



POINT OF VIEW

Become a Brand Wizard:

What can Harry Potter teach us about building a brand?



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JK Rowling created a complex world of wizardry in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* by following a classic storytelling device known as the ABDCE framework. While the characters and their adventures are certainly memorable, the then-unknown author understood the importance of using a proven structure to connect with her readers and draw them in. By following this time-tested method, Rowling delivered a story that became a franchise, and has lived on in the hearts and minds of fans around the world.

So, what can Harry Potter teach you about building your brand? Quite a bit actually, especially when it comes to building your brand story. To enhance your brand story—and have a little fun in the process—you can approach it as if you are authoring a book and follow the same ABDCE framework of Action, Background, Development, Climax, and Ending. By following this structure, your brand story might just live on like the world of Hogwarts!

ACTION:

The best stories open with an inciting action—a hook that pulls you in.

Harry starts receiving mysterious letters that are confiscated by his uncle just before his 11th birthday. He tries to read the letters but does not succeed.

For your brand, **action** is the opening hook that grabs your customer's attention and draws them in.

BACKGROUND:

After the opening scene, stories then fill in the background, providing details about characters and settings to put more context around the hook.

Hagrid hand-delivers the letter from the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry and meets Harry in person. He tells him his story and that he is a famous wizard in the wizarding world and that the evil Voldemort is after him.

For your brand, **background** is the unmet need that your brand addresses. In pharma, this revolves around conditions and symptoms.

DEVELOPMENT:

After the background context, it's time to develop your plot. You start to drive your story forward with more and more details.

Harry reaches Hogwarts and becomes part of the Gryffindor House. He has a series of adventures where multiple characters are introduced. Harry, Ron, and Hermione suspect Professor Snape is trying to steal the Sorcerer's Stone.

For your brand, **development** is the features and functional/emotional benefits that you offer.



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CLIMAX:

Then, a key narrative twist happens. A moment of enlightenment occurs where the crux of the story's conflict and solution come together.

Harry solves various puzzles and overcomes the hurdles created to guard the Sorcerer's Stone. He discovers that professor Quirrel is trying to steal the stone because Lord Voldemort has possessed him.

For your brand, **climax** is your key differentiator—the one critical conflict/solution point that your brand addresses.

ENDING:

Every story must then come to a close, where the reader realizes how the protagonist has been changed.

Harry wakes up in the hospital and learns that Voldemort has vanished again after killing Quirrel. Gryffindor lifts the house Cup for their role in protecting the Sorcerer's stone. Harry returns to the Dursleys.

For your brand, **ending** is the call to action, showing how your brand will change the life of your clinicians and patients.

When you think about it this way, your brand story is more than just a collection of messages. Using a formal story-building framework forces us to consider the overall narrative and identify the key pillars of each section that map to our messages and communications platform.

You don't need to wave your wand or cast a spell to develop a stronger brand story. Just follow the ABDCE framework and your brand will have a story to share and a message that will live on.

If you would like to learn more about this unique approach to telling your brand story or discuss ideas for building a lasting brand, please email us at business@evokegroup.com.