading an incubator, and now leading design teams. How have you managed to change the gears over a period of time?

I don't see them as changing gears. Instead, these experiences have helped me develop an understanding of people, processes, organizations, and tools. That understanding helps me connect the dots and apply them to my work today when faced with challenges. I am still trying to add to that learning.

## 3. As a leader, what are your philosophies for building, retaining, and nurturing teams to create a work culture?

Building a culture based on trust, respect, and honesty are the core values needed to develop and retain a great team. I try to imbibe these values in my team to the best of my abilities, and everything

else follows naturally. I encourage investing in relationships and genuine connections within the group.

## 4. Can you elaborate on how companies can make their users feel more familiar and homely while using their products?

Culture is contextual. Our lived experiences shape our perception and understanding of culture. These differences in experience lead to different generations experiencing and understanding a culture differently, with some common foundational values. Hence, while building something, we must understand who the target audience is.

Try to see through their eyes. This understanding would eventually lead to products and services that naturally feel naturally familiar to them.

## 5. How do you keep the innovation culture going, especially using complex human behavior understanding as a key driver to find solutions?

Asking when and why innovation is required is essential. Unless necessary, one can always leverage a solution that already works, rather than reinventing the wheel to be unique. That doesn't make business sense. If a problem truly needs something unique and no solution exists today, then dedicating time and resources to innovate makes a lot of sense. Every problem we set out to solve may not require a profound psychological and behavioral understanding of the user. Merely learning the user's behavior without fully understanding the psychological phenomenon can solve many problems. There are many exceptions, especially those in the domain of wicked problems. For instance, people generally try to avoid preventative diagnostics and annual check-ups. If we wanted to solve this problem, we would certainly need to understand why such irrational behavior occur.

There might be deep-seated fears that are way bigger than the usual explanations of lack of time and access—fear of what might happen if they get diagnosed with an illness. Not knowing is better. We find stability and comfort in a static state. New environments and life changes can be a source of anxiety. We don't want to do anything that may lead to knowledge of something negative, leading to dramatic life changes. This understanding might help us design more effective and innovative solutions.

## 6. How are enterprises putting the Human-Centric Design approach to practice in various aspects of design disciplines?

Traditionally, high-tech companies used to put technology over user-centricity. However, in the last decade or so, such organizations realized that human-centered design is not just about user experience but can be a compelling competitive advantage. Suppose one successfully creates products and services that are functional and manages to build an emotional attachment with the user.

In that case, it will be difficult for even a cheaper, slightly better solution to replace it. Organizations have realized this and have started investing in user research, design, and a human-centered approach to product development.

## 7. How does storytelling play an important role in one's professional career?

For me, storytelling is crucial not just in design but business and technology as well. In the real world, all these functions work as a coalition. Storytelling can make or break the outcome, be it an insight from user-research or a business pitch or presenting a design concept. Creating user journeys and personas, making a point with the help of data are all a part of storytelling, helping hit the right target spot at the right time in the right way and lead to desired outcomes.

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**“I believe it is important to find your purpose, what is at the center of your Golden Circle.”**

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## 8. Tell a good story, and you will end up with a passionate team who works on the product your customers love. How do you use storytelling as a tool to lead teams?

I use storytelling for inspiration, connection, and planning or goal-setting at the workplace. We often bring seasoned industry professionals from various domains to inspire us through their stories. We watch films about design, art, music, and then discuss the narrative and the content. Each of us also shares stories of our personal journeys, which helps us feel connected, understand each other better, and build trust.

As a team leader, I often need to talk to folks about their career goals. I urge not to focus on the level or the designation, as they are the upshots to the end goal. But first, find their purpose, their 'why.' Then focus on visualizing and telling a story of what they see themselves doing and feeling a year or five years from now. That's their goal. It's not the title or the salary or the level.

## 9. How is technology shaping the evolution of storytelling?

The content is what matters. Although many experiments with new forms of nonlinear storytelling, the ancient tradition of oral storytelling still holds today. It can be as engaging as watching a movie using live-action, 2D animation, or any other medium for that matter. The six or seven-story curves are time-tested and still highly effective—That's why films from some of the most renowned directors in the film industry are always amazing to watch. The tools have certainly become more sophisticated over time. But it is as good as any tool, without great content and engaging narrative. The medium is secondary.

## 10. One key takeaway you would like young people to learn from your journey?

First, I believe it is important to find your purpose, what's at the center of your Golden Circle. We often define our goals, wanting to be in AI, cloud, mobile, and so on. These are tools and technologies at the peak of the hype cycle today but might become commonplace

tomorrow. Hence the primary goal ought to be to discover your purpose and values. Second, I think you should consider focusing on learning from an experience rather than its outcomes. Outcomes can be success or failure. Successes can lead to a sense of an inflated ego over time, and failures can feel like a terrible setback. It is vital to always have a sense of progress, even in the face of failures. Concentrating on the insight gained from an experience instead of looking at outcomes as successes and failures lead to a progressive mindset called a growth mindset.

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**Written by – Zeel Modi**

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**“Organizations realized that human-centered design is not just about user experience but can be a compelling competitive advantage.”**

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**Kavan Antani**  
Co-Founder and CEO at IndieFolio Network

With the mission to organize and strengthen the Indian creative community, Kavan Antani founded the IndieFolio Network in 2015. He has always been passionate to start various ventures and explore new ideas.

LinkedIn: [Kavan Antani](#)

# Storytelling to Influence and Inspire

Crabs, crocodiles, and sharks have existed on this planet long before we Homo sapiens arrived. So what made us, relatively one of the youngest species on this planet, take over the world in a mere 2,50,000 years?

money, success, humans rights, and democracy, all of these do not exist. However, for humans, despite not being universal truths, these stories control us.

So as you can see, **human evolution** also validates the power of storytelling.

Now let us look at how this technique can help a budding entrepreneur. When you are starting a new company, especially a community platform, the brand must tell stories that excite a potential member.

The answer lies in our ability to come up with abstract concepts, and give a sense of belonging. This helps us form complex and large communities of people with shared values. It is this unique ability that has helped us organize billions of humans. For a crab, the aspect of

“Compelling storytelling can help you influence and inspire. However, it will not help you execute.”



Six years ago, when we were launching IndieFolio Network, I distinctly remember many students and design professionals coming to our team and mentioning that it feels like they are talking to someone who understands them.

We were able to give this sense of belonging by telling a personal story. I was a designer who was struggling to find job opportunities. The existing platforms had gaps, and we were able to identify them very well. Whenever I spoke about this story, everyone in the audience seemed to, "Get it."

We used storytelling to forge connections between our idea and our users. Every designer I spoke with struck a chord with our idea. They felt that we were relatable and onto the right thing. So how did this help? In 2015 our product was glitchy, and our platform barely had any members.

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**"Human evolution also validates the power of storytelling."**

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No network effect had kicked in. Moreover, we were just five people handling everything. To our surprise, our earliest members were very supportive. They understood why we are doing what we are doing and showed tremendous patience.

Compelling storytelling can help you influence and inspire. However, it will not help you execute.

Often I have seen brands superficially utilizing storytelling. You may be able to gauge interest using stories, but you need to follow up with real solutions. Users are not stupid; they can sense foul play and fake promises

from far. So if you lack integrity and cannot execute, you will fail no matter how good your story is!

I want to conclude by quoting Robert McKee, "Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today." So if you have an idea which you want people to care about, start with a good story.

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**"We used storytelling to forge connections between our idea and our users. Every designer I spoke with struck a chord with our idea."**



**Alok Thakurdesai**  
Design Director at Indexnine Technologies

Alok has been at the forefront of building Design Thinking led businesses. His driving force in the work he does stems from his core belief that the human-centred design-led approach adds great value to businesses no matter what stage they are at or what industry they belong to. His work centres around building a strong brand and product experience in the digital as well as the physical space.

LinkedIn: [Alok Thakurdesai](#)

# Business, Design and Technology are Necessary Ingredients of a Good Story

In building stellar digital products and their experiences, the story that you tell helps articulate the purpose, value, and capabilities of the product. In the early stages, it is critical to be able to move fast and be agile.

The key to successful innovation is to be able to bring about a balance between teams that represent three critical objectives within the product team: viability, desirability, and feasibility. The functions that represent these groups are: business (viability), design (desirability), and technology (feasibility). When you are just starting up with your idea, especially if you are going to be bootstrapping it, it is critical that you set up the right mechanisms to enable collaboration between them.

For any typical software development project the process from a team perspective looks somewhat like this: This is especially apparent when you are working with separate agencies for design and development. Let's try to understand two critical points from the process flow above:

1. The product story that you wish to tell to your potential investors and customers starts taking form at the early stage, as the business identifies product needs and then engages with the design to put that vision in the form of screen designs.
2. When the technology team starts doing walkthroughs with the design team to understand the functionality and user flow, they start to look at it from a perspective of how they are going to develop the product.

If any feasibility issues crop up at this stage (and they will), you have either of the two outcomes:

- All features, but delay in product launch.
- On-time launch, but scaled-down features.

Suddenly, your story does not hold up and is ripe for disappointment. Such a scenario is not unique to startups, and seen in larger corporations. One of the best examples is Tesla; when they launched the Model 3 in 2016, they planned to start deliveries of the Standard Range variant in 2017 but were not able to get regular deliveries started till 2019. Do note that when you are running an A listed company, you cannot afford to sell a story that does not hold up to its promises!

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“The key to successful innovation is to be able to bring about a balance between teams that represent three critical objectives within the product team; viability, desirability, and feasibility.”

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Nevertheless, how can you ensure that you craft a story that successfully leverages the innovation model?

1. Enable all the teams with the right tools and information right from the get-go. Understand that the teams you engage with are going to help you achieve your business goals. The more you involve them and allow them to excel at what they do best, the stronger the outcome.

2. Be communicative about the business case and objectives.

Business and client teams often like to keep design and technology teams at an arm’s length without communicating the realities of the business case. Transparency goes a long way to help teams stay motivated about what you wish to achieve. You need to be assured that the story sells internally before you sell it to your customers and investors.

**1. Allow everyone across teams to discover and craft the story; do not write it by yourself**

Business teams often make the mistake of dictating the story to the design and technology teams based on research and assumptions arrived at in isolation. Co-define the purpose of what you are trying to achieve and set clear roles for all collaborators within teams.

This sets a clear path for successful collaboration and a story that you can sell confidently!

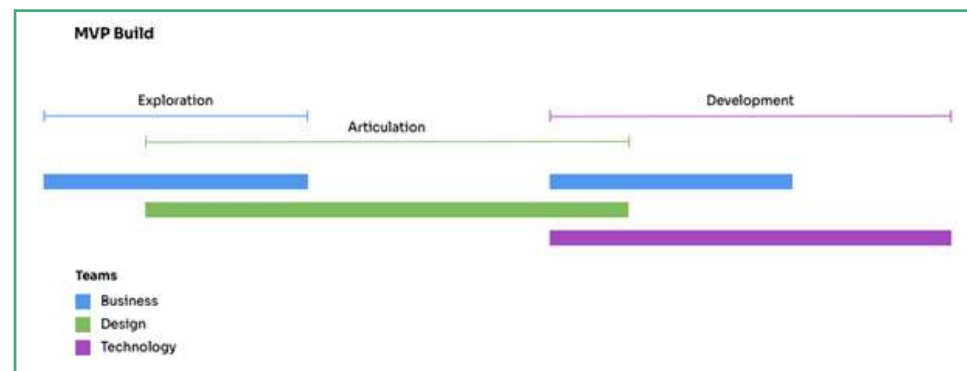
**2. Understand what is achievable now and what the future looks like**

Like it when you have a long-term plan, even if it means getting access to necessary features further down the line. If you push too hard for something unachievable within your timeline, you risk not just releasing a substandard product, but also setting a precedent of how you approach the product strategy. This will help you define three parts to your story; the premise, the vision and a path to the future!

**3. Understand external dependencies**

These could be technological frameworks, government policies, and even resource providers. In spite of your core teams being well aligned, external factors can have a strong influence on your innovation process. It is always best to stay curious and question your solution from outside perspectives!

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“Co-define the purpose of what you are trying to achieve and set clear roles for all collaborators within teams. This sets a clear path for successful collaboration and a story that you can sell confidently!”



**Deepti Kshirsagar**

Partner, Director-Strategy & Design at TCT Branding

With over a decade of experience working on various FMCG brands, Deepti has balanced her passion for designing with a deep understanding of the business world. An enthusiastic traveler, analytical thinker, and ferocious reader, she combines her unique adventurous spirit with her zest for life.

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# Packaging Design: The Brave Face of Successful Own Brands

**How packaging can play a vital role in transforming their brand into a most valued Brand: A case study on Tata's FMCG food brand Fabsta.**

What started as a soft foray into a few categories by retailers, in the name of store brands a decade ago in India, is now every retailer's priority. With modern trade or organized retail booming in the country, both offline and online, today any category from fresh to packaged foods, health & beauty, cosmetics, staples, and OTC drugs; private labels are biting into the share of the market and categories, once dominated by established national brands.

**How are the private labels doing this, and what role does design play in the whole game?**

On one hand, there are advantages and opportunities that private labels have over a national brand:

- Lower retailer margins, hence can offer better value to the consumer.
- Offer regional niche products based on the understanding of its regular consumers.
- Most importantly, occupying appropriate shelf space.

On the other hand, they face several challenges:

- Looked upon as cheap alternatives to national brands.
- Comparatively lower in price, hence perceived as low quality.
- They have to compete with national brands without being on prime time, so there is less awareness.

This is where design, primarily packaging design, can play a vital role in the push.

A decade ago, when private labels entered the retail scenario, they had employed basic and unengaging packaging, reinforcing the fact that they are low-value products. The packaging used to be bland, simple, and homogeneous for all product categories. Many times creating confusion in the minds of the buyers. Another route that used to be implemented by own labels was that of imitating the characteristics of leading brands.



Basic, un engaging, reinforcing the fact, that they are cheap !





Me too , imitating the leader brands

However, today brands are witnessing a paradigm shift in their marketing strategy. Big retail players intend to create private labels that are more than just value for money, or cheap alternatives to national brands. When the objective is to create a brand that consumers will value and cherish for the long term, the design strategy and brand positioning have to be crafted accordingly. Effective branding for private labels should not only create value, but also, help it straddle across a range of products, giving the brand a long term vision.

Here is a case study of an own-brand by Tata, created to be retailed at all its Star Bazaar outlets. Coming from Tata, it had to carry good virtues and equity, in every bit of its branding and packaging.

Fabsta was conceived as a brand that promises excellent quality and an unforgettable culinary experience, bringing families together to celebrate moments of happiness. While making its branding decisions, TCT implemented some key strategies.

For a Private label that is intended to straddle across categories, and aims to grow into many new ones, some colour variations for the Fabsta logo were created. This would enable flexibility in brand logo usage and avoid monotony. With wholesomeness at the core of the brand, the hero ingredient of the story became an anchor of the visual architecture.

Research shows that even today, 70% of purchases made are on an impulse. We used disruptive visual designs in low involvement categories such as papads. We broke the serious category codes of growing the Nacho segment to create enough reasons for consumers to switch.

A significant challenge private labels face is the MOQs (Minimum Order Quantity), since the portfolio comprises of regional and experimental products, printing in volumes and large run length is detrimental. We at TCT addressed these challenges by creating practically viable designs and managing the number of colours in such a way that three SKUs (Store Keeping Unit) can be printed on one roll. In turn reducing the need for changeovers and additional make-readies, thereby reducing the printing costs.

Another area that TCT addressed with its packaging design is product awareness. As private label products do not get advertised in mainstream media, it is essential to use packaging as a cross-promotion tool for other product categories of the same private label brand. TCT deployed this strategy and used the back of the packaging to engage with the consumers, as to which snack can be best paired with which dip or recipe suggestions, promoting other Fabsta products in the process.



**Creating value through packaging in a low involvement category. Giving the reason to believe for the consumers to switch.**

I want to conclude that strategic and thoughtful packaging for private label brands can easily create a strong point of differentiation and help it stand out as a brand of stature on the shelf. It can help elevate the perception of the private label to a valued brand and trigger a buying decision in the consumer.

“Strategic and thoughtful packaging for private label brands can easily create a strong point of differentiation and help it stand out as a brand of stature on the shelf.”



“When the objective is to create a brand that consumers will value and cherish for the long term, the design strategy and brand positioning have to be crafted accordingly.”

With modern retail gaining its foothold in the country, even in tier 2 and tier 3 towns, private labels hold a bright future in times to come. With brick and mortar stores, online retailing is another steadily growing avenue for own brands penetrating across categories like apparel, tech, homecare beyond groceries, and fresh produce. Especially in India its large consumer base seeks value, quality, and freshness over brand names. Consumers who were used to buying loose, unbranded staples and goods see great value in upgrading to private label brands.

Many times national brands are limited by economies of scale when faced with challenges catering to the divergent needs of a country like India with multiple regional preferences. Private labels here are a step ahead in understanding their consumers and responding with suitable needs in a stipulated time. Premiumisation of private labels with niche offerings is the next big thing, with sectors like health, eco-fashion, and customized tech on the rise. The kind of engaging experiences and extensive choices that the private labels are offering, there is no doubt that we will see consumers turning into own-brand loyalists soon.

“Premiumisation of private labels with niche offerings is the next big thing, with sectors like health, eco-fashion, and customized tech on the rise.”



**Sagnick Dutta**

3rd Year Communication Design  
Avantika University

LinkedIn: [Sagnick Dutta](#)



The vibrant color palette of their clothing and their turbans go hand in hand with the culture and individuality of this place but are in contrast with the mundane lives they lead. The ambience also played a vital role in my project as the whole photography session took place near the holy temple in that area. The subjects who were found there complimented the architecture and the color palette.



This project was aimed to capture the ethnicity and variety of the local people of Ujjain. The candid shots create empathy towards their lives, it tells us a story about that person, and their experiences, their way of living, and the authenticity of their clothing with such vibrant colors that complement the holy city of Ujjain. I wanted to capture the photographs when the people are ideally relaxing so I timed my photos in the afternoon so as to capture their most candid moments.



## Aditya Panikker

Business Development Manager – Eastern Europe, Middle East & Africa at Digigram

Joining Digigram in 2018 as a product and digital marketing intern, Aditya Panikker set the structure of the company's social media presence. A zealous traveler and amazing photographer, he has the knack to deliver complex messages in a creative and simple way. He was accorded IABM Young Person of the Year-2020.

LinkedIn: [Aditya Panikker](#)

# Design, Culture & Visual Storytelling

In a world that is moving at a breathtaking pace, where time is at a premium, short attention spans and quick consumption of information has become the norm.

Social media platforms and their users perfectly illustrate the current scenario, with all of the applications that facilitate communication and conversation designed specifically while keeping in mind the restlessness and fast-paced behaviors of their users. While such innovation in the world of Technology and Design comes with its obvious set of blessings and benefits, the caveats have been far-reaching.

Gone are the days where people would take the time out to invest themselves in a topic or issue of importance, pick up a book, thoroughly understand its nuances and immerse themselves in it and eventually spark meaningful and healthy

conversations. With information now a click away, there seems to be a ready-made answer for almost every question posed by humankind.

It has become crucial to foster a culture where ideas and opinions are not just out there for one-time viewing and consumption; it should lead to something more fruitful, something more meaningful.

According to Aditya Panikker, a Business Development Manager at Digigram and an avid visual storyteller, the goal is to take complex, relevant topics and simplify them to a level where it gives the audience a general direction to pursue the issue further, and spark healthy conversations and develop a clear judgment. A quick look at some of Mr. Panikker's works on social media platforms manifests a distinct style of storytelling that one can immediately notice, not just visually, but as an amalgamation of visual

and verbal that strikes a particular chord. It is a style that does not seek special inspiration from anywhere but is derived from his experiences as a listener. It usually tackles socially relevant issues, informing the audience about a range of topics right from current affairs to personal experiences. Effective visual storytelling on such issues requires the storyteller to find the right balance between being simplistic and oversimplifying the narrative.

“Effective visual storytelling on such issues requires the storyteller to find the right balance between being simplistic and oversimplifying the narrative.”

Oversimplifying leads to undermining the gravity of the issue being addressed, losing the entire objective of the process.

One of the most crucial steps going into creating a storytelling experience is how invested you are in the topic ; emotionally and intellectually. That gives the storyteller the zeal, and enthusiasm, to create an experience for the audience that not only primes them on the issue, but also encourages them to pursue the issue further.

A neutral audience is detrimental to society since they hamper cultural growth. At the end of the day, the goal is to help your audience build a perspective and initiate healthy conversations around these issues. As designers, time and time again we have been reminded of the importance of visual storytelling in our careers. It affects the way your work comes across to your peers and your

ability to stand out from the rest. This holds true in all professional fields, not just design. As a Business Development Manager and content creator, Mr. Panikker truly understands the power of storytelling. He is of the opinion that his storytelling experiences as a professional has helped him immensely in creating content that resonates with his audience.

Moving to France 3 years back gave Mr. Panikker the opportunity to travel and that has contributed to his storytelling experiences and helped build a passion which he wishes to keep alive. He feels that while travel has helped him produce some of his best stories, traveling in its literal sense is not the only way one can truly intertwine the two. One can always travel without traveling and have wonderful stories to tell.

Producing content and telling stories stems out of a sense of responsibility for Mr. Panikker, who believes that being in

a position of privilege, it is his responsibility to reach out to his audience about various social issues around the world, informing them and helping them build new perspectives.

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**Written by Rishabh Kiran**

**“There are always two sides to every story; the oppressor and the oppressed. Looking into both sides of the story before constructing any visual content is essential, not to produce a neutral narrative, but to ensure that the neutral audience is urged to make a judgement.”**



## Ritesh Malik

Head of Creative Design at Spacewood, NID Alumni

For more than 12 years, Ritesh has been involved in the design, and development, of products in different domains. His proficiency and skills leads him to develop creative concepts, that refine the appearance, function, and value of products. Thus, benefiting mechanical systems for the users and manufacturers.

LinkedIn: [Ritesh Malik](#)  
Website: [spacewood.in](#)

# How Storytelling Helps in Designing Great Products

When we have to design something, there is always a story – of a need, problem, or realization that needs to be uncovered and told. Storytelling is one of the oldest forms of human communication. A great story sparks the brain's reward system, with an emotional charge, solidifying the story in our memories. Just like stories told in words, visuals can communicate narratives and evoke emotions. The process of creating new products is all about telling stories with design.

“...people are not just buying products, they are buying better versions of themselves, which means they want to know how a product will shape their lives and their narratives.”

## Storytelling is a Technique and Process of Design

The typical design process starts by digging into details and focusing on users, their environment, and their expectations. At the start of the creative process, designers ask what a product or service can do for people, and what people can do with it. Creating personas and scenarios while designing a product helps the design team work their user in mind and build empathy. A great story incorporates the main character (*your users*), a supporting role (*the product*), and setting (the ‘Why’ and ‘When’ users need your product). Based on training and experience, designers can communicate the intended story through form, shape, colour, and finishes.

## Design is the Narrative – Behind every good design is a story

Design is not only about the aesthetics of a product, but also about interaction; how intuitive, approachable, and usable that product is. For example, colour can highlight interaction points while recessed forms with a neutral finish allow other elements to fall away. Combining colour and emotion is a powerful storytelling technique. The designer explores the colour, cultural context, narrative content, and psychological effects to alter the meaning of the product or design and change its impact on users.

## Storytelling in Design Thinking

If you want to show how your design solution brings a positive change, you need to tell a story that connects with people emotionally to justify your thought process.



### Cloud Storage - Wall Shelf Inspired by Clouds

As humans, seeing things is a critical aspect of how we make decisions. The story can be built around the user or customer, not always the product. Make your user a hero and your product their magic weapon. Take a leaf from the catwalk and haute couture, in which designers themselves talk their audience through inspirations, and sources of material from each collection. Tell your customer why you choose a specific colour and material.

Design thinking with storytelling is no longer just associated with the design world, as it can be strategically implemented across various industries to solve complex problems. Hence, hiring professionals with design thinking and problem-solving skills is not an option for companies; it is a necessity.

Successful logos tell you precisely what a brand story is all about. Let us look at the exciting story behind the logo of Amazon. The logo of the company reflects the growth and evolution of the tech giant. The orange line ending

with an arrow is a symbol that represents a smiley face, and the fact that the brand is now able to provide customers with everything from 'A to Z'. The orange colour lines represent joy and warmth, somehow reshaped the company's reputation to a friendlier one among the consumers. Jeff Bezos named it Amazon because it was the river, he considered the biggest in the world, and he hoped his company would be the same.

In the creative profession, 'inspiration' is something that gets you excited and started. It can be anything from nature, surroundings, inspirational work, to the movies, or even idols! There are numerous ways to express your ideas. It can merely be a doodle, a detailed 3D render, an article, or an entire blog. So when an expression wants to escape your mind, as designers, we should be equipped with the required tools, no matter what medium you choose, but use storytelling in design.

### Stories Inspired by Nature & Design

Designers use nature as an infinite source of ideas for their inventions and products. Every day, we interact with products in the shape, or principal function, inspired by the world around us. We should understand that people are not just buying products; they are buying better versions of themselves, which means they want to know how a product will shape their lives and their narratives. When you buy an Apple product, you do not just buy a pretty smart design, you also buy a brand known to be innovative and upfront.

The pandemic has significantly altered hard driven habits and routine based lifestyles. Hence, urging creatives to adjust their processes, design stories, and adopt new technologies to reconsider the way people live, interact, and work. Now, it is a time where designers should focus more on the human-centric design approach.

The storytelling technique helps designers to put themselves in the shoes of the product users. When they start thinking from that perspective, they have more information to make a decision that will benefit the user and the product, because the true beauty of great design lies within the solution that a product provides.

*“The story can be built around the user or customer, not always the product. Make your user a hero and your product their magic weapon.”*



### Knowledge Tree - Book rack design by Spacewood



**Blessen Philip**  
Senior Design Manager, 3M

With over 16 years of industry experience across Automotive, Industrial, Consumer, Architectural, and Health Care domains, Blessen strives to enable a system-level approach to product innovation, brand experience, and business development which is strongly based on business value creation through a deep understanding of customer needs.

LinkedIn: [Blessen Philip](#)

# Empathy drives Great Design

As we settle into the new normal with the pandemic, I look back at how design has been able to drive change throughout 2020. Today, we are all quite aware of the need to maintain a safe distance, follow good hand hygiene practices, disinfect our surroundings, and even choose the right type of masks. It was an overwhelming experience when India went into a sudden lockdown, bringing most businesses to a standstill. Priorities changed overnight and the plans for the rest of the year started to look hazy. It was imperative to pause and rethink our approach, to embrace this shift.

For over 118 years, 3M has been dedicated to science, exploration, and taking on global challenges to develop solutions for our customers. Customer-inspired innovation has long been a core strength at 3M and this global crisis presented us an opportunity to put it into action under these

extreme conditions. As we, at 3M Design, were coping with the changes, a unique opportunity arose to help our customers navigate this uncertainty, and storytelling was one of the tools we used to bring to life the needs of our customers across segments.

## Navigating uncertainty

Within the organization, our priorities shifted towards the safety and protection of our employees, ensuring that critical products reach our customers, and building the right partnerships to combat the pandemic. Having realized that our business's customers would be facing similar challenges, we set out to understand how things had changed for them. We saw that our customers were seeking partners, not just for products but also for expertise in ensuring business continuity, protecting their workforce, and creating a safe environment for their end-

users. The initial requests came from airports and railways, but soon we were building solutions for commercial buildings, urban spaces, and schools.

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**“A designer’s ability to empathize, observe and discover patterns puts them in a unique position to create stories that define or many times redefine the problems.”**

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## Crafting journey maps

Insights processes based on empathy, keen observation, and unbiased pattern-finding can radically change our perspective on user needs. This approach helped us craft multiple journey maps, detailing the critical touchpoints based on user behavior and current solutions. Customer journey maps are a great way to identify and predict the challenges that users face. It breaks down complex systems into simpler elements, forcing us to think more about the emotional state of a user in each scenario.

## Seeking patterns

These nuggets of insights became the soul of our stories, highlighting challenges faced by travelers, retail consumers, patients, and students. It had soon become a powerful means for us to bring to life their needs, aspirations, and anxieties. Strong behavioral patterns emerged from across touchpoints that emphasized the need for better design of spaces and products. These were real problems to solve for and the need of the hour.

## Stories that unite

Solving complex problems is always a concerted effort. It is done best when people get together and collaborate, which is how 3M innovates. It sets the stage for small ideas to synthesize into something much larger. Again, these stories had become central to the collaboration as they made the customer problems more relatable to everyone, becoming the common thread that drove the purpose of the teams.



## Inspiring action

While data and insights can show the gaps, a well-crafted story inspires action to cut through all the ambiguity. These customer stories got the team to explore beyond traditional products and solutions, and develop unique ways to solve problems. The solutions extended across cleaning chemicals, disinfectants, personal protective kits, and antimicrobial surfaces. Thus transforming the spaces we live and move in and communicating the need for safe distancing and wayfinding. It brought together designers, scientists, and marketers to go out of their way to reach customers and offer their expertise.

## Driving change

Customers seeking solutions are often not able to articulate their needs. A designer's ability to empathize, observe and discover patterns, puts them in a unique position to create stories that define, or many times redefine, the problem. Over the last several months designers played a unique role in connecting with our customers and bringing their stories to life. We uncovered stories of resilience in the face of challenges and determination to adapt to the new world, seeking new ways to bring more value to their customers while protecting their workforce.

**“While each touchpoint is an opportunity to create a better solution, every interaction that a designer has with his user is a story waiting to be told.”**

In my view, it all starts with empathy and a drive to improve lives. While each touchpoint is an opportunity to create a better solution, every interaction that a designer has with his user is a story waiting to be told. Ask the right questions, look beyond the obvious, and feel what the other person feels.





**Madhavi Shankar**  
Co-founder and CEO, SpaceBasic

Passionate about building and engineering consumer-driven products, across scale, Madhavi is also passionate about global women's employment and equal opportunities. A socially committed entrepreneur who advocates equal educational opportunities through her start-up SpaceBasic - an interactive hurdle free application for student housing.

LinkedIn: [Madhavi Shankar](#)

## How to Use Storytelling in your Start-up

Entrepreneur and technology enthusiast Madhavi Shankar advocates equal educational opportunities through her start-up SpaceBasic- India's first technology forward, interactive networking platform, for day-to-day communication and task management within Student Housing and Co-living communities.

She moved to Australia to study for her Masters in Business Administration and Masters in Engineering Management, at the University of Technology, Sydney. She was focused on the opportunity to live a more independent life.

In 2016, Madhavi decided to experiment by setting up a startup, leaving behind a corporate job in

Sydney where she started as an intern when the company, Vodlo Pvt. Ltd. was an early-stage start-up, and around five years of diligent work resulted in her position as a Product Manager, Asia Pacific. Her meeting with Indu Navar, co-founder of SpaceBasic and her mentor, gave her the confidence to kickstart her entrepreneurial journey. She decided to move back to India and work towards fulfilling her dreams, and this soon turned out to be a life-defining moment.

Madhavi always wanted to do something in the education space, and she accidentally stumbled upon the problems faced by students in student housing. At Spacebasic, she decided to address critical problems like safety checks, digital data management, open and improved communication channels between all stakeholders. After diving deep into the problems and talking to hundreds of students and parents from

around 50-60 colleges, she found that these problems were persistent, hence she decided to work upon them. Additionally, SpaceBasic also worked towards creating equal opportunities for students by connecting them with global corporations seeking student engagement in the form of skill development training, internships, and more.

Launched in 2017, SpaceBasic started with 3 pilot customers and currently serves around 200,000 users across 70 universities and student housing facilities across six cities in India. SpaceBasic is a cash flow break-even company today, registering 300% growth in the last two years. For her efforts, she is one of the few Indian Entrepreneurs to have secured a spot in the prestigious Forbes 30 Under 30 Asia Enterprise Technology 2020 list.

**“Build customer relationships and not client lists.”**



### Team SpaceBasic

Living by the quote, "Educate a man and you educate a person; educate a woman and you educate a family," Madhavi says, "Education is the cornerstone of independence and self-reliance of women." She also addresses prevalent gender-based stereotypes. Most women in India battle self-doubt, she motivates them to unlearn preconceived notions like 'women cannot do it', and conventional ideologies by leading as an example. She also funds 4-5 girls' education every year and aims to do it on a larger scale in coming years. Through the pledge, 1% corporate philanthropy movement, she annually commits 1% of the profits,

time, and software, from SpaceBasic, to invest back into the community and towards educating women. She has been recognized as the 'Top 30 Women Transforming India 2019' by the NITI Aayog and United Nations for her contribution towards global women's employment and equal opportunities.

Madhavi says that behind her aspiring journey was her father's support and guidance, Indu Navar's mentorship, and confidence in her spirit. Including her mother and sister's go-getter attitude, which made her independent and fierce.

Madhavi believes that storytelling plays an integral part in building relationships with her customers. She has always emphasized building customer relationships and not client lists. Especially, with Spacebasic being an online platform, user experience is used to provide a great customer experience. The entire platform is solely designed from customer needs, feedback, and validation. She believes in selling experiences, not just the product, to ensure long-term customer engagement.

When asked about entrepreneurship, she says it is like fire fighting every day. Fame, money, and attention from the media come as a byproduct while you keep your eyes on the prize, that is the problem one is trying to solve, and the impact your product is making on users. Being intuitive and not emotional while facing your fears is crucial. She insists, "Trusting your gut when there are not enough data touchpoints, and with constant customer feedback, one can achieve everything they aim for."

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Written by Zeel Modi

**“Trusting your gut when there are not enough data touchpoints and with constant customer feedback, one can achieve everything they aim for.”**

**Kriti Sinha**

M. Des. student at Avantika University

“Every day is full of new opportunities to expand your knowledge, and even the failures are the building blocks to success.” I firmly believe that design is a perfect domain to understand, express, and modify one’s viewpoint of the world. It is such a diverse domain to explore, and being curious is my thing.

LinkedIn: [Kriti Sinha](#)

## A Design Journey

Coming from a technical background and making my way through design, I have experienced many challenges. I trust that everything I am going through helps me grow and evolve into the person I am meant to be.

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“Design is about an emotional perspective, but it is essential to know to present it from both an analytical and visually appealing perspective, which will develop a sense of trust with the audience.”

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Along with this, the psychological aspect plays a vital role in every design because visuals are usually perceived subconsciously by the audience as they are not aware of the theories behind them. In some way, the design and emotional quotient processes are similar, and EQ reflects its impact on

creating or perceiving a design. So while designing, aesthetics and psychological aspects should go hand in hand along with technology. I try to integrate this concept into my work.

During this journey, I encountered a divine experience that led me to reach my higher potential when I was selected as a participant for the Generation Equality Asia Pacific Design Challenge organized by WDO in collaboration with UN Women. With a zeal to bring the change, together in a team of such diverse talent: designers, artists, psychologists, design leaders, and other professionals worldwide, we were able to conceptualize and deliver a prototype mock-up to “Change mindsets for violence against women.”

The sprint taught me that while working in a team, what matters is to reach the goal with the efficiency of each member of the team, and every feedback or critique acts as a building block to achieve

that goal. Along with other design-related learnings, I understood the importance of responding appropriately during group discussions. I learned how crucial it is to be a good listener, which improved my interpersonal skills.

I welcome new challenges into my life that will allow me to learn more and make me capable enough to add value and create an innovation that changes the way people experience the world. I am blessed and grateful to have amazing people in my life who supported, encouraged, and helped me in this journey. I believe that just by observing things, we can learn a lot, and there is always learning even from the worst. My potential excites me, and with all the enthusiasm and excitement, I continue to grow and learn every day.

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**Caroline Stedman**  
Creative Technologist

With global experience in immersive technology and managing live events, Caroline Stedman brings a new wave of creativity, and perspective, to the table. Besides being an emerging technology expert, she has also been a sound artist and music composer. She is always open to new ideas, and puts 'think out-of-the-box,' into action.

LinkedIn: [Caroline Stedman](#)

# Innovative Technology For New Age Storytelling

**1. You are building your career in a unique cusp of broadcasting technology, communication, and designing while attempting to bring these together. How do you balance this interplay?**

The three are all very strongly related - technology and design are both integral to communication and the storytelling process. It is important to understand that technology is the medium, not the message, otherwise, it will fall into the realm of gimmick. Technology should be used either to elevate the viewers' experience or to streamline and improve the production process.

**2. Storytelling is an important ingredient for good content, how does using the right medium impact this storytelling element?**

When you have a story, you have to think about when and where the audience is

consuming that story and what level of immersivity is required. This determines which medium is most suitable to convey that story effectively. Newer, more tech heavy mediums aren't necessarily better as a rule. If I am cooking in my kitchen I want to listen to content in audio format - I can't look down to read, look up to watch 2D TV content, and I certainly can't don a headset and be immersed - that is a sure way to burn dinner! Radio or podcasts and audiobooks will always have a place as will print and 2D media.

When you have a story to tell, you have to think "When and where will my audience be consuming my story? What medium is the most suitable?" You have to write for the medium in a lot of cases and adapt your story accordingly. There is no concept of a 'one size fits all' script - adaptations from one to the other have to take place, or a medium has to be picked and content created within the

limitations, and potentially presented by that format.

**3. Can you share an example where you saw a story communicated more impactfully, with the use of AR/VR compared to conventional mediums?**

VR for good is a great example where social and environmental issues are communicated to the viewer. The immersive nature of this medium, and the way it enables the audience to see through that protagonist's eyes, heightens the sense of empathy and challenges the viewer to see things from a different perspective. AR in advertising is worth a mention, as is gamification - there are loads of studies that show interactivity increases revenue and being able to try makeup, glasses, and clothes on or place furniture and home decor in real world environments is a no brainer in terms of effectively selling products. Sports, NBA, boxing, ice

hockey, and more can easily be covered in virtual reality and effectively bring the audience closer to the action. However, sports like cricket or golf, where the action is far away are more challenging. Vader Immortal is another fantastic piece of VR content, based upon Star Wars, as one gets to interact with their favorite character from the series. It is a completely new form of content, where you become a character in a story and get to interact with your favourite characters from your favourite movies.

#### **4. Will storytelling need to be changed with the usage of new broadcasting mediums? What are some of those changes?**

Storytelling will change in that it will become hyper-personalised. With object based media workflows coming in and ancillary on demand content and AI generated content, viewers will be able to dive deeper into the stories they are interested in and skip over the bits they care about less, and focus on characters they like. Content will be able to fit into time frames that suit the viewer and a lot more

options will be available to those with accessibility issues like impaired hearing and sight. Content makers will need to approach production in a completely new way to enable this personalisation. The stories we are telling may not change, but the way viewers consume them will. A wider variety and greater quantity of content will be created and the subjective value of quality will be the filter through which viewers decide what to watch - and when I say quality I am referring to quality of experience and not production values which will only improve as new tech becomes available and affordable.

#### **5. AR, VR, and MR are used to communicate a story well and create a unique user experience. How does design play a role in these mediums?**

Design has moved beyond aesthetics with the advent of game engine technology like Epic Games' Unreal Engine being used for movie and tv production as well as immersive content production. Now we can immerse presenters in an interactive environment and designers are being

given the tools of real world physics modelling, collision boxes which trigger actions in virtual sets and graphics, simulated real weather and lighting, and non traditional environments which would never have been possible back when we were limited to physical fabricated sets or on location shoots.

Designers need to adapt and resell, just like when we moved from hand drawn and scalpel and art board typesetting into computer design (I remember my graphic designer father navigating this change when I was a child) or when 3D CAD software became available. Now we are moving into the age of the metaverse, the blending of the digital and the physical, and the possibility to step out of reality. Designers are the ones who will be visualising these new worlds and there has never been a more exciting time to be working in this field.

#### **6. Are there unique challenges while designing new channels for the Indian audience, compared to western audiences?**

Availability of hardware and scalability are the biggest challenges. Also quantity of content - there is the classic chicken and egg challenge, which is even more apparent in countries where English isn't the first language, where consumers aren't buying hardware as there is not enough content to consume, and content creators aren't creating content because there are not enough hardware owners to consume the content at scale.

It is my hope broadcasters and film production houses will take the lead and invest in content to kick start the XR ecosystem which we all know has been slow to make the move into the mainstream. In India, there is huge potential for Hindi and regional language based content and culturally relevant content due to the sheer size of our population here and in communities across the globe. If we look at smartphone adoption rates and screens in homes in India in general, we can see the numbers soaring, especially with the advent of Jio and affordable and free data in that respect we are ahead and leading but

obviously, coverage and infrastructure has to improve greatly along with hardware availability and affordability for us to achieve true scale.

#### **7. What are some of the exciting innovations that are upcoming in the field of AR, VR, MR, and broadcasting?**

The use of Epic Games' Unreal Engine for virtual studios and AR graphics on air is one of the most exciting developments of recent times. The ability to leverage AI/ML for gesture recognition and optical tracking as well as HMDs and mixed reality views, which enables presenters to see as well as interact with virtual environments and objects. These are changing the way we create and use graphics and add layers of interactivity. Volumetric capture is bringing graphics and analysis into a new era, though in sports we are still to develop a cost effective solution to capture live action, especially in India where solutions like Trueview are not feasible.

#### **8. You have experience in being a conceptualizer, technical & creative production direction**

#### **for events, and content. How has the use of a new broadcasting medium shaped content and its impact on consumers?**

We are really just at the start in terms of XR being a new medium. Broadcast is very much driven by factors of scale, whereas events have limited and specific audiences and controlled environments where to some degree, access to hardware can be provisioned for. Broadcasters aren't in a position to provide a 6DoF VR headset to millions, so until mainstream adoption of XR hardware becomes a reality, content in the new medium will be restricted to POC, and impact to consumers will be limited.

#### **9. What elements of the design have impacted the usage of these mediums and the digital content industry at large?**

Designers are upskilling and becoming proficient in coding and visual coding, like Unreal's blueprints. UX and UI design have become ever more important as experiences become more and more interactive.

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**Written by Samiksha B.**



**Vivek Sabhachandani**  
SVP Product & Design at Disney Star TV Network

With over 15 years of experience across consulting, e-commerce, and payments, he has touched upon various facets of digital domain. He is an expert in leading large cross-functional global teams including product management, product marketing, product development, UX, and project management in a fast-paced work environment.

LinkedIn: [Vivek Sabhachandani](#)

# Elements of a Sound Product

Over the past twenty years or so we have seen technology evolve faster than ever. Innovation in consumer electronics has taken a front seat across the board. From automotive to home building, hospitality, healthcare, and even defense, it has impacted all industries and is changing the way we live.

What has caused this massive shift in such a short period of time? Sure, one can attribute a lot of this to the electrical and computer engineers who have ensured Moore’s law stayed relevant all these years but is that it? In my perspective, not only has technology evolved but with-it humans and thus organizations too have progressed in their ways of thinking and working which in turn has driven such high growth.

Back in the day when I was in engineering school, I recall one of my professors gave us a project that entailed improving the usability of a car stereo.

A car stereo has gone through several iterations, from the simple two knobs and a few buttons to a jam-packed interface with buttons, knobs, and levers all over the place. More recently with everything going touch, that too has joined the bandwagon. All devices have advanced so why is it that this device takes precedence in an engineering class? Let us keep in mind I was majoring in industrial/human factors engineering and thus classes also delved into facets of human behavior, psychology, and how we can bridge the gap in making products intuitive. Given that context, a car stereo is a brilliant product to tackle. The driver’s main task is to drive the car, focus should be on the road, the pedestrians, cyclists, the lights, and

adhering to speed limits. All of this by itself is a chore, do you really want the driver to be fiddling with knobs, buttons and what not while keeping their eyes on the road? I think not.

This was my introduction to what I call  $P = E + 2D$ . An enticing product (P) must take into account data (D), design (D), and engineering (E). I learnt how to build and conduct surveys, perform statistical analysis, build prototypes, and run pilots.



**“An enticing product(P) must take into account data(D), design(D), and engineering(E), this is what I call  $P = E + 2D$ .”**



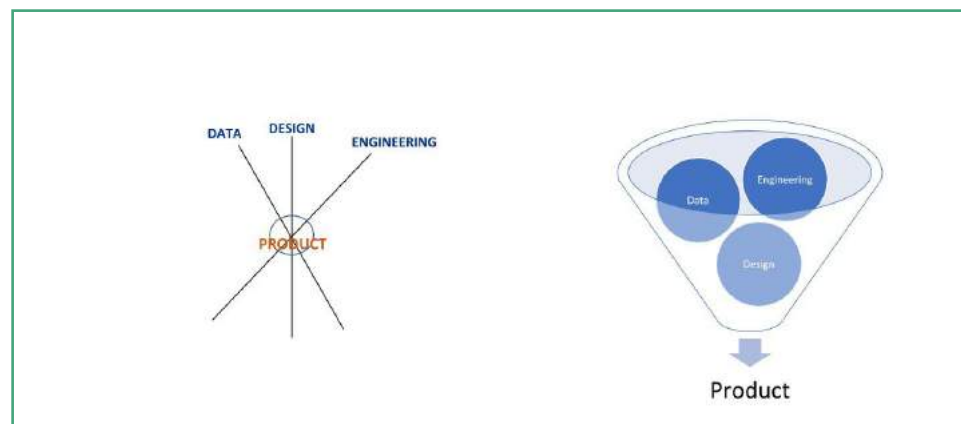
With the advent of the internet, all these activities have started taking precedence. It started with how we can make websites user friendly so that people could easily complete a task. 'Improve my conversion rate,' was and still is, the mantra for many. We started seeing companies pay more attention to user research, UI design. Engineers kept evolving JavaScript to keep up with the Joneses. From AJAX to jQuery, to Node.js, AngularJs, and now React. On the hardware side too, we started seeing a massive shift in product design. Apple played a big role in this and 'voila!' all industries are now taking a keen look into not just the product life cycle but also manufacturing. Sustainability, and being eco-friendly, are now all the rage; but before I digress too much let us get back.

What exactly is  $P = E + 2D$  and why is it important? One way to look at it is that the product sits at the intersection of engineering, design, and data. One can build a product with one or two of these elements but if you want to build something delightful and genuinely address the gap then all three are a must.

When Garrett and Travis launched Uber it was not about the app, rather it focused on lowering the cost of transportation whilst also making the experience of getting a cab seamless. They have done a wonderful job in bridging the gap with the use of technology. Not only have they made the task of getting from A to B simple, but also fun. Now that they solved that problem what more could they do to innovate? In India, many people have drivers to haul them around. By launching Uber Rentals they addressed that need. You can now rent a ride for an hour or the entire day and go from A to B to C to D. But was the decision to launch rentals a no-brainer, or did a lot of data and research go into it? You are cannibalizing your main product, if the number of rides is one of your key metrics to track, you have managed to mess with it.

Schedule a ride was another feature they launched. With both these features, they delved into the customer's mindset and a lot of data would have gone into decision making. With every new feature, you could be cluttering and making the app less intuitive. This is where design plays a big role. It all still needs to work like magic thus keeping engineers on their toes.

To summarize, do not start your quest with a product or feature in mind. Think of the gaps that exist and how would you go about filling them. That is where  $E+2D$  comes into play and the result is a product.



**“Do not start your quest with a product or feature in mind. Think of the gaps that exist and how would you go about filling them.”**



# Bridging the gap between industry and academia

Sessions conducted in  
November 2020 – January 2021.

November 2020



## ADS Podcast

India's first Designing  
Podcast show, showcasing  
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## ADS.COM

A fun session where leaders  
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**Ramesh Kozhissery**  
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**Leela Shankar**  
Gaming Entrepreneur  
Krypton Cloud Gaming



**Anil Reddy**  
Founder & Design Director  
Lollypop Design



**Udhaya Kumar Padmanabhan**  
Global Strategic Design Director  
Designit



**Rupambika Khandai**  
Creative Advisor  
EY

January 2021

Case study



**Dhisti Desai and Rohan Parekh**

Co-Founders at Pineapple UX/UI Design Studio

With storytelling at their core, they are reimagining product design by continuously breaking traditional processes and revolutionizing the way design is adapted across every platform. They have got an opportunity to work with Amazon, HostGator, Tata, and many other global startups and multinational corporations.

LinkedIn: [Dhisti Desai](#)  
[Rohan Parekh](#)

# Storytelling to Create Immersive Digital Experiences

On average, humans engage with over 25 brands a day out of which they access more than 10 brands through digital channels. A recent report says that by 2025, almost, every human being will partake in 4900 digital interactions every day. If this is not a sign of a dramatic rise in digital engagements, what is?

While the world focuses on creating products, we should take a keen interest in ensuring how storytelling can influence the experiences provided by these digital products.

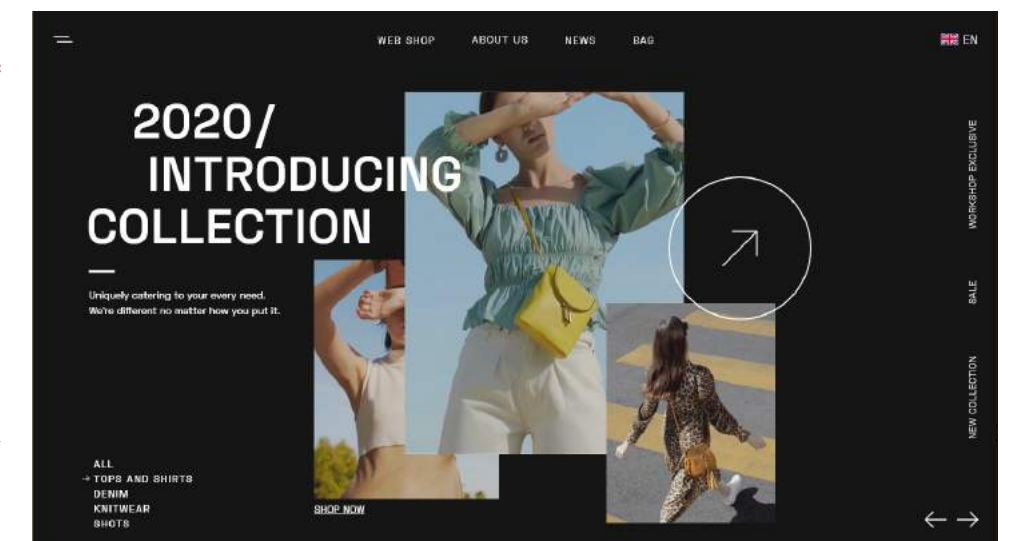
Stories have carved our lives since birth. Everything that we recall today is a story in its way, why else would we have remembered it? It can be humorous, meaningful, or something that causes sorrow, but it is important to note how we recollect every memory associated with it. Stories affect emotions and human beliefs. We choose to believe in ideas that stand alongside our morals.

Stories have built humankind's roots, imagine how comprehensively it can change the way we experience every digital screen.

Digital user experience has two sides. While the first one ensures to fulfill a user's demand at the right place and time, the other side aims at capturing attention; a resource that is very scarce amongst humans.

Infusing stories in UX/UI designs reflect the authentic experience an organization aims to provide across any of its platforms, be it anything within a digital screen. How else is the founder going to explain their vision for employees and products in an approachable, empathetic, and attractive manner?

“Stories have built humankind's roots, imagine how comprehensively it can change the way we experience every digital screen.”



When we built a process for creating UX/UI designs, we wanted to ensure that the initial questions revolved around understanding any business's strong foundation. Understanding business problems, interviewing employees, their end-consumers, and the C-suite. All these elements play around with the current story, that the organization has built-in their immediate environment. This comprehensive process allows us to assess deviation in both: the story that the organization aims to tell, versus the one currently being told. Once all the rudimentary differences are recorded, every design is forged to tackle and bring the business's true experience.

Any digital experience merely does not exist to state facts. Facts bring clarity, but not the purpose, and that is why they are generally stated. However, stories give the background of why such facts exist in the first place, making them more compelling. It would not be desirable to have users reading and interacting with facts every time they come to your website. Rather it would be better

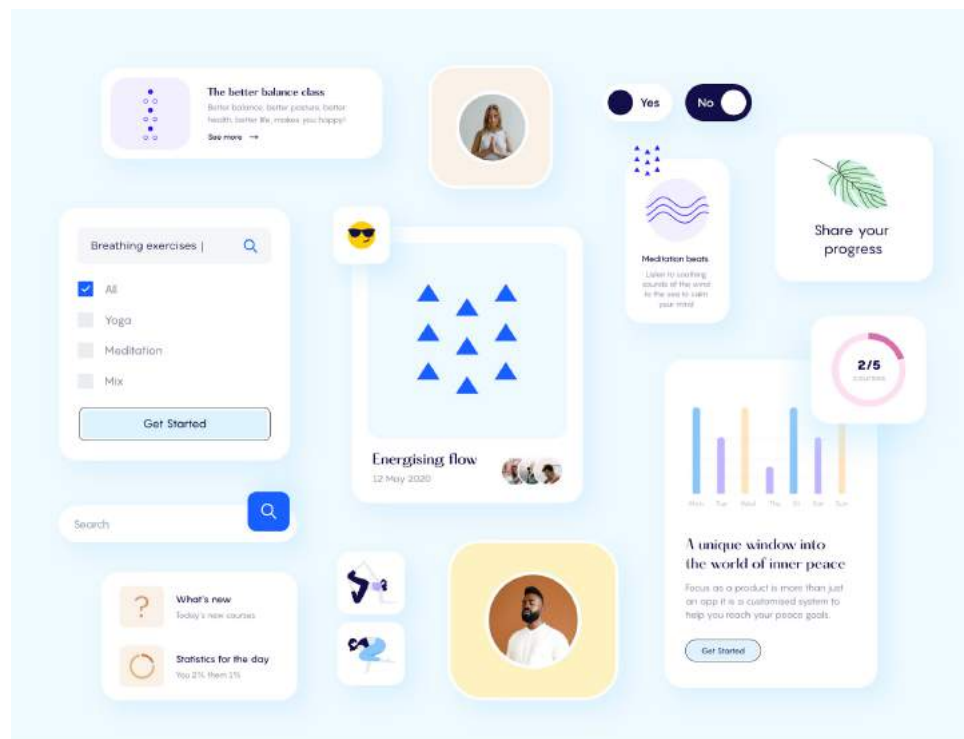
to use their indispensable attention to help them know more about you. That is what designers will help you do, find value at every step.

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**“Digital user experience has two sides. While the first one ensures to fulfill a user’s demand at the right place and time, the other side aims at capturing attention; a resource that is very scarce amongst humans. Salesperson.”**

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We recently created a mobile application for Yoga and Mindfulness enthusiasts that involved delving deep into understanding the user’s moods when they open the application. Every mood is converted into patterns which represent human anatomy, and the story lies in explaining how the app helped every user feel calm and tranquil at every action taken within the app. An environment that represents a live mindfulness session had to be created, to bring out every emotion, replacing the essence offered by a live session, with a virtual one.



**“User experiences come out best when stories are unfolded along with every tap. Your metrics will always follow your story.”**



## Ekalavya Bhattacharya

### Founder of Blakomi and FuseBulb

With 14 plus years of experience in the Indian digital ecosystem, Ekalavya is the quintessential storyteller. He was previously the Digital Head at MTV India and the Chief Strategy Officer at ALT Balaji. Now with his two new ventures: Blakomi, integrating e-commerce and fashion with AI, and FuseBulb, a branded content and OTT content consultancy, and development studio, he is set to make a difference in the world of digital.

LinkedIn: [Ekalavya Bhattacharya](#)

# Entering the Digital Space with Ekalavya

“I was a digital addict,” remarks Ekalavya Bhattacharya explaining how he was exposed to the internet much earlier. His father worked at the computer center for the Indian Armed forces in Pune. “I managed to sell my TAZO (little plastic discs) collection to a guy in Australia for 25,000 rupees in 6th grade. Made websites using basic Microsoft Word and HTML,” but computer engineering was not a field that intrigued Mr. Bhattacharya because at that time it comprised of just blind coders.

He says, “Wherever the world evolves to, I have always wanted to be at the helm of doing what was relevant.” This led him to do his undergraduation in biotechnology, as Biocon and Kiran Mazumdar Shaw occupied the spotlight then. However, by the end of the course, he realized it was not for him and that the wonders of that stream stayed only within the pages of a Robin

Cook book. “If anything, biotechnology taught me Viral Marketing,” he jokes.

The genesis of his digital journey began when he got inspired and eventually became involved with the online forum for CAT prep students, PagalGuy.com. Originally aiming to do an MBA from the IIMs, to enhance his CV while working with PagalGuy.com, he flooded its CEO with a myriad of ideas on how they could expand the forum and even monetize certain aspects of it. “I was super enthusiastic about it,” he recollects. He got invited for a talk at IIT Mumbai on Web 2.0 and the arrival of Social Media at the age of 20. When he got into IIM Calcutta, Ekalavya was attracted to the whole startup experience and eventually did an executive program in sales and marketing.

Coming to MTV and building an addictive user experience, Ekalavya explains, “At the end of the day to grasp the user, you

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“I believe that attention is the new oil, not engagement.”

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have to use storytelling. Because in this attention-deficit generation, people’s attention span has become minuscule, one WhatsApp notification and the mind wanders. For MTV, no one was watching TV anymore, by 2011 it was an advertising averse generation,” this is when he realized the need for branded storytelling to really grab the consumer’s complete attention.

“I believe that attention is the new oil, not engagement.”

“When I further moved to ALT Balaji, the ALT stood for alternate and that was interesting. Helping a media company pivot in its storytelling and launch an OTT platform for a completely different audience as compared

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“Any piece of content you put out needs to make people feel something or generate any sort of emotion, can offend, make them happy, anything. Only then it lands.”

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Ekta Kapoor is a maverick in this space and it was immensely gratifying to get to work with her. But they too realized that the audiences were changing and for that story formats had to change. People were no longer willing to wait till 8 every day to sit and watch the new episode.” Ekalavya followed that up by telling that, “In the OTT industry there is a huge dearth of writing and editorial talent.” This is because film schools in India never taught one how to make a 12 episodes ‘ki kahani’ and so, “The people who evolved were the ones who were anyway good storytellers and knew what a good story was.”

When asked about how he managed to catch the talent for effective storytelling he says, the TV audience Balaji had that “Extensive content

consumption, this is particular to the creative space. So while technical prowess is always required, your creativity is a process that starts from day one. The kind of content, conversations, and people you are exposed to, I had a wide spectrum of content I liked ranging from sports fiction to business. I have also learned a lot from the people I have worked with.” Now, what is effective storytelling? Theoretically, it completely depends on your audience, if we look at content today, digital advertising has opened avenues to micro-target people. Ekalavya reiterates that ‘the pay and pray’ days of advertising are almost gone. This way he conveys there are two key aspects, first is understanding your audience and catering to it specifically. Secondly, “The biggest enemy today is apathy.” Very prevalent in our present generation of scrollers. “Any piece of content you put out needs to make people feel something or generate any sort of emotion. Only then it lands.” For this, he says, “There is no secret mantra. Lots of trial and error, and investment delve into a multitude of existing case studies to see what works.”

What is Immersive storytelling? This is an era of screenagers, people are jumping from one screen to the next. Therefore stories also have to be cohesive, responsive, and consistent across screens and mediums. Ekalavya also took some time looking into VR, as that is the true sense of immersive content consumption. However, his revelation was that “It isn’t only the device which is expensive but also the content experience.” The latter means that a director or cinematographer will be able to tell a far better story by directing the viewer to look at a specific something at a defined angle that really enhances that scene. This direction is lost when the consumer is allowed to look anywhere for themselves or figure out their own story on VR platforms.

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“Wherever the world evolves to, I have always wanted to be at the helm of doing what is relevant.”

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Nevertheless, the following are where we will see the most innovation in VR and Mixed Reality:

**Education** - exposing little kids to wonders like dinosaurs walking across can truly enhance learning. Ekalavya tells us, “My sister is a pediatric ophthalmologist and I have seen her experiment with content exposure to kids.”

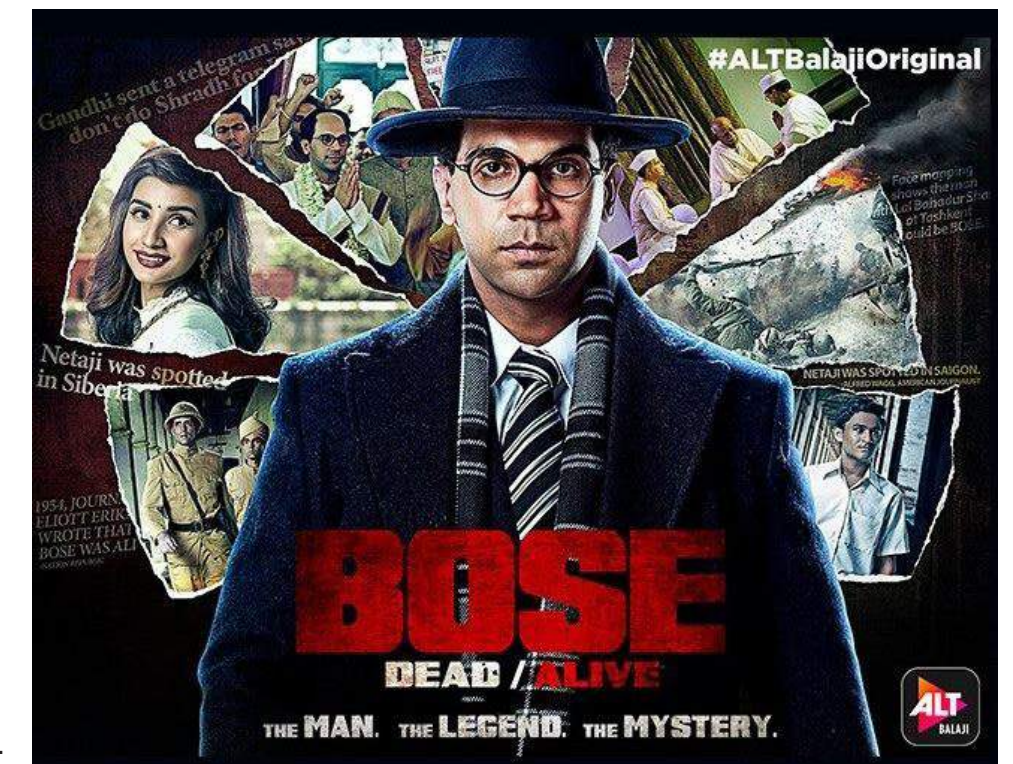
**Porn** - here is where everything on the internet has started from. Pop up ads, in-stream ads, text ads, multi betrayed streaming. Ekalavya remembers his boss from, Contest2Win share, “Do not judge pornography for pornography, but the platform it is. You will always find the biggest innovation there.” The fact is 50-60% of the content consumed on the internet is porn. Tactile and haptic feedback have all sprouted from porn which people are now moving to other forms of experiential design in other spaces.

**Gaming** - over this course quarantine, with not much to do, playing in these virtual environments have kept a lot of us going. There is excellent scope for immersive storytelling here.

If you are jumping fields to what excites you, you have to stay adrift. Not everything will work out, but you have to take that step and not wait or imagine for the world to change and align with your passion, financially or fulfillment wise. You have to stay informed, aware, and keep replenishing your skillset. If in any case entrepreneurship does not work out, do not get stuck up.

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Written by Miral Zafar





## John Sebastian

Founder & CEO at John Sebastian Ltd, Global Design & Innovation Consultancy

With over 15 years of experience in product innovation to deliver market-leading products and thoughtful experiences, John seeks to build new opportunities to improve the customer experience.

LinkedIn: [John Sebastian](#)

# Design for a Dematerialized World

Today, people share stories worldwide in search of products, services, and experiences that are digitally accessible. This rapid change has caught businesses by surprise, since success is not feasible through gimmicky products, retrospective variations, or on-off interactions. The primary question at the moment should be, how do we design for a dematerialized world?

Companies executing with a short-term profit, and non portfolio offerings of digital components often haven't considered the long-term impact on their eco-system. The dematerialization change breaks the conducting path to discover new business growth. Pursuing this as an opportunity for business lifecycle calls for rethinking the status quo. It requires rework of practices to drive a unified customer experience (CX) focused on organizational transformation.

## Design decision making

For better enablement of business adaptation, and to define the next generation of CX in the connected product space, design is a powerful catalyst to build relevance and resilience. Regardless of industry or business model, it creates value benefiting both customers and businesses. Enabling a holistic perspective of problem solving by connecting an organization to real people, with real needs, and real problems.

**“The wonderful thing about stories is that they are not only powerful cognitive tools, but offer a pivotal framework to connect with people emotionally.”**

A well-grounded, customer-centric perspective makes it possible to focus investments on the offerings that present the highest potential impact. Thoughtful customer experience derives from deep end-to-end CX and behavioral insights, technological advancements and data trends to stakeholder mapping. All when unified, form a complete customer journey with detailed requirement definitions and functional specifications to lead the design strategy. This helps create a shared understanding of multi-talented teams on specific calls-to-action, and aid decision-making processes with stakeholders to identify the pivot in value creation opportunities.

Be open, flexible, and make sure to experiment at different stages of the process. Every small challenge works a little differently, and remember to discover synthesis in the in-betweens. Some of the most remarkable innovation initiatives arise from the space in between touch points, journeys, brands, experiences, and across multiple dimensions.

People with deep expertise have trained eyes and ears to enlighten unforeseen opportunities, relying on their judgment and intuition. Businesses working with global complex challenges use specific expertise to identify market leadership opportunities. Long before they can get market feedback and reliable market forecasts, these companies must make bets on which technologies and designs are likely to succeed as it will increase the odds that those bets will pay off. For those who have less timely clarity, starting with understanding your stakeholders in the broadest sense is essential.

### Design inclusivity

Storytelling becomes a key driver to a valuable change in our beliefs and behaviors in both, crises and in better times. The wonderful thing about stories is that they are not only powerful cognitive tools, but offer a pivotal framework to connect with people emotionally.

Storytelling can enhance knowledge and educate as well as simplify messages or visions over time. It ensures experiments are prioritized to deliver short-run outcomes, drawing great learnings from the process that additionally help define a more detailed and visual story. Best practice would be the use of high-fidelity prototyping, topping with storytelling to conduct customer validation in closed in-context interviews and observations. It can help pivot the concept and internal 'three power bullets' communication, to address new questions and consider both sides of the equation of core capabilities and operational strengths while going beyond customer needs, demands, and immediate expectations.

### Design in your spine

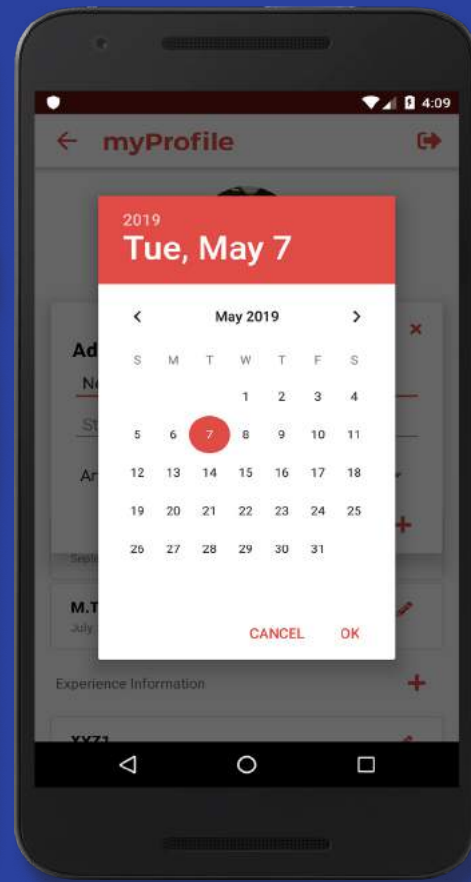
Consider the reason why you are solving a problem, what it might mean for your team, start-up or company, and how key discoveries can show themselves right next to you. Wherever you are in your journey you must explore how better design leads to higher engagement, commitment, and ultimately greater impact. Design is for everybody, it is about how we think, dream, create, connect, and grow.

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“Design is for everybody, it is about how we think, dream, create, connect, and grow.”

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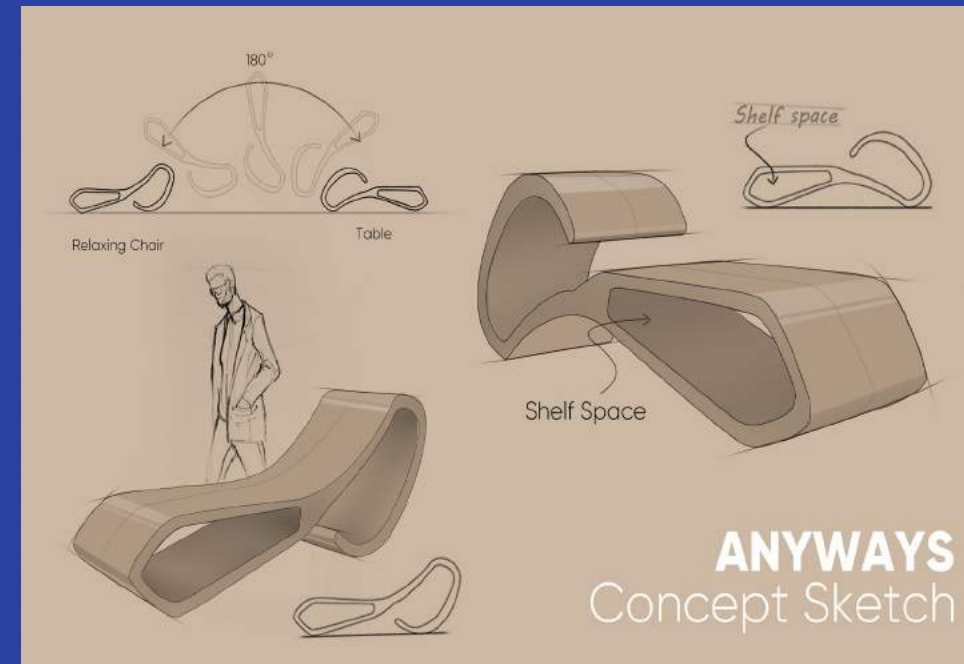
“A well-grounded, customer-centric perspective makes it possible to focus investments on the offerings that present the highest potential impact.”



### Mihir Srivastava

Avantika Alumni is a mobile application developed to create a network between alumni and activities happening at Avantika University. It keeps the alumni updated about events, industrial opportunities, and other activities done by the alumnus.

LinkedIn: [Mihir Srivastava](#)



### Kshitij Gangurde

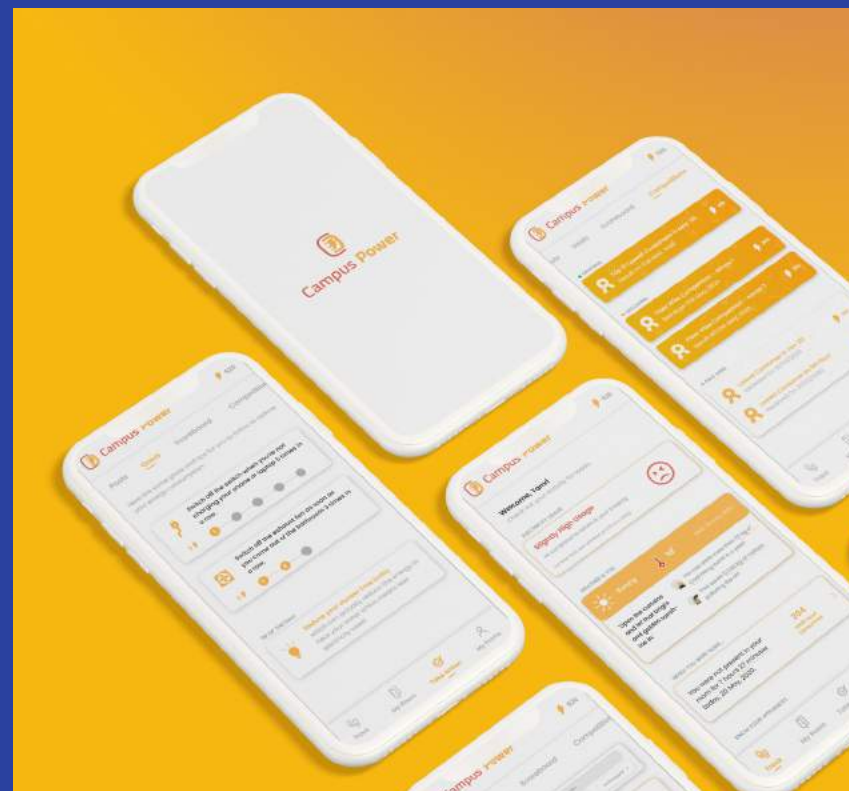
A multifunction furniture design concept, ANYWAYS can be used as a table or a relaxing chair by flipping it on either side. The concept lies in the complete use of a structure in different dimensions for various purposes.

LinkedIn: [Kshitij Gangurde](#)

### Tanvi Joshi

To change the behaviour of hostelites towards electricity wastage in residential campuses, Campus Power was conceptualised a mobile application which displays real-time usage of electricity, gives tips to reduce its consumption, and rewards users to keep them motivated towards reducing their energy consumption.

Behance: [Tanvi Joshi](#)



### Prakriti Pachisia

A series of illustrations have been created to bring awareness about different personality disorders that people suffer from, inspired by in-depth research of the reasons and effects of these disorders on humans.

Instagram: [Prakriti Pachisia](#)





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