



Stories That Stick

A Practical Guide to Visual
Storytelling with ComicFire

NOTICED. SHARED. REMEMBERED. UNDERSTOOD.

For founders and small teams

Mithun Shanbhag

Founder of ComicFire

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Why I care about visual storytelling

I've always been fascinated by visual storytelling. Charts, pictures, comics, infographics: different tools, but a similar possibility. Take something complicated and help someone see what you mean.

That fascination prompted me to build ComicFire.

Think about explaining your business to someone who has never heard of it. You know the features, the terminology, the exceptions. They have a much simpler question: what does this do for me?

It's easy to answer with another paragraph. Then another. Before long, you've written a perfectly accurate explanation that requires a small commitment to read. The reader, unfortunately, has other plans.

I like the discipline that a short comic imposes. Who is in the scene? What are they trying to do? What goes wrong? What changes? Those questions pull an explanation toward something a person can recognize.

A small story, with a useful point

A backup service could describe its scheduling system. Or it could show someone postponing a backup, losing a file, and discovering why an automatic copy matters. The technical details still belong somewhere. The story gives someone a reason to ask for them.

The same approach can work for a customer question, an everyday frustration, or a misconception about your product. Start with a real situation. Give the reader one thing to take away. Leave the feature catalogue for later.

ComicFire brings that approach into a workspace for shaping your brand, developing a mascot, reviewing ideas, and working with comics. The aim is to make visual storytelling a repeatable part of how you explain your business.

A little perspective

Comics aren't the right format for every message. A comparison may need a table. A process may need a diagram. A precise instruction may need plain text. Choose the form that helps the reader.

This guide looks at the case for short visual stories, where the research is useful, and where it stops. Then we'll turn one business message into an example you can actually inspect.

Give people a reason to pause

A picture can occupy space in a feed without giving anyone a reason to care. For a founder, the more useful question is what the picture helps someone notice. A situation? A problem? A consequence they had not considered?

Noticed: something is happening here

Dhanesh, Duthler and Li studied 400 visuals posted by four airport brands on Facebook and Instagram. Images with narrative qualities were associated with stronger engagement. The study examined existing posts, rather than assigning people randomly to different creatives. It supports paying attention to how a visual tells a story; it does not establish that adding comic panels will increase your results. [1]

My practical takeaway: give the image a situation. A character facing a familiar problem is a useful starting point. Make the point readable before asking the reader to study the caption.

Shared: useful enough to pass along

Berger and Milkman's research on online sharing connected transmission with emotional arousal and found that practical usefulness also mattered. Their work included news articles and experiments, not a test of branded comic strips. [2]

That is a helpful prompt for a small business: who would send this to whom, and why? A founder might forward a comic about confusing invoices to a colleague. A customer might share an explanation that finally makes a setting understandable. The reason to share should exist inside the story.

Peng and Bainbridge studied 1,247 Reddit image posts using a model that predicted image memorability. More memorable images were associated with more comments, including after controls for image category. This is evidence about predicted memorability and observed engagement, not a guaranteed lift in shares or sales. [3]

Make the idea worth the space

Try a simple editing pass. Remove the logo and read the scene. Is there still an observation, a useful explanation, or a recognizable moment? If all that remains is a product claim in a speech bubble, the story needs more work.

There is no reliable multiplier to promise here. Audience, distribution, subject, and execution all matter. Treat a comic as a creative approach worth testing, and judge it against the job you wanted it to do.

Familiar faces. Clearer explanations.

A single post has a small job: communicate one idea. A series has another job too: make it easier to recognize who is speaking.

Remembered: give the character a consistent role

Jenni Romaniuk's work on distinctive brand assets treats identity as something to build and protect over time. Her book covers a range of assets, including advertising-based assets; it is a branding framework, not a ComicFire performance study. [4]

For a small team, the practical question is continuity. Can you keep a character's appearance, role, and manner recognizable while changing the situation? A helpful guide could answer a different customer question each week. A curious beginner could keep encountering the mistakes your product helps address.

System1's account of M&M's advertising offers a concrete industry example of recurring characters and brand recognition. However, the ads differed in their creative treatment as well as their characters. It would be a stretch to turn that comparison into a universal claim that mascots outperform celebrities. [5]

Use the example as encouragement to develop a recognizable character. Your audience still has to learn the connection between that character and your business.

Understood: show the change

Jun Liu's experiment examined comic strips alongside texts for English-language learners. Lower-proficiency students reading the harder text benefited from the comic support; higher-proficiency students reading that text did not show the same recall improvement. The paper is from 2004, and the setting is education. [6]

That qualification matters. Pictures can help particular readers with particular explanations. They are not an automatic upgrade to everything you write.

In your own story, make the sequence do some work. Show the situation before an action, the action itself, and what changes afterward. If the drawings merely repeat a long paragraph, try shortening the words and clarifying the scene.

Four useful jobs for a story

The table below connects each goal to a practical benefit to aim for. These are creative intentions, not predicted business outcomes.

Goal	Practical benefit to aim for
Noticed	Make an everyday customer problem recognizable.
Shared	Give people a useful explanation to pass along.
Remembered	Connect a familiar character with your business.
Understood	Show what changes when someone uses your product.

One message. Two small stories.

Meet Mara, the founder character in this fictional backup-software example. The business wants to explain scheduled backups. Its original message might read: "Our software runs automatic backups on your chosen schedule."

Accurate enough. But what situation makes that feature matter?

Episode one: tomorrow arrived early



The scene connects postponement with a consequence. The final panel makes the value of an overnight backup visible. Notice what it leaves out: storage architecture, settings, and a list of every possible recovery option. Those belong in the product explanation that follows.

Episode two: a backup worth checking



The second episode keeps Mara recognizable and introduces a related question: can the saved copy actually be restored? The series has room to teach another useful idea without introducing a new cast each time.

Both strips are illustrative artwork created for this guide, not ComicFire application output or customer evidence. They describe a fictional service, not a technical guarantee about backups.

Try the same exercise with your business. Choose a question customers already ask. Write the ordinary answer first. Then find a person, a moment of friction, and a small change that makes the answer easier to see. Keep the claim accurate even when the scene is playful.

Where ComicFire fits

ComicFire gives this work a home. You can describe your brand, develop a mascot, review story ideas, and work with generated comics. The useful part is having those decisions connected, so each new story has context to draw on.

1 BRAND	2 MASCOT	3 IDEAS	4 COMICS
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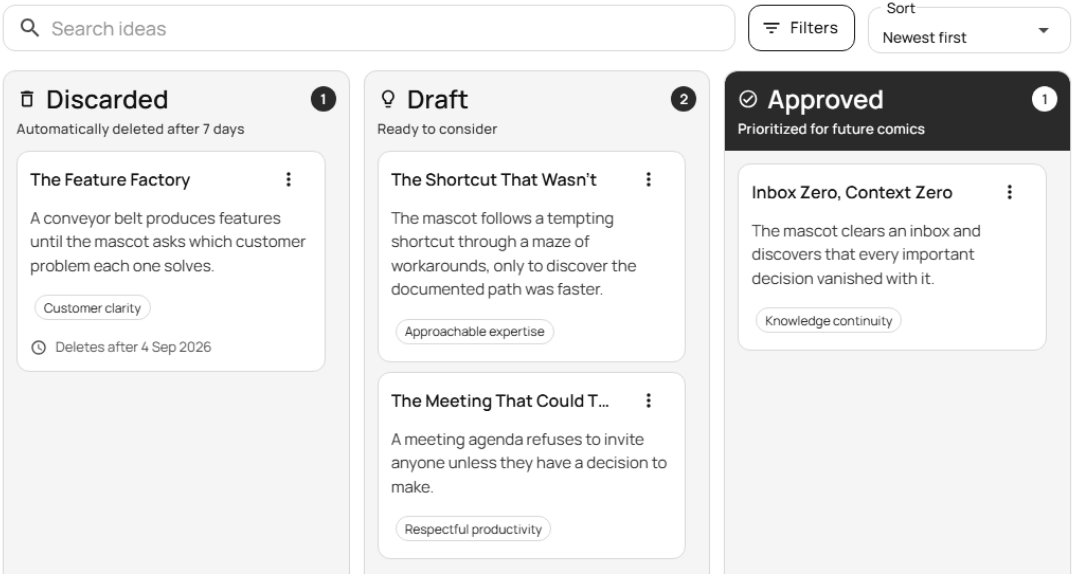
Start with the business behind the story

Use the Brand workspace to describe what you do, who you serve, and how you want to communicate. Be specific. "We help small teams recover accidentally deleted work" gives a story more direction than "We provide innovative solutions."

The Mascot workspace lets you generate and refine a character. Look for a character you can keep using, with a role that makes sense for your audience. Appearance matters, but so does what the character helps explain.

Review the ideas before they become the message

The Ideas workspace organizes story seeds into Draft, Approved, and Discarded states, with search and filtering. You can review an idea, adjust it, and decide whether it belongs in your brand's story. ComicFire also generates ideas from the brand and mascot context.



Ideas workspace · local product UI with sample data (cropped viewport)

Approved ideas feed comic generation. Review the result before approving it: product claims, character consistency, and readability all need your judgment. An image can look convincing while getting the point wrong.

The screenshot uses sample data in the local application, not a customer account or deployed-service evidence.

Start small. Learn from the response.

You don't need a sprawling comic universe to begin. Pick one audience, one recurring character, and a handful of questions worth answering. Give yourself a manageable experiment.

Build a short starting routine

First, collect questions from real conversations: a confusing feature, a repeated objection, or something customers regularly misunderstand. Choose one that can be explained accurately in a short scene. If it needs five caveats, choose a narrower question.

Next, write the takeaway in one sentence. Develop the scene around that sentence, and check that the character's actions make it understandable. Add the caption afterward. It should help the reader, not rescue an incomprehensible strip.

Before publishing, ask someone unfamiliar with the draft what they think happened. What did they understand? Which business did they think it came from? If their answer surprises you, the story may need another pass.

Publish through your usual channels, then keep a simple record of the topic, format, date, distribution, and response. Repeat with another useful question. Keep enough of the character and presentation consistent that the series feels related.

Measure the job you intended

For attention, examine engagement relative to reach where the platform provides it. For sharing, record shares or forwards alongside exposure. For comprehension, look at the questions people ask and whether they can explain the point back to you. For recognition, ask whether they connect the character to your brand.

Compare with your own earlier posts where the audience and distribution are reasonably similar. A different posting time, paid promotion, or unusually popular topic can change the result. Small samples are noisy; a single successful post is a useful clue, not a verdict.

Keep business outcomes separate. Likes do not tell you whether someone became a customer. If visits or enquiries matter, track those too, using the measurement tools you already have.

Make the next explanation easier

What is one thing about your business that people struggle to understand? Start there. Find the scene that makes it click. That is the kind of work I want ComicFire to help you do.

Explore ComicFire at comicfire.com

Sources and further reading

These references inform the discussion, not a promise of ComicFire results. Journal abstracts and publisher records support the academic summaries; the System1 article is an industry account, and Romaniuk's book is a branding framework. No pooled effect size is calculated.

[1] **Dhanesh, G., Duthler, G. & Li, K. (2022).** Social media engagement with organization-generated content: Role of visuals in enhancing public engagement with organizations on Facebook and Instagram. *Public Relations Review*, 48(2), 102174. Publisher abstract; observational content analysis.

[Read source online](#)

[2] **Berger, J. & Milkman, K. L. (2012).** What Makes Online Content Viral? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 49(2), 192-205. News-sharing research and experiments.

[Read source online](#)

[3] **Peng, S. & Bainbridge, W. A. (2026).** Image memorability predicts social media virality and externally-associated commenting. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 174, 108799. January 2026 issue; online 2025. Publisher abstract; Reddit image analysis.

[Read source online](#)

[4] **Romaniuk, J.** Building Distinctive Brand Assets. Oxford University Press. Author book overview consulted; branding framework rather than a single experiment.

[Read source online](#)

[5] **Rosenthal, M. (13 May 2024).** Leveraging the Magic of Memorable Characters in Advertising. System1 Group. Industry account of advertising tests; not a controlled comic-format comparison.

[Read source online](#)

[6] **Liu, J. (2004).** Effects of Comic Strips on L2 Learners' Reading Comprehension. *TESOL Quarterly*, 38(2), 225-243. Publisher abstract; language-learning experiment with conditional results.

[Read source online](#)

The practical exercises and fictional examples are editorial recommendations. They have not been validated as a ComicFire performance study. Evidence about news sharing, airport-brand posts, Reddit images, and language learning should not be treated as interchangeable.

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