

Telling worthwhile stories via social media

 By [Ruth Cooper](#)

21 Apr 2017

In these data oversaturated days, getting your message heard can sometimes feel as futile as sending it via carrier pigeon, however, Craig Rodney, managing director of [Cerebra Communication](#) and founder of the [@SouthAfrica](#) Instagram account, says being heard is all about making sure you are telling a story worth listening to.

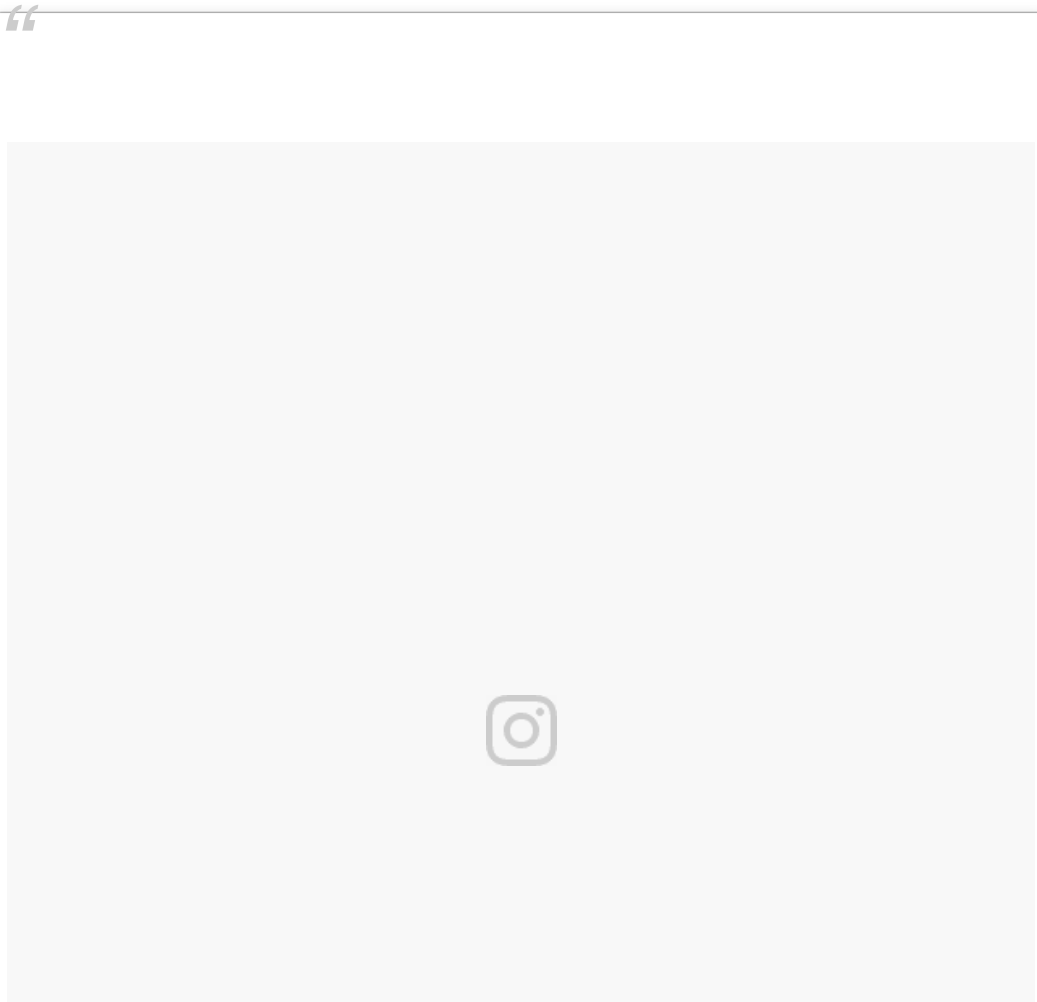
Rodney spoke about social media storytelling to a packed out Travel Tech Theater at the CTICC on the second day of the [Word Travel Market Africa](#) 2017 conference.

“ *“Your story is your most powerful asset”* ”

“ *“Your story is one of the things that matters most”* [@Craigrodney #WTMA17 pic.twitter.com/QUwR3kt4Ht](#)— Jenna Maree-Kipling ([@jennakipling](#)) [April 20, 2017](#) ”

In a world where creating and sharing has never been easier and everyone and their grandmother has a blog and an Instagram account, standing out is reserved for those who are doing something special and unique.

Through his experience of aggregating the content for the [@SouthAfrica](#) Instagram account, he has found that pretty sunset pictures just don't cut it and it is the images that tell a story through their subject matter that get the most engagement. Content creators and social media users need to be the hero of their own story by creating authentic content with a unique voice.



There's something strange in the water in Bainskloof. Photo by @ducky_staples #ThisIsSouthAfrica

A post shared by SouthAfrica (@southafrica) on Apr 9, 2017 at 1:30am PDT

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Experience over pillows

For example, most hotels use the same imagery in their communications; pictures of smiling receptionists and buffet breakfasts. However, Rodney encouraged hospitality marketers to rather think of their customer and what they are looking for, which is not necessarily info on the linen thread count, but rather useful information they can use during their trip - for example, where to grab the best coffee or cocktails in that area.

Selfie-nation

We live in a time where the reason most people travel or experience certain things is so that we can share (and show off) what we did with our social media networks. This is often becoming the more important deciding factor in where to travel or what to do. I mean if you didn't share your holiday sunset snaps of Mauritius, did it even happen?



Image sourced from petapixel.com

Companies or brands that embrace this and engage with their customers will have the most success with social media. He also stressed that we are never going back from here, content creation and the sharing of it is forever evolving and it is just going to get faster and more saturated - he urged companies accept this and join the online dialogue.

Five different types of content

Forget about what medium you want to create your content with or what platform to share it on, Rodney said it's not about choosing video over press release or Instagram over twitter it's about the type of content or message you want to portray. Below are his five different ways companies can communicate their message.

1. Customer-generated content
2. Inspirational content
3. Sales content
4. Differential content
5. Transactional content

“ The 5 types of content by [@Craigrodney](#) at [@WTM_Africa](#) [#wtma17](#) [pic.twitter.com/LRVZ9IVyRt](#)— Fazelah Williams (@FazelahW) [April 20, 2017](#) ”

In conclusion, successful storytelling on social media is about creating a unique voice that engages with your customers or followers in an authentic way.

[craigrodney.com](#)

[africa.wtm.com](#)

“ Craig Rodney, [@craigrodney](#) is now trending in [#CapeTown](#) [https://t.co/Nba8b89aLr](#) [pic.twitter.com/w5bwDI09VR](#)— Trendsmap Cape Town (@TrendsCapeTown) [April 20, 2017](#) ”

ABOUT RUTH COOPER

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