

our story life cycle[©]



from **data**
to **action!**

introduction

In this whitepaper we'll guide you through our game-changing Story Life Cycle© approach to content and analytics. At the heart of what we do is the belief that your story is in the middle of it all. Smartocto

therefore is story-driven. We developed our approach from this philosophy and refined it, step-by-step, with input from many newsrooms along the way. We're going to toot our own horn and say that now it's a respected and integral part of many newsrooms - and the number of devotees is growing.

It's a groundbreaking, editorial-centric approach to using data to optimise output - and we're excited to present it to you and show you how it can work for you. And together we can even make it better! For an analytics system to be successful, it needs to be connected to the newsroom workflow. And, at the centre of the newsroom is the story. The Story Life Cycle© is an ongoing process of eight phases critical to every story - and we can help in each stage. Analytics isn't just about tracking how many Article Reads your story gets; it should do more than that - because it can.

So, from how you define your brand, where and when you publish, and how you assess success, the Story Life Cycle© approach gets you asking the right questions at the right time - all reinforced (in the background) by sound data analysis. We're there for you every step of the way.



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1 define



Long gone are the days when journalism's remit was solely to update. Of course that's still a valid reason to publish, but things have got a lot more complex - and frankly a lot more interesting. We think of stories as being part of a cycle: an ongoing process which gets more and more refined with experience. We're able to help guide you through each of the 8 stages of this cycle, offering guidance on how to properly maximise your impact at each step of the way.

Of course you are busy publishing the news and working on other stories. But how? Why? And for whom? Publishers who understand their brand DNA and their audience are more likely to publish stories that hit the mark. It's the phase that's absolutely critical to the Story Life Cycle®, but is typically neglected. We start here, because it's the foundation of everything, and it's worth spending time on.

Off the shelf isn't good enough for you. Let's get to work customising your own toolkit. Learn about who you really are, and how you want your audience to recognise you!

2 discover



Of course you never want to miss a story - and you definitely want to stay relevant - but topic detection needs to go beyond producing 'feed fillers'. How can your brand relay that breaking news story? How does the news look through your unique lens? Forgetting how your content intersects with your brand - or your demographic - is a waste of time and resources.

Our solution helps you discover the topics your audience cares about - all from analysing your own historical data. So, you get to identify your evergreen content and grow your loyal audience at the same time.

3 create



Let's get this straight: the smartocto tool won't write your articles for you. It's not here to muscle in on what reporters do best. That said, there are parts of the creative process that can benefit from a little data-informed intervention. What's the best format to deliver your story in? Are there any assets that could be used to boost its visibility? How can you boost your SEO results so search engines will find your content better?

Even now, after years in the industry, we're learning more about editorial workflows and the way stories perform on multiple channels on a daily basis- and we want to share our knowledge with you, so you can grow too. We serve tutorials on online formats, have multiple insights on the algorithms of social channels (and how to benefit from that) and we have some state of the art notifications that suggest specific content formats based on data input. It's our mission to continue to make this more automated and accurate. Together with your online ambitions we can speed this up and maybe even inject all the data knowledge right into your CMS-system. So, in short: there's so much to optimise during this phase - and smartocto is here to help!



your story at
the **centre** of it all

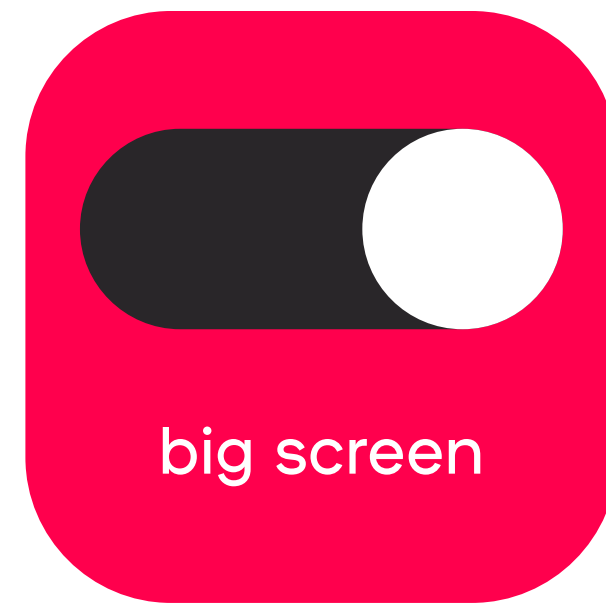
4 channel



Collaborating with newsrooms taught us that success comes from working on the biorhythms of your audience, not the newsroom itself. Just because a story is ready, doesn't always mean that it's ready to be published. The algorithms that sit behind the smartocto dashboard tell you when and where your content should be published, so you have the best chance of meeting your audience when they're ready. That way we help you to optimise your omnichannel storytelling efforts and boost your impact. It's simple, but it's smart!

Smartocto shows you the impact of your storytelling versus the effort - the amount of produced stories - it took to reach that impact. Many newsrooms and editors use this simple overview to keep track of the way their omnichannel storytelling is performing over time.

5 publish



When you DO publish your content, you're going to need to know how it's performing - and if you're publishing across multiple channels (which you probably are) - it can be tricky to keep tabs on what's working where. We're the only analytics tool that takes an omni-channel view on all your stories out there. And we're able to help you maximise your impact through easily integrated notifications and alerts, whether it's on your articles, video or audio. As long as we recognise the unique identifier of your content we'll start giving tips to your newsroom on the blink of an eye. In real time. Of course!

6 optimise



You should be able to stretch the lifecycle of your stories, and it makes sense to, right? Often editorial attention is highest when it's time to publish, but then it trails off. With your audience, it's the other way around. As part of the Story Life Cycle®, your stories won't succumb to this pattern. The app draws on your omni-channel article data to identify stories which would benefit from a further push, or adjustment of the headline. We also pay attention to the orchestration of your website and app, and - as always - we do all this by sending you notifications showing you what to do, and where. You can even split-test your headlines directly from your index pages. Super convenient!

●mnichannel
analytics with
smart alerts

7 convert



Your stories have to work hard. And, just like with any workforce, your anthology of stories all serve different functions. Some need to be optimised for eyeballs. Some need to sit in front of a paywall as part of a sales funnel. Perhaps some need to aid loyal reader retention. And sometimes you need to stretch the attention time of your audience through the right recommendations. This is the final phase of the customer journey, and all these prior stages of the Story Life Cycle© will help provide feedback that can help make your online storytelling efforts profitable. It's unique and it's fun. Try us!

8 report



You can't manage what you don't measure, and though the very utterance of 'analytics reports' is enough to send many editors scurrying for the hills, this needn't be the case. The smartocto Story Value Engine delivers comprehensive analytical insights to you, but all in plain English. Easy to understand. Visual. Focused. Concise. Instructive. Actionable.

Of course you can choose for yourself what segment you want to analyse: yesterday, last week, last month? And with a focus on Engagement, or Loyalty, or Reader Depth - you name it, we'll measure it.

Many newsrooms in the world have already experienced the power of this unique engine and are getting impressive results from working with it. Find out for yourself. It's worth it!

And just as the name suggests, this is a cycle. Everything you've learned here will inform how you do next time. So, how did you do?

Ready for the next round?



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results, conversions to subscriptions and overall reach have been groundbreaking - even in corona times. smartocto is very important, both for our journalists and the data driven approach of our newsroom in general.

roy wassink

insights manager @
dpg media

To understand the full power of the Story Life Cycle© you need to understand a few things.

- it's a modular approach which means you can choose which apps within the cycle you want to use to optimise your stories
- smartocto can connect to multiple data sources, so we can also use the data from tools you already have and then add notifications to it in order to get your newsroom actionable
- we're easy to talk to, we love great stories and we're here to help. So if you have any questions on the digital transformation you're facing just let us know!

**we are not a data company serving data,
we're an **impact company** using data to
turn your online effort into audience
loyalty and **profitability****

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