STORY ❘ PARTNERS

VISUAL STORYTELLING

Tips for Your Next Digital Advocacy Campaign
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WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Why Is Visual Storytelling Important?

- Visual Storytelling Trends to Consider

- The Creative Process

- Content Tools To Consider

- Examples of Corporate Storytelling

- Examples of Visual Storytelling

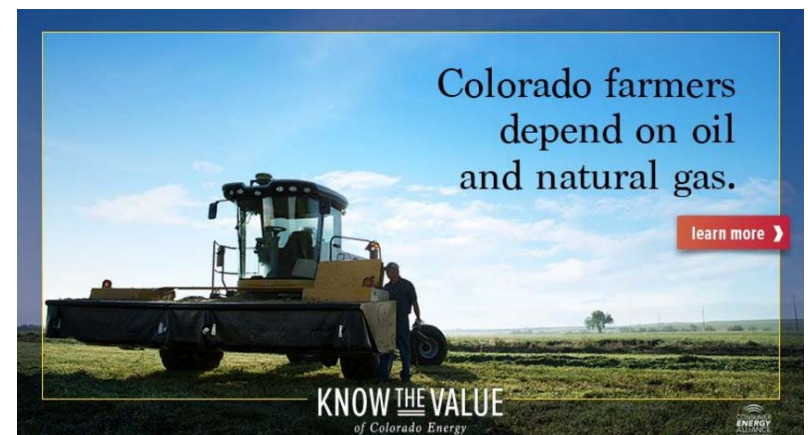- Do's and Don'ts of Visual Storytelling

WHY IS VISUAL STORYTELLING IMPORTANT?

We live in a world of information saturation →Tuning out content has become a defense mechanism for online users.

- Avg. consumer processes 100,500 digital words daily.
- Every 60 seconds, 700,000 Google searches are performed, 60 hours of video are uploaded to YouTube, and 168 million emails are sent. (Source: SEOmox.org, PR Newswire, Nielsen Norman Group)
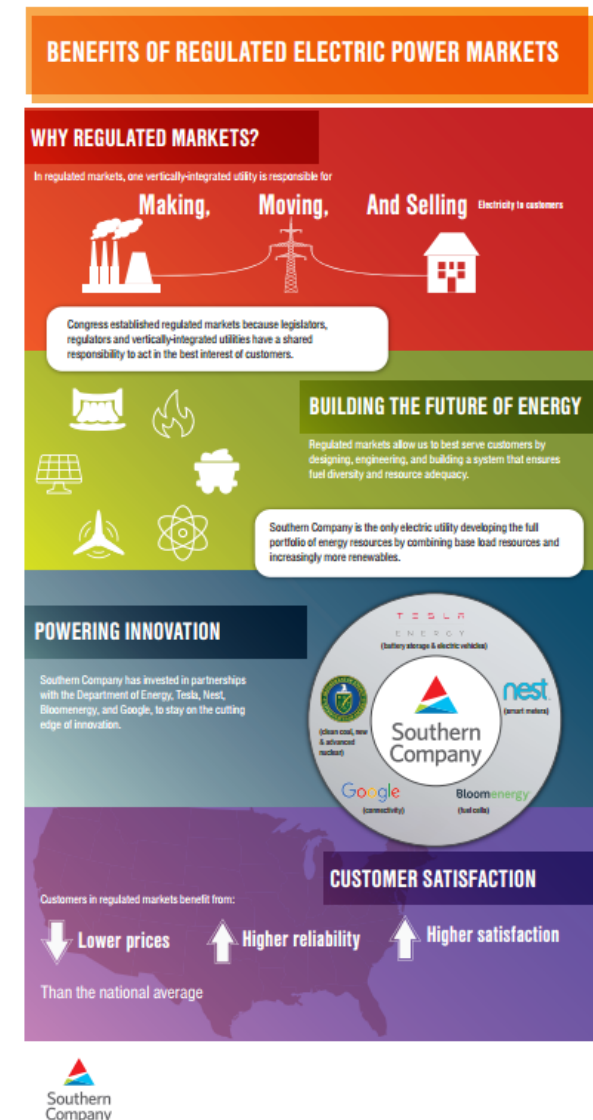
How do you overcome this?

- **Visual storytelling**: Using graphics, images, pictures, and videos to engage with a target market and convey a brand's message in an effort to drive emotions and encourage a particular action.

- Visual storytelling is tied to our instinctive desire to connect with others through engaging tales and narratives.

- We are drawn to narratives, and stories that make us feel fundamentally human.

- In the era of big data, we need stories in order to build marketing messages that are both accurate and human.

It's not just kids who are absent. It's up to an estimated $1 million.

learn more

KNOW THE VALUE of Colorado Energy

Colorado farmers depend on oil and natural gas.

learn more

KNOW THE VALUE of Colorado Energy

VISUAL STORYTELLING TRENDS TO CONSIDER

How Can You Use Visual Storytelling to Cut Through The Noise?

- **Video** is the most powerful form of visual storytelling → Consider adding this to your content mix to enhance the story.
  - Avg. user exposed to 32.2 videos/month
  - 65% of video viewers watch more than ¾ of a video ([Source](#))

- **Two things people love**: statistics and graphics → Combine both of them for an incredibly effective storytelling medium (also known as an infographic)
  - Infographics are "liked" and shared on social media 3X more than other any other type of content. ([Source](#))

- **Branded images**: with the growth of visual-based social platforms, such as Instagram, many marketers have found branded images and GIFs to be powerful vehicles for visual storytelling.
  - Facebook posts with images see 2.3X more engagement than those without images. ([Source](#))

- **Interactive storytelling:** This is a growing trend among digital content marketers today, using a mix of interactive features, animation and data visualizations → Great option to help captivate users and give them freedom to navigate and experience the content how they choose.

BENEFITS OF REGULATED ELECTRIC POWER MARKETS

WHY REGULATED MARKETS?

In regulated markets, one vertically-integrated utility is responsible for

Making, Moving, And Selling Electricity to customers

Congress established regulated markets because legislators, regulators and vertically-integrated utilities have a shared responsibility to act in the best interest of customers.

BUILDING THE FUTURE OF ENERGY

Regulated markets allow us to best serve customers by designing, engineering, and building a system that ensures fuel diversity and resource adequacy.

Southern Company is the only electric utility developing the full portfolio of energy resources by combining base load resources and increasingly more renewables.

POWERING INNOVATION

Southern Company has invested in partnerships with the Department of Energy, Tesla, Nest, Bloomenergy, and Google, to stay on the cutting edge of innovation.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customers in regulated markets benefit from:

↓ Lower prices ↑ Higher reliability ↑ Higher satisfaction

Than the national average

Southern Company

TYPICAL CREATIVE PROCESS

DISCOVER

- ID your team at the start
- Establish budget and timeline
- Establish the "story"
- Research past examples for inspiration
- Solidify goals are and audience

DEVELOP

- Build your narrative and message.

- Collaborate with the team to develop content marketing and distribution plan.

- Where will content live? (i.e. website, social platforms)

DESIGN

- Work with design team (in-house or contractor) to convey your vision
- Determine what creative assets you need to collect (i.e. stock imagery, real photos, video footage, logos, style guides)
- Meet with designer to ensure you're aligned

TOOLS TO CONSIDER

- Budget can be a limitation when it comes to content development

- There are free and low cost tools available that you can use when budget is limited

- **Biteable: https://biteable.com/**
  - Option to sign up for free
  - Create HD quality videos
  - Publish to YouTube
  - Unlimited

- **Canva: https://www.canva.com/templates/infographics/**
  - Free infographic templates
  - Drag and drop features
  - Create graphics for social media
  - Data visualization/graphs
  - Photo editing features

- **Venngage: https://venngage.com/templates/**
  - Free to sign up and use on a limited basis
  - $19/mo. for the "Individual" package
  - Infographic templates
  - Data visualization/graphs

CORPORATE STORYTELLING ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- Prior to re-launching Noble Energy's website, we established a presence for the brand on social media.

- Shareable images/graphics allow us to introduce users to Noble Energy on social media.

- It was important to introduce the brand and what it represents with imagery and consistent style elements.
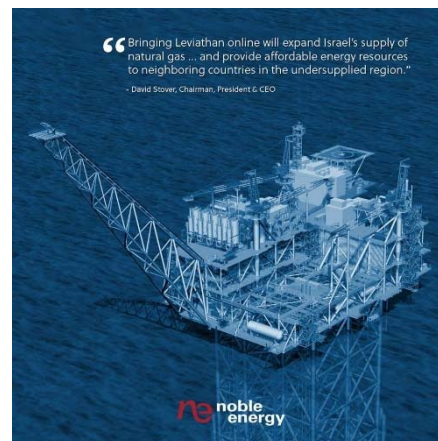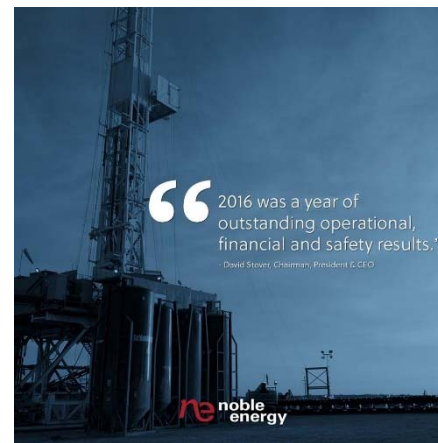
CORPORATE STORYTELLING WITH ANIMATION

- Using animated graphics for social media is a compelling way for us to tell a more complete story about Noble Energy's brand, and who they are as a company.

CORPORATE STORYTELLING WITH HIGH IMPACT ADS

- Leveraging high impact interactive digital ad units help tell a more complete story about Noble Energy's presence in Colorado and generates much higher engagement.

    - 3 x's more visibility vs. standard display ad
    - Focused on the user experience (UX)
    - 2.5x's MORE likely to engage → 9.6% vs. 3.9% avg. engagement rate

CINEMAGRAPH W/ SLIDESHOW
Total Engagements = 195k
Engagement Rate: 4.74% (vs. 1.96% benchmark)

CORPORATE STORYTELLING WITH VIDEO

Testimonials from Community Partners in Colorado

- A new series of video ads that underscore Noble Energy's commitment to Colorado and the positive impact the company has on their lives, and the state, told from the perspective of some of their local supporters and partners.

- Since launching these videos in our video advertising campaign, we've seen **a 51% increase in brand favorability for Noble Energy** – this is up from 27% in 2015.

STORYTELLING THROUGH INTERACTIVE CONTENT

- Energy plays an important role in our life, but connecting the dots requires demonstrating energy's impact in a compelling way.

- We used a combination of striking visuals, a fully interactive user experience, and animation to provide people with critical information about energy in a relatable manner on Vote4Energy.org.

- Since relaunching the Vote4Energy site in 2015, we saw a **1,200% increase in *new* users compared to the benchmark**.
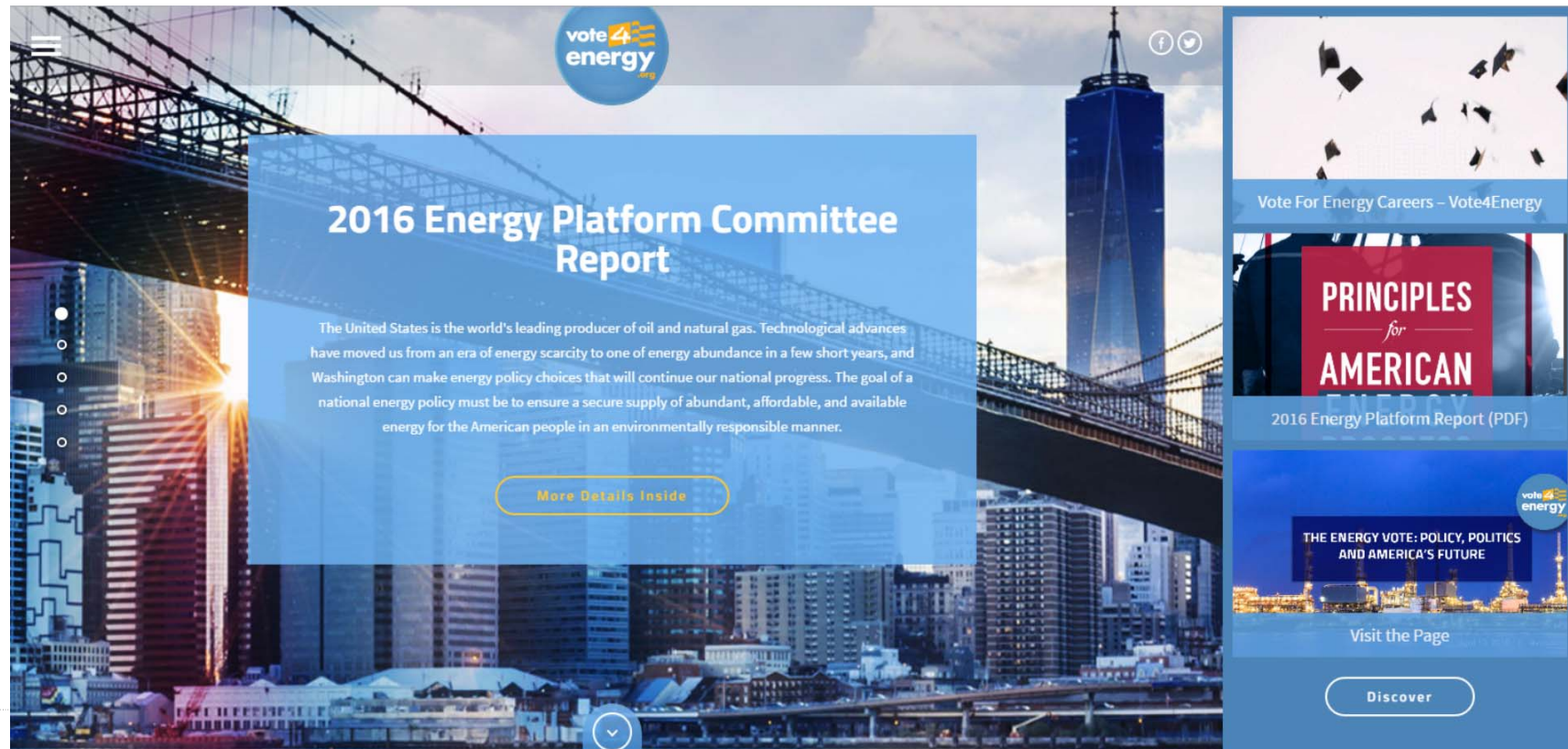
STORYTELLING WITH ANIMATED CONTENT

- Leveraging animated images (GIFs) on specific pages of Vote4Energy.org allowed us to bring the story of a particular post to life with added movement, while also making the content relatable to everyday consumers.

- Switching from static images to animated GIFS, **increased monthly traffic to this page by 91%**
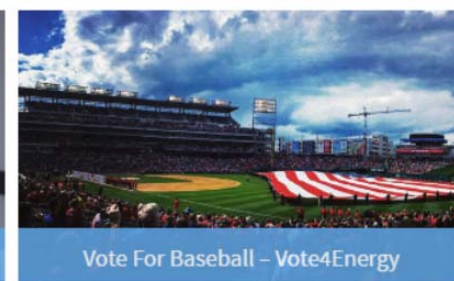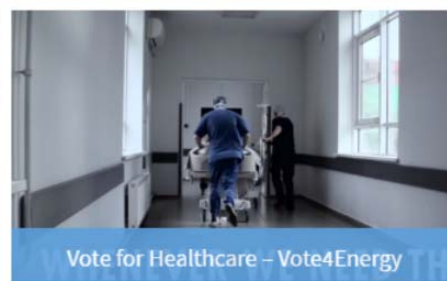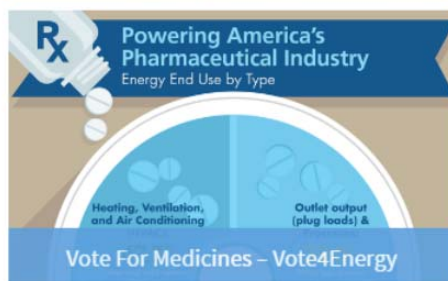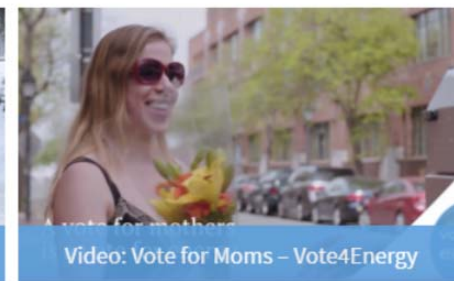
STORYTELLING WITH DATA VISUALIZATION

- Using various forms of data visualization on the re-designed Vote4Energy.org website allowed visitors to discover, absorb and easily share key stats and figures from important industry studies.

- Since redesigning Vote4Energy.org into a more visually engaging, mobile-friendly format, we saw 1,600+% more visits on mobile devices than benchmark properties.
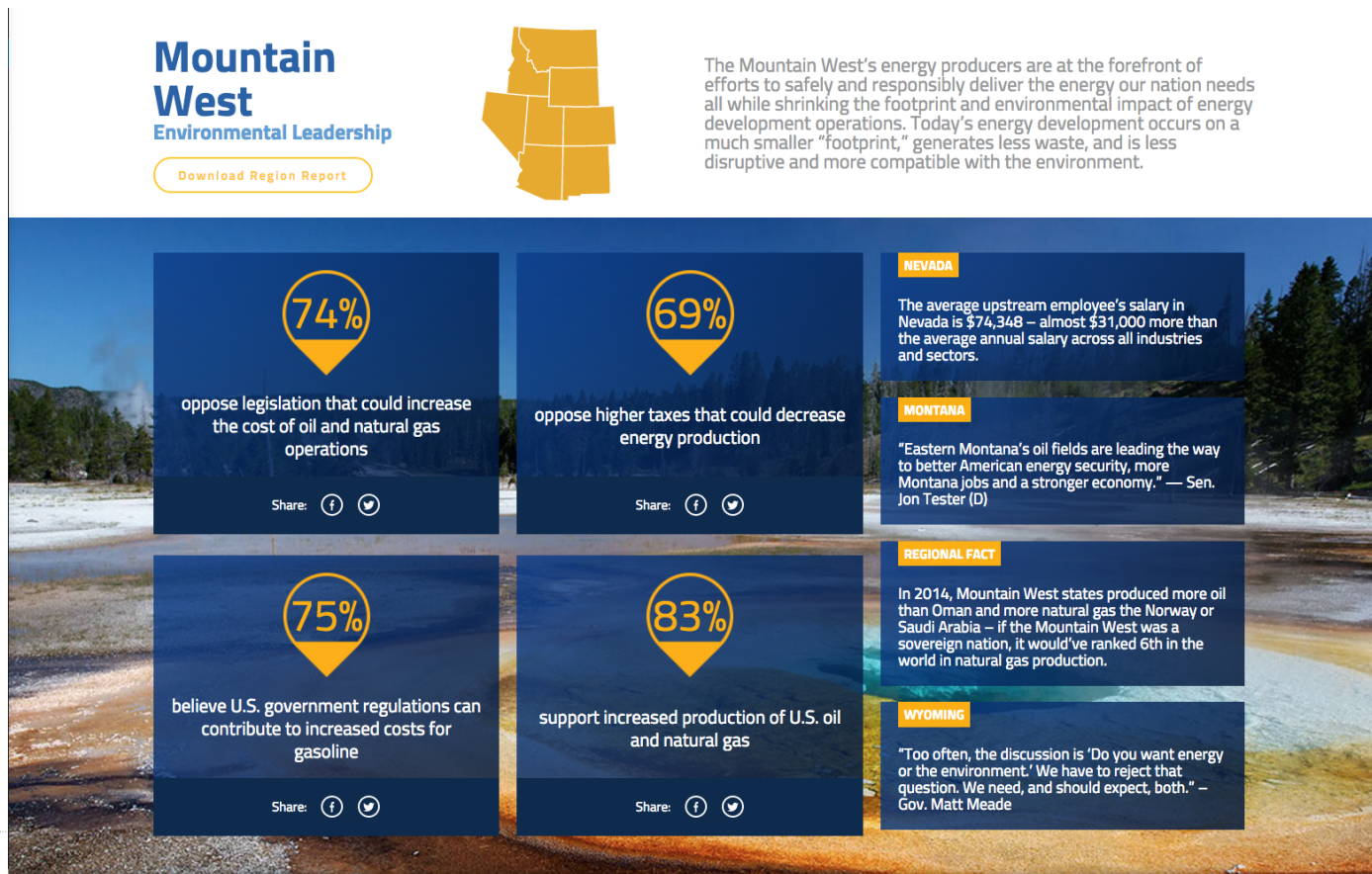
VISUAL STORYTELLING: DO'S AND DON'TS

DO'S

- Do focus on **authenticity**, **sensory**, and **relevancy** if you want to be successful at visual storytelling.

- Do plan out the content distribution plan to align with your goals.

- Do make sure you allow yourself enough time to properly build content.

- Do spend time researching examples for inspiration before committing to a visual format.

- Do experiment with animated graphics to enhance the visual experience.

- Do use video in your content mix in order to tell the most complete story.

DONT'S

- Do not make visual content an afterthought – take time to plan.

- Do not use stock photography as a "go to" every time; authenticity is key.

- Do not attempt to create custom graphics or videos on your own (if you're unfamiliar).

- Do not forget to think about your campaign/brand's goals and target audience when you're planning out the content and its features.

- Do not forget about the storytelling power that imagery and visuals have on a user.