Until around a year ago, I did not really understand marketing. All the advertising, mailings, newsletters. The same content for everyone. Usually combined with discounts. And then my colleagues showed me the first beta version of BSI Studio and told me about customer journeys and stories. Customer stories.

I have learned a lot since then. For the past twelve months, I have really focused on what real marketing automation can do. Through my many presentations and discussions with consultants, partners and customers I have looked into it as a customer, considered what advertising appeals to me and what captures my loyalty. I reviewed many of my customer experiences and determined that these companies missed the chance to really make me happy as a customer.

Still today, marketing in most companies is based on classic target group selection and the mass dispatching of mailings. The opening rate is accurately tracked and the campaigns evaluated. But what is with the omni-channel driven by the customer that everyone pays lip service to? What happens to customer proximity? Keywords: emotions and segment of one!

Customers only become loyal when you offer emotional experiences. When you prove that you take each customer seriously in their present life situation, that you treat each one individually. Not as a sales rep, but as a partner. Don’t shout offers and discounts in my face! Walk alongside me, be my butler. That guarantees an unforgettable customer experience and wins you sustainable customer loyalty.

Keep your ears and eyes open: Stories are everywhere – impress me!

Zeno Hug, story expert
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#Inspiration</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learn storytelling from the pros</strong></td>
<td>Why companies should also know the secret of good stories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#Practice</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Man vs. machine</strong></td>
<td>Facts &amp; figures from the study conducted in collaboration with W.I.R.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>From analytics to weather steps</strong></td>
<td>These are the highlights in BSI Studio popular with BSI staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#Customers</th>
<th>23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Digital assistant for Pfister</strong></td>
<td>Switzerland’s leading furnishings store ensures service excellence across all channels with BSI CRM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#Marketing Automation</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The brains of BSI Studio</strong></td>
<td>Christoph Bräunlich talks about machine learning in BSI Studio</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#About BSI</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Win hearts with stories and software</strong></td>
<td>Monika Freiburghaus, BSI customer experience director, reveals how it’s done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#Meet the partner</th>
<th>24</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New section: Partner of BSI</strong></td>
<td>This time featuring the storyteller Andrea Bleicher from Panda &amp; Pinguin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Man vs. machine**

Facts & figures from the study conducted in collaboration with W.I.R.E.

**From analytics to weather steps**

These are the highlights in BSI Studio popular with BSI staff

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**Digital assistant for Pfister**

Switzerland’s leading furnishings store ensures service excellence across all channels with BSI CRM

**Interaction at the perfect moment**

Baloise Insurance optimizes customer interactions with BSI Studio

**The brains of BSI Studio**

Christoph Bräunlich talks about machine learning in BSI Studio

**“Decoding Digital Marketing”**

Together with the think tank W.I.R.E., BSI creates order among the hype in digital marketing

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**Win hearts with stories and software**

Monika Freiburghaus, BSI customer experience director, reveals how it’s done

**Film-ready year**

New customers, new locations, new study (and much more): 2018 was an exciting year

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**New section: Partner of BSI**

This time featuring the storyteller Andrea Bleicher from Panda & Pinguin
The power of stories – and how companies can profit from it

#Inspiration #Customers

Storytelling is as old as human communication. Stories are told at children’s bedtime, in bars, in books, in the media, on the stage, in films and in companies. Why is that? It is because stories are powerful. They make you sit up and take notice. They are retained, trigger emotions, give the sender a distinctive profile, and create a bond between teller and listener. They can also be seductive and dangerous, think of “fake news”. “Stories shape our culture, our lives, the way we experience the world,” wrote Lukas Bärffuss in his essay published at republik.ch, 19.1.2019.

Wherever you look: Stories abound. Sad ones, funny ones, romantic tales, those real and made up. Cinema shows us how it goes: paint the picture of an entire world in 90 minutes. A lot of work lies beneath what seems effortless. Essential is the triad comprised of screenwriter, actor and director. We journeyed in search of the secret of what makes good stories and we show you why this is something that companies ought to know as well.

Storytelling does not mean that the teller is free to make up truths, facts and figures that make no sense. It is a matter of how these ingredients are mixed, how the individual elements are linked. Is there a hero, a conflict, a resolution? No one knows better what material is used to weave good stories than a screenwriter or a playwright. It is no wonder that the screenplay is considered to be the heart of any film and the play the soul of any stage performance. We chatted with someone who ought to know: the Swiss author Laura de Weck.
**Meet the playwright**

Laura de Weck is an award-winning playwright, actress and – since recently – also a critic on the “Literaturclub” program on the Swiss channel SRF. She works as a freelance author and writes a column for the “Tages-Anzeiger” newspaper. Ms. de Weck was a master student at the Munich Screenplay Workshop in 2017/18.

Are you an author or actress? Everything I do has to do with dialogs. It does not matter whether I speak the dialog, act it or write it. However, I am first and foremost an author, a dialog author.

What brought you to the world of dialog? Schiller’s story “Cabal and Love”, which we read in school. The dialogs in that piece! I felt compelled to read them aloud.

Stories are powerful because … they tell of relationships and emotions. They are inescapable.

What ingredients go into a good story? They say it takes pivotal moments, conflicts and emotions. But then I am not a good storyteller, though I am interested in the topic.

The strengths of film as a medium? Films depict an imaginary reality. Abstraction has little to do with it. This enables the viewer to jump into the story and to be totally taken up with it.

Then why should anyone go to the theater? Because theater is the pinnacle. Theater brings all forms of art together: literature, art, music, performance, choreography, imagery. When all forms of art intertwine and you experience it live, it can be like a sensual explosion.

Where do you find inspiration for your stories? I find them by listening closely. I have a dialog journal in which I enter every sentence and dialog that I pick up and find interesting.

The author as societal observer. What qualities does one need to have? Empathy. You need to be able to think your way inside many different figures. And you must be able to love these figures, even if they are assholes. You also have to love people to begin with.

You work closely with directors and actors. What is this triangular relationship like? I hardly add any stage directions in the pieces I write. This means that I throw the ball to the actors and directors. They, in turn, can play with the ball and fill in the gaps. I usually am not there much during rehearsals and show up at the premiere. Of course, there are sometimes unpleasant surprises, but the happy ones far outweigh them.

“Without a screenplay, there is no film. Without a heart, no human.”

Laura de Weck, Swiss author

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**Why, how, what?**

It is worthwhile to seek out good stories within the company; stories that match the internal DNA, the goals, the values and the company’s direction. According to Simon Sinek and his “Golden Circle”, every success story begins with the simple question: why? Why are we doing what we are doing? What is our vision, what motivates us? Steve Jobs was a person who always asked why at the beginning of whatever he undertook. In this way, he managed to create a technological revolution, but also inspired his comrades in arms – with stories. He was convinced of the power of storytelling: “The most powerful person in the world is the storyteller. The storyteller sets the vision, values and agenda of an entire generation yet to come.”

This is something management should take to heart.
Customer journeys as screenplays

Employees and customers also play an active role in brand storytelling. They make it possible to target customer journeys that can be planned on the basis of the current situation and customer needs, like screenplays. What is a must; what are the wow moments? What does the perfect arc of tension look like, as well as the beginning and end? And customers can be invited to also participate in the writing of the company stories in a co-creation process.

What is important is to clearly assign the roles and make sure there is commitment. It takes credible actors to create authentic stories. Motivated employees who keep their eyes on the vision, those who appear as credible testimonials and who embody customer service. The issue of credibility is central to films as well, as actor Anatole Taubman revealed in our interview.

Meet the actor

Anatole Taubman is a versatile Swiss actor, known for his character roles. He has appeared in more than 100 film and TV productions. He plays the evil Elvis alongside Mathieu Amalric in the Bond film “Quantum of Solace”, and is currently shooting a tragic comedy with Bettina Oberli entitled “Wanda, mein Wunder”.

“What matters to me is that the story functions globally.”

Anatole Taubman, Swiss actor

Stories are retained 22 times better than facts (Jennifer Aaker, Social Psychologist at Stanford University)
You are among Switzerland’s most successful international actors. What roles do you take on, which do you turn down? That depends on multiple factors. Screenplay, role/character profile, emotional span, director, production and co-actors. What matters to me is that the story that is being told functions globally. That it deals with themes and feelings that people around the world can empathize with. Blockbusters, which generally come from the USA, are an exception to this.


What is your favorite story? I have many favorite stories. Most stem from real life. Reality writes the funniest, most absurd, saddest and most unimaginable stories. Limitlessly.

What do you think makes a really good film? Three things: a good screenplay, a good screenplay and a good screenplay (Billy Wilder).

Are you a good storyteller yourself? Yes, I’d go as far as to say, a very good one. As an orphan, self-defense and maintenance were part of my “survival strategy”, unconsciously, of course.

What was your favorite role? I somehow have to fall in love with each of my roles so that I can portray them as believably as possible. This means that I do not have a favorite role. However, I am able to let go of some of them more easily, while the separation is more difficult for others. It is always like a little death that I go through – romantic, painful, freeing, honest. I would have loved to been able to occupy my Montcourt in the TV series “Versailles” in 2nd and 3rd series as well. Unfortunately, he was slated to die at the end of series 1, at least it was at the hands of Louis XIV himself.

“Reality writes the funniest, most absurd, saddest and most unimaginable stories.”
Anatole Taubman, known for his character roles

You were born in Switzerland and have a British passport, just like James Bond. Is there anything else you have in common with the character? I have surely become an authentic gentleman. Other than that, perhaps the charm and fearlessness for people and conflicts, without violence however, and with communication, in dialog and with listening.

In “Quantum of Solace” you play the evil Elvis. What fascinated you about this role? The chance to create a “colorful tapestry” from a screenplay that presented a rather “colorless tapestry”, one that is memorable. To be more than merely a function, but a person with an identity and background.

People think in stories
And who takes on the role of director?

Convincing actors are one thing, but without directors to weave all the threads together, to give instructions and to set accents, no film could be produced. In companies too, it takes people to assume the director’s role and to keep an eye on the big picture. To orchestrate all the action, to supervise and evaluate it based on the fundamental strategy, values and goals – the screenplay so to speak. When it comes to customer journey management, this role is assumed by marketing technologists, customer experience managers or CMOs.

In the film world, there are directors who know how to properly set the scene for a story. We met with Tobias Fueter, director and co-founder of the company Stories AG, to find out what distinguishes a good story and which companies are good examples of how it is done.

Meet the director

Tobias Fueter is a director, a founder of the Swiss film production company Stories AG, and a storyteller through and through. As a director at his company, he is in charge of visual films and digital content, such as the Migros gnome advertisement recently seen on Swiss television. Along with his team, he regularly wins national and international awards.

Thriller, science fiction, love story, drama or action? If I have to choose: the love story. It is the most basic of all story formats. Actually, there is a bit of a love story in every story in whatever form that may be.

What ingredients go into a good story? First: conflict. Without conflict, there is no story. Number two: identification with a character who leads me through the story. That does not mean that the figure has to be similar to me. Pixar repeatedly proves that I can identify with a fish or a robot. And third: structure. A story must be precisely constructed and perfectly structured.

On your company website, you are presented as a storyteller. What does storytelling mean to you? Storytelling is often misunderstood. It is not a matter of product explaining, but one of conveying emotions. Storytelling can help develop an identity, define a brand – it speaks to the heart. The story told need not necessarily be realistic, but it must be believable. Does the story match the company? Is it believed?

Can you give us an example? One good example is Nike with their “Believe in more” campaign. Why would a sporting goods manufacturer run political advertising? What does that have to do with athletic footwear? Not much, but it is accepted from Nike, because the message and presentation harmonize with Nike’s decades-old brand core.

So Nike did everything right. Are there also negative examples? You have to be careful to honestly talk about the brand core and to not jump on the bandwagon of trends too late, such as Gillette did with its “The best man can be” campaign. That set off a shit storm, because Gillette previously focused for 30 years on a very classic masculine image, and then suddenly: from mega-macho to #MeToo. Things just happened too fast in this case.

What tasks does the director take on in a film project? As the director, you lead the viewer through the action, give clues, subtly manipulate them. Viewers must always have the feeling that they figure the most important things out for themselves, while at the same time, they want to be surprised. Without a conflict, there is no resolution at the end, no happy ending. The director must provide this.

How does the triad of director, screenwriter and actor work? Film is a very visual medium. That means, regardless of how good a story is, it must be told in powerful images. A collaborative and creative collaboration between screenwriter and director is thus extremely important. The screenplay is the most important thing. If the story is right, then you really can’t do much wrong. The screenwriter establishes

“The screenplay is the most important thing. If the story is right, then you really can’t do much wrong.”

Tobias Fueter, Co-Founder Stories AG
the conflict, lays the foundation. The director uses it to build the house, set the accents and is in charge of casting, editing, imagery and music, etc. Actors provide the identification.

Is the step from feature film to advertising film a big one? It may seem a bit heretical when I say: The craft is very similar. Sure, a feature film is a marathon – and also the masters league, while advertising films are more of a sprint. But that doesn’t make it a cake walk. The art of advertising is to paint the picture of an entire world in 90 seconds. Charlotte Malz/Claudia Gabler

And the moral of the tale?
Without a screenplay there is no film. Without corporate stories there is no identity. Without an identity, there is no future in the market. Every company has stories to tell. It is worth tracking these down and using them for communications. It is worth listening closely to which stories customers tells. What drives them? What motivates them? When companies tap into that and continue writing customer stories, then the foundation for recognizability and a good customer experience are laid.

The mirroring neurons are responsible. They make sure that we experience what is told as if we were actually there.

1 "Start With Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action", Simon Sinek, 2011
2 Thomas Higbey recalling his meeting with Steve Jobs at NeXT, 1994
3 "Storytelling – Das Gehirn will Geschichten", Silke Jäger, 2016

“Storytelling can help develop an identity – it speaks to the heart.”
Tobias Fueter, director and storyteller
Inspire customers, step by step

#Customers #Insurance #Marketing Automation

Baloise Insurance plans to introduce BSI Studio. What experiences could be created using the marketing automation platform? Flavia Schmidlin-Buser, Project Manager Omnichannel Campaign Management at Baloise and involved in customer management, sales & marketing provides insight in the BSI Studio trailer.

Flavia, Baloise is among the pioneers in the areas of customer experience and touchpoint management in Switzerland. Now you are again among the first to take the customer experience into a new era – with BSI Studio. In which context does the marketing automation platform benefit you?

We intend to use BSI Studio for interaction measures with existing customers. Our goals are customers who are even more satisfied, customer loyalty that is stronger still and needs-based cross-selling and upselling. We launched a pilot phase in March to find out whether BSI Studio meets our requirements and can optimally help us meet these goals. It will run through the end of August 2019.

Flavia Schmidlin-Buser, Project Manager Omnichannel Campaign Management at Baloise Insurance.
The topics of customer loyalty, customer journey and customer experience are not fundamentally new to Baloise. How did you previously deal with these areas of activity?

We used to handle this with lots of manual steps involving various teams. This way of working, however, delivered neither the level of efficiency nor effectiveness that we were looking for.

What advantages does BSI Studio offer you?
Continuous automation of customer interaction measures and empowering through features such as enabling a team to send its own e-mails and to build small landing pages. With automation, we hope to be able to trigger customer interaction at precisely the right time for customers, individually and potentially every day. We used to have to set a time when something was to be sent. BSI Studio also offers us the ability to clearly depict complex customer interaction procedures with different target groups. This facilitates internal communication and helps us avoid errors and bad decisions.

What other objectives are you aiming for with BSI Studio?
We are looking to conduct more targeted customer interaction measures. As much as possible at the right moment for the recipient so as to provide greater relevance and perception by the customer. This requires automation of the processes, along with an individual approach.

What do you like most about BSI Studio?
I anticipate that with BSI Studio we will be able to clearly design and automate customer interaction measures, which for us is a big step in the direction of trigger-based marketing. We are currently working with BSI to optimize our management of campaigns and content.

“Our goals are customers who are even more satisfied, customer loyalty that is stronger still and needs-based cross-selling and upselling.”

Flavia Schmidlin-Buser, Project Manager at Baloise Insurance

Can you describe an experience that your customers could have in the future?
The customer should not notice that we are working with BSI Studio. He or she should simply be approached with the right content at the right time through the right channel. BSI Studio serves as a useful tool on the way to realizing this vision. Claudia Gabler
BSI Studio – four things in one: customer journey builder, content management system, business process engine and data management platform. Eight BSI team members share with us their personal favorite features found in the BSI Studio marketing automation platform. 

Charlotte Malz

Discover the story.

Chris Rusche, the driving force behind BSI Studio

... the all-in-one concept.
“What I like best about BSI Studio is that everything is cast from the same mold: Generating a voucher with a QR code, sending it per e-mail to the right customer (e.g. by checking the location quality), at the right time (perhaps when the sun is shining?) – and following up with WhatsApp shortly before the voucher expires. Till now, each individual building block of this story was a separate system. With BSI Studio, you can put it together with just a few mouse clicks, try it out in the laboratory and then switch it on live with a click.”

**************************

Zeno Hug, story expert

... the emotionalizing.
“BSI Studio lets you emotionalize marketing. Stories can thus be implemented that personally appeal to me emotionally, because they match my situation in life. And they become segment-of-one reality through automation. An experience I had with my bank when my daughter wanted to have a credit card with a starting balance for her 18th birthday led to the development of the “18th birthday” story. It is now available for downloading in the Step Store. Cool, right?”

**************************

Sebastian Louis, partner manager

... the weather steps.
“There are two steps in BSI Studio that function as weather forecasters and which design weather-related customer experiences. Whether it means that a newsletter contains different content depending on the weather, a mailing about sun protection is only sent when the temperature where the respective recipient is located exceeds 20 degrees, or the offer for hail damage insurance is only received by interested parties as needed when hail is forecast. And everything is easy to configure with a few mouse clicks.”

**************************
Oliver André, Customer Experience Manager

... the integrated CMS.

“What is especially valuable to me as a marketing specialist: The integrated content management system. This is particularly helpful to us with the newsletter and invitation management for events: Personalized landing pages are quite easily created with drag and drop and adapted to various target groups with conditional content. A personal QR code is generated in an instant and can then be dispatched as a ticket by e-mail. What more do you want?”

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Beat Schwarzentrub, software engineer

... the storyboard.

“The interface for configuring stories is very visual and intuitively operable. It’s fun to arrange the colored steps and to assemble them step by step into a story. I get a kick each time when I click on the big play button and the story participants walk through the story and light up with each activity. That is the pulse of BSI Studio!”

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Markus Brunold, CEO

... the analytics.

“We can observe the customer’s behavior in BSI Studio in real time. Which channel is used how frequently? Which push messages are successful, and which are not? What’s best though, is that I can intervene live immediately. With just a click, a new version of the story is created, a new channel or an additional A/B test is added. With another click, the adapted story already goes live and I can continue to check my favorite analytics.”

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Urs Frick, BSI Studio expert

... the reactions.

“I think it’s fun when I show stories in BSI Studio to customers and interested people at trade fairs and see their eyes light up. I have presented the software countless times now and chosen the appropriate story for the audience: hail insurance, shopping cart abandonment, NPS survey or newsletter. I have even used BSI Studio for my wife: I gave her a scavenger hunt as a birthday surprise – in BSI Studio of course.”

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Christoph Bräunlich, ML expert

... the Brain Editor.

“As a developer of machine learning (ML) applications, I want to be able to concentrate on what is essential, not lose time with the converting and loading of files. With the storyboard, BSI Studio comes with an excellent GUI for wiring data together. With the Brain Editor, I can also define a neuronal network that processes the data. This makes it possible to try out and fine-tune different brain structures and algorithms in no time.”

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Working at BSI is film material!

#About BSI

Congratulations, Monika! You are celebrating your 10-year anniversary at BSI this year!

Thank you! That’s right. I started working as a software developer in a project for PostFinance back in 2009. I later took on the project management for Baloise Insurance, Möbel Pfister, Galenicare and many other projects.

How did you end up at BSI? Through my sister. She saw an advertisement for BSI at the train station in Bern and thought it would be better for me to work there while I studied than in the Aperto train station mini-market (laughs).

You were already working at BSI when you wrote your master’s thesis. It was on the subject of teamwork, right? Exactly. I researched the affects of business growth in team development in software projects and chose BSI as an example. BSI operates in a rapidly growing business environment. This demands agility, and that applies to teams as well. The bottom line: BSI manages this very well – undoubtedly due to our values, which are embodied by everyone who works here.

You can name an example? What I especially like at BSI is the togetherness. “The team” or “the project” matter rather less than the big picture: We are all BSI. Everyone does what is necessary to ensure that things go well for both us and our customers. I am fundamentally a team player; without my team members, I wouldn’t be worth much as a project manager (laughs). Working together with a strong team, with colleagues who have the same mindset, I can truly accomplish a lot!

You love the mountains and prefer travelling by bike. Why? I just like being outside in nature and really like the change in scenery. Sunbathing and enjoying the vistas that you don’t get as a city dweller. I love riding fast and concentrated – always a bit at the limit to feel the boundaries. Pure adrenalin! But then, biking has a lot to do with stamina and working towards goals, besides the social aspect: being together with friends who share the same passion. That really creates bonds!

Monika Freiburghaus

Diploma: BSc in Computer Science at the FHNW, MAS in Business Engineering at the ZHAW

In training: To become a BSI Studio director

Lives and works in: Zurich

Grew up in: Bern
You are now involved as a “director” for the marketing automation platform BSI Studio. What did you think the first time you heard about BSI Studio? Crazy! That’s what I need to write good customer stories with our customers! Anyone can create good, customer-focused stories quickly and easily. There are no limits to your ideas! Anyone can become an innovation leader because companies are productive incredibly quickly with BSI Studio. The short time to market is fascinating. You can simply get started. That’s fun!

If you would shoot a film about BSI, what would it be called? “Fire and Flame” (laughs). We approach projects with a lot of emotion, energy and passion, remain close to customers, and give it our all.

“At BSI, we approach projects with a lot of emotion, energy and passion, remain close to customers, give it our all.”

Monika Freiburghaus also moves with plenty of power in her private life.

Can you remember an episode at BSI that is film material? Working at BSI is film material (laughs)! We are very agile and spontaneous, make plans, but ultimately do what the customer presently needs and help when we are needed. When our product development head, Chris, presents BSI Studio, it is not just film material, but Oscar material! One of my favorite scenes happened at our BSI Studio premiere in the SRF studio: Our premiere guests were able to scan a QR code and use a landing page to concoct a smoothie to their taste and then pick it up. It is so nice to see how people can be impressed with small, well-conceived stories!

Claudia Gabler’s Favorite film
Dramas and films with authentic histories and a good story, such as “Side by Side”.

Claudia Gabler’s Favorite actress
Julia Roberts.
I love how her smile just beams!

Claudia Gabler’s Hobbies
Mountains & biking, Downhill and Enduro. As long as it’s wild!
Best of BSI 2018

#About BSI #Inspiration
What a year we’ve had! It was truly film-worthy. We celebrated product premieres, invited guests to the presentation of the W.I.R.E. study, conquered the SRF Studio, developed stories together with our customers and partners in BSI Studio and had intense discussions in the BSI communities. We also welcomed many new customers, including Hanseatic Bank, Galenica, Pfister and Fortune 500 pharmaceutical companies, and were able to expand collaborations with existing customers. We opened a new location – “Moin, Hamburg!” – and we broke through the 300-employee mark. All this gives us energy and passion for further adventures. So, buckle up, 2019 is going to continue to be exciting! 

Charlotte Malz
What is your favorite film on the topic of man-machine and why?
The various Star Trek films and TV series, especially “The Next Generation” presented an interesting vision of human-computer interaction and artificial intelligence (AI). Many aspects portrayed, such as voice assistants, smartphones and virtual reality, are a reality today.

Artificial intelligence, machine learning, neural networks ... Can you shed some light on them?
Real artificial intelligence doesn’t exist yet. AI attempts to simulate “intelligent” behavior with computers. Machine learning refers to a collection of algorithms that are able to make predictions on the basis of experiences in the form of data. Neural networks, in turn, are a group of such algorithms. These take various aspects of biological neural networks as their inspiration.

What opportunities does ML offer companies when it comes to contact with their customers?
With a modern CRM, companies can compile comprehensive data about customers, their communications and behavior. This data is usually so comprehensive that it can no longer be thoroughly analyzed by individuals. ML algorithms can help with the mining of this data in order to reap useful information from it. ML is rather like a data detective, so to speak. For example, it can help marketing specialists and sales reps to identify those customers in danger of jumping – keyword: churn detection. This means increased efficiency and offers unimagined opportunities for shaping customer relationships.

Where do you think the skepticism held by many people about AI comes from?
Many science fiction films and books portray a bleak future: An artificial intelligence attempts to take over the world. In my opinion,
the risks are rather with the AI users and developers, because it can be used for dubious and immoral purposes such as monitoring citizens or customers. The ethical questions must also be considered when using ML.

**What does ML have to do with the marketing automation platform BSI Studio?**

That question is quickly answered: BSI Studio is a digitization platform that combines automation with process optimization. ML takes automation to the next level to support users, whether with a tailor-made customer dialog or automated processes. I think this is a must for a modern tool!

**Where exactly is ML to be found in BSI Studio, and what is yet to come?**

BSI Studio supplies among others different types of neural networks, so-called brains. These are built into (customer) stories. The brains determine, for example, the best time to establish contact based on the habits and preferences of each individual customer or find the right target group for a marketing campaign. Good ideas about brains often also arise among customers. We are only too happy to make use of these.

Automation with intelligence – for technically sophisticated BSI Studio users, the graphical Brain Editor offers the opportunity to assemble cortices themselves using drag and drop.

**Does a BSI Studio user have to be able to program, or have ML expertise, in order to profit from the brains?**

We have three user groups in focus with BSI Studio:

- Marketing specialists who draft a customer story should be able to choose from a selection of existing brains in the Step Library, and then use them easily.
- A technically sophisticated BSI Studio user can compile Cortices in a graphical Brain Editor. The editor makes it possible to merge development steps that ordinarily would have to be programmed using drag and drop. An understanding of data types and vectors will be necessary here.
- The data scientist can configure the inner workings of brain blocks, which, depending on the block, requires expertise in neural networks or genetic algorithms.

BSI Studio with ML is also a wonderful tool for a “machine teacher”, because it combines all aspects of the “teaching process” – from compiling data to training and testing, through to publication – in just one interface.

**Let’s look into the future: What will be possible?**

I would like to see stories that optimize themselves, such as with the goal of boosting sales and thereby profits. This story should be able to make independent decisions in the process that lead to success for as many participants as possible and thereby support the corporate goals. This means no longer working with scores or the like – a brain no longer needs such technical diversions. *Charlotte Malz*

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1 A Cortex is a component of a brain that independently performs a task for the brain.
Man vs. machine?

#Practice #Marketing #Studies & surveys

The good news is: The human ability of storytelling will still be needed in the future, perhaps even more than ever; narratives are distinguishing features of businesses and companies that write stories together with their customers. However, machines increasingly have something to say. *Charlotte Malz*

La Marque, c’est moi

With increasing personalization, companies are targeting themselves increasingly towards individuals. Content and products are being customized together.

Platforms are power

The market power of digital platforms for the staging of products and services is growing. Having one’s own channels remains relevant as an orientation tool and for differentiation.

“Data is not the new gold per se; only when it benefits customers or society.”

*Stephan Sigrist*, founder think tank W.I.R.E.

The 4th dimension

The conveyance of content is shifting into virtual and physical space with digital interfaces; smartphones and two-dimensional screens take a back seat.

© Think tank W.I.R.E.
Study objective

A guide for organizations seeking an independent way to position themselves in the market, free of buzzwords and homogeneous standard concepts.

Target group

Managers and marketing specialists, critical minds and pioneers

Who?

Think tank W.I.R.E. on behalf of BSI

Bot against bot

The frequency of messages can be further increased through the robotization of marketing by social bots. Due to overstimulation, smart bots will filter customer messages.

Differentiation by the brain

Marketing is becoming data-based and automated. Differentiation, however, continues to be achieved through people and machine teaching.

The age of values

Social media will replace classic marketing as a source for product information. Credibility, values and long-term customer loyalty will be central in the future.

Kill the noise

Overload caused by digital noise is leading to new marketing strategies aimed at reducing to the essentials instead of speed.

“In the future, the job of marketing will be to ask suitable questions to get the answers from artificial intelligence.”

Sascha Lobo, German journalist and entrepreneur

BSI Business Systems Integration AG 21
Five questions for W.I.R.E.

What brought BSI and W.I.R.E. together? What issues do we have in common? We have been in contact with BSI for many years and have consistently discussed new developments in the context of digitization and their consequences. We have noticed that the view of the future of digital marketing is clouded by fears and over-the-top expectations. What is lacking is a clear analysis of the effective potential and the necessary measures and tools. That is why we have decided, together with BSI, to conduct a study to take an in-depth look at the future of the transformation of marketing in the data age.

What does the “Decoding Digital Marketing” study pertain to? To what degree is the name also the study program? It first involves creating an overview in an enormously dynamic market environment. Many marketing managers ask themselves which of the latest promises are real and which are really just hype. We attempt to offer some orientation here. Data-based marketing provides a maximization of efficiency and the possibility for ever-increasing personalization, which then only delivers benefits when it is filled with relevant content. This requires a new way of thinking for marketing, as well as new skills. We seek to question existing myths with the study – to “decode” digital marketing, so to speak.

What developments did you identify as hype and which are to be taken seriously? The hype regarding data, which is to be traded as the new gold, must be demystified. Algorithms and machine learning will grow in significance in view of the large data volumes and the further use thereof, but will especially deliver added value with repetitive processes. Augmented or virtual reality can be used to stage brands or for consultation services, but they too require the human factor. The core challenges involve data security and the (re-)gaining of the customer’s trust in the age of fake realities. This happens through values – not through data.

What does this now mean for the routine work of marketing specialists and communication professionals? In the digitization age, marketing specialists are needed more than ever to develop creative concepts and narratives which differentiate. Central to this is the orchestration and understanding of customer needs. This forms the basis for focusing on solutions that provide a real benefit. It is important not to do everything that is technically possible, but that which truly delivers added value for the user. Only those who truly know customers have a chance to conduct intelligent marketing. Furthermore, knowledge about new technologies and touchpoints will be important for marketing specialists of the future. We assume that machine learning will be replaced by machine teaching. This requires well-trained professionals to drive it in the right direction.

In a nutshell: The most important finding of the study? The digital transformation of marketing is progressing and becoming reality. Despite ever more data, more precise channel management and new automation possibilities, human intelligence remains the differential for the creative-strategic aspect of marketing.

Charlotte Malz

W.I.R.E. is an interdisciplinary think tank that has concentrated on global developments in business, science and society.
Pfister: Service champion when it comes to furnishings

#Customers #Service Champions #Retail

Pfister has been a service champion since its founding in 1882. With BSI CRM as its digital assistant, Switzerland’s leading furniture store can make the service experience tangible both before and after purchase. René Gebert, Head of Customer Service and Call Center at Pfister, reveals how to create a lastingly memorable customer experience.

Service leadership is an important value at Pfister. How do you ensure service excellence across all channels? We set ourselves the goal of responding to customer concerns quickly, in an uncomplicated manner, regardless of channel and to tackle them where they occur. This enables us to offer a needs-based and convenient customer journey across all channels and a surprisingly fast and simple service. With BSI CRM, we are essentially better able to meet these requirements.

Thus, for some weeks now, our delivery teams have been equipped only with tablets containing all relevant data for the customer delivery. If something goes wrong, the customer concern is entered directly on the tablet as a business case, and routed to the customer service team without delay, with photos if need be. What’s more, blockings, new card printings or name changes for more than 550,000 active myPfister customer cards can be entered from anywhere through BSI CRM, and carried out promptly with the direct link to the external partner. These examples show that even complex solutions are also possible with BSI CRM. The simple, continuous processes make the extra work sometimes required also worthwhile. These solutions help us tremendously in our day-to-day work.

What is the difference between a service center and a service champion? As a service leader, we want to do more than simply handle existing and future customer inquiries. We want to trigger enthusiasm among our customers also after a customer concern arises, and to prove that Pfister offers professional solutions both before and after the furnishing is complete.

Claudia Gabler

You not only integrated your customer service, but also all platforms and partners. What are the advantages of this? It really was important to us to experience as few media disruptions as possible in the daily processes.

“We want to trigger enthusiasm among our customers also after a customer concern arises.”

René Gebert, Head of Customer Service and Call Center at Pfister
The journalist Andrea Bleicher knows what captivates us. And she shares the secret with us. As a professional storyteller and BSI Studio partner, she writes her way into customers’ hearts. Is getting their hearts to beat faster a profession, a calling or a craft? Our recent chat provides some insight. Claudia Gabler

What is the first story you can remember ever hearing?

My mother told me that you rust if you don’t dry off after washing. A nasty, made-up story, but I believed it for a long time.

When did you begin telling stories?

When I was five, I began recording my own radio plays on cassette tape. I was quite inspired by puppet theater.

When did you decide to become a professional storyteller?

I decided to become a journalist when I was 12 years old.

Why?

I imagined it to be incredibly interesting and varied. And I was right.

Then what happened?

Then my business partner Sabina Sturzenegger and I decided to take the best part of journalism – the authentic storytelling – and to found an agency that conceives, researches and writes stories for companies and organizations.
As a journalist you learn what a story is made of. This includes first of all knowing what a story is, coming up with surprising details, and presenting it in the right narrative form. We take this one step further at Panda & Pinguin. We research and tell authentic stories. Fiction is not at home here.

Because you cannot only use them to convey information to customers, but emotions as well. And in this way, the flood of information you pour on them, is better retained by them. This enables companies to more effectively communicate their values and messages.

Stories, of course, are just snippets. It would be a mistake to think that stories only tell tales of success. Closeness and relevance are fostered when you also talk about setbacks and failures.

It especially makes sense for companies that take a stand and are clear about their goals. Their strategic goals can be broken down into stories.

A good story is an interplay between sender and recipient. The story can be experienced, is suspenseful, presents situations and figures the reader can identify with.

Courage, love for detail and the power of reduction.

People at BSI enjoy what they do – so do we.

The smarts steps, such as the weather step, and especially the ability to individualize the customer journey and so also the experience.

Because we believe in the ecosystem in BSI Studio and are convinced that it can benefit good partnerships and cooperations for customers.

Meet the partner: Starting now, we will introduce one of our partner in each edition. This time: Andrea Bleicher, co-founder of Panda & Pinguin, the agency for storytelling.
Many companies are using storytelling in an attempt to evoke positive emotions with their product. All stories by Coca-Cola are about people coming together and having fun. At Harley-Davidson, freedom and independence rattle out of the exhaust. Nike’s stories let me believe that I am an athlete, although we all know better.

The hero’s journey is the best-known format in storytelling. Every blockbuster sticks to the same basic elements: The leading figure is always living a peaceful life when suddenly, his life goes off the rails and off he goes down the path to adventure land. Our hero gets to know friends, has many adventures with them, and defeats his greatest enemy in the end. Finally, the hotshot wins treasure with his grandiose victory and then heads on home. Fame and glory await him on his return. Throughout the tale, the greenhorn matures into a new and better person.

Sounds familiar, doesn’t it? That’s the plot of “Shrek”? And “Star Wars”. “Titanic”. Not to mention “Die Hard”, “Dirty Dancing” and “The Fifth Element”. And just about any film or episode of countless CSI series. Even my favorite show, “Monk”, has followed this pattern throughout 125 episodes – and I love it!

The hunger for good stories seems to be insatiable. Now, AI is able to assuage this hunger somewhat. Watson analyzes public reaction and players’ emotions at Wimbledon to automatically produce a compilation of highlights for each tennis match. Or Reuters: The news agency uses Wibbitz, a technology that creates an appropriate news video for prime time from a simple text.

“It rarely happens that a story has everything it needs: A real hero, a solid conflict, many emotions – and a good reason to be told.”

Uwe Funk, software developer at BSI and a stories fan

Is that storytelling? Can AI really tell stories? Stories that move us, that make us laugh, that make us think, that surprise us? It’s possible, but in my imagination, there is a real hero who weaves emotions with a central theme into the storylines of any great story.
Sweetens every customer relationship:
Software from BSI.

bsi-software.com/sweetstory