

Introduction and Background

The Case Method of story capture is a unique approach to case studies. The case method focuses more on the thematic story than a traditional performance evaluation. This paper provides an overview of e2's approach to case method for story capture.

Power of Stories

The use of stories to inspire and educate are foundational to community economic development. Stories can stretch our views of what is possible and how other organizations, communities, or regions like ours have achieved remarkable progress. Unlike more academic performance evaluations, the case method of story capture provides a more powerful and accessible way to share stories.

Case Method Elements

There are six design elements within e2's case method of story capture:

1. Origin Story
2. Development Journey or Chronology
3. Core Story Content
4. The Venture Model
5. Lessons Learned
6. The Future

Origin Story. We often begin story capture with the **origin story**, focusing on three elements. The first is the underlying passion of the founders of the initiative or organization. Next, we want to capture the initial vision driving the success of the initiative and organization. Finally, we want to capture the players or those who helped enable the start of the initiative or organization. We can then capture how the vision, champions, and players have changed over time.

Development Journey or Chronology. Every powerful story has an embedded journey or chronology. Employing the chronology, we can identify key dates (measuring the pacing) and decisions, investments, initiatives, discoveries, and outcomes. The chronology allows us to attach the various elements to the total story.

Core Story Content. In most cases there are four core story content areas including metrics, mini-impact and motivational stories, testimonials, and quotations, and supporting images. These core content areas are initially organized around the chronology.

The Venture Model. In community economic development, sustainability enabled by both impact and the venture model is very important. The venture model embraces how an initiative or organization is empowered through support, including funding. In most cases, a venture model that can grow with the promise of the initiative or organization is central to more impactful outcomes and sustained efforts.

Lessons Learned. Powerful stories should provide the lesson learned that can be shared with others. The field seeks out stories that can inspire and educate. While every community, organization,

entrepreneur, and initiative have their own unique pathways to success and impact, other's journeys and lessons learned can be empowering to both internal and external audiences.

Stories are Ongoing

Hopefully, powerful stories are ongoing, becoming richer as the years and decades pass. In story capture we provide a snapshot rooted in the past, present, and the vision of the future. But the opportunity always exists to return and update the story.

The Future. Finally, we want to capture where the community, initiative, etc. may be going, providing a snapshot of the future vision. This element creates a benchmark for future story capture.

External Story Capture Curation

Those creating the story and active in the story's journey are very close and often too close to capture the story effectively, objectively, and efficiently. We recommend consideration of external story capture curation, working closely with those central to the story.

Story Capture Process

There is no set process to story capture. However, there are numerous story capture models. At e2 we employ a structured approach that involves interviews, focus groups, and procurement of relevant information and the like when we curate and write the stories. Through this process, we co-create the story with those central to the story. In capturing the story, the curator assumes the role of proactively getting the story down on paper, allowing those close to the story to contribute, validate, and efficiently engage. It is an iterative process where content is gathered, articulated, and organized.

Our primary vehicle is the written word. But complementary videos, podcasts, and web-based story telling can be employed if there are sufficient resources. Critical to ethical story capture is vetting the evolving story with all those mentioned in the story to ensure that the story is not only accurate but sensitive to representations being made. With almost every story, there are sensitive topics that must be captured but presented in a way that does not create issues for those engaged in any ongoing story.

Questions and Additional Information

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