PROTAGONIST

UNDERSTAND AND ACTIVATE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

PROTAGONIST UNCOVERS INSIGHTS THAT DRIVE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR

UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER BELIEFS, FEARS AND MOTIVATIONS

Even the most established, respected companies in the world are subject to Narratives, the deeply held beliefs that motivate and drive behavior in the world around them. The Digital Age continues to open new doors to engage with our customers, but these advantages have an equally daunting potential to create and propagate negativity. Beliefs aren't passive, they impact behavior.

The Narratives that your audience adopts are directly responsible for their actions. That means that if you want to grow your business, shift a population's behavior, command a stronger position in your market or win customer loyalty, you have to tap into the issues your customer cares about. Deciphering and leveraging those Narratives is the foundation for clear, effective communications, organizational alignment, and products that truly meet customer needs.

Protagonist didn't just take something off the shelf and apply it to our company. Rather, they worked with us upfront and even through the research phase to be clear on what we were trying to accomplish, and they custom-tailored the analysis to our needs and goals. Their team uncovered clear threads—of attitudes, opinions, and concepts—that we would never have found otherwise. They also gave us actionable ideas that have already started to drive our market penetration and customer intimacy strategies forward.

- Rosemary Shader, Director of Market Development, American National

TRADITIONAL MARKET RESEARCH METHODS ARE NO LONGER ENOUGH

Good marketing is the constant pursuit of better human understanding. Many organizations have relied on traditional market research techniques like polling and focus groups to try to get at the beliefs of their audiences. Traditional methods can be effective, however they often only show a small piece of the puzzle.

Using modern marketing tools like automation platforms, we can test things like promotion, message and subject line. However, there are deep dynamics behind customer success not visible through simplistic response, traffic and sales numbers. Listening tools and AI allow us to guess at keywords, sentiment, and basic topics in

social conversation. Unfortunately, this view won't get to a fully articulated belief blocking your efforts to meet your customer needs, and it certainly won't quantify how many people out there feel the way they do for the reasons they do. We need to supplement our methods and constantly look for new angles in order understand what our customers really believe, not just what they report.

A NEW LEVEL OF MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Many of the world's top enterprises, foundations and even top government agencies use Protagonist to understand people's perceptions about their brand, policies, initiatives and products. We've folded eight years of expertise in social science and human psychology into a software platform that helps us isolate the most important Narrative patterns across billions of structured and unstructured data points in public discourse.

We used Protagonist to segment broad opportunity areas such as hybrid cloud computing through the use of market narratives. The result was a tighter and more differentiated go-to-market proposition that resonated better with our customers

- Jason Wehner, Director, Global Marketing Strategy, Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Through a data science called Narrative Analytics, we leverage Natural Language Processing systems and machine learning to look at the entire online discourse (media, blogs, social commentary, forums) and expose the full range of public beliefs about any topic that matters to you. We help you use the powerful Narratives that really influence customer behavior to create communication, brand, and product strategies guaranteed to resonate with your audience.

HELPING A GLOBAL IT COMPANY UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF SMALL BUSINESS

A Fortune 30 company in the IT sector had seen massive success at the enterprise level, but struggled to connect to Small and Medium Businesses (SMBs). The company's SMB market penetration was strong, but SMBs weren't adopting their toolset as rapidly as they were with competing tools. There was a real threat of losing significant market share if the trend continued. The company wanted to understand what small business leaders cared about, and what went into their decision-making process when considering how to implement new software.

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Protagonist exposed predominant beliefs to segment the SMB market by the pain points and aspirations most tied to their behavior. This unique market view showed different levels of customer adoption based on how leaders viewed their overall business: those optimistic about the future, pessimists, and those that just focused on the present. We helped the IT company surface market confusion that was hindering not only usage but also sales of their offering. The IT company was able to tailor its product packaging, resources and messaging based on the stories that resonated most within each SMB segment, resulting in increased adoption and customer success rates across the whole industry segment.

When you do as everyone else does, don't be surprised when you get what everyone else gets.

- Peter Kaufman, CEO, Glenair Inc.

REDESIGNING A TOP COFFEE COMPANY'S CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Despite strong brand awareness for their brick and mortar locations, a top coffee retailer struggled to increase growth and engagement in their digital programs. The mobile app they had launched in the previous year was intended to increase participation in their loyalty program and simplify their customer experience, but it seemed to be having the reverse effect. They asked Protagonist for help in understanding their Customer Narratives so they could find the disconnect.

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Protagonist compared the discourse about the coffee retailer's mobile experience to that of its brick and mortar experience. We looked at conversations happening in app reviews, social networks, blogs, forums and other media. We learned that the things customers loved about the brick and mortar experience were completely absent in the messaging, navigation and features of their digital programs. Customers didn't feel the same personal touch, reliability, or emotional elements in the app that had resonated and made them loyal to the brand in the first place. Armed with a new level of understanding they just couldn't get from polling and prompting customer feedback, the coffee company implemented Protagonist's strategic recommendations for fixing the digital programs to connect with powerful Narratives about the in-store experience. As a result, they saw massive lift on app usage, loyalty program engagement, and increased revenue.

HELPING A MAJOR ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY DESIGN AND LAUNCH A NETWORK FOR MILLENNIALS

A major entertainment company was developing an ambitious new streaming network tailored to speak directly to a specific audience: multicultural, digitally-native millennials. To engage their target audience and convince millennial brands the network would be worthy of ad dollars, their programming had to focus on issues the audience cares about, and continuously evolve to stay relevant to the fluctuations in their Narrative Landscape. They asked Protagonist for help understanding what multicultural millennials believe, how they think, what their priorities are, what products and brands they talk about, and the attitudes they have towards big picture topics like politics, religion, racism, career, and relationships.

HOW PROTAGONIST HELPED THE ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY UNDERSTAND AND ACTIVATE THEIR TARGET

Uncover What People Believe Today

CURATING YOUR DATA SET

Every engagement begins by gathering data. Protagonist data scientists curate a custom data set by selecting the relevant sources that contain issues impactful to you. We collect data wherever people express beliefs. And, we do so passively. That means the narratives you get include the real words, the emphases and context around the issues you care about.

RESULTS

The company had been struggling to find a large-scale understanding of market perceptions. Protagonist helped them isolate narrative rich conversations in the places multicultural millennials were communicating, in their voice.

THE PROTAGONIST ADVANTAGE

Unlike traditional market research methods like polls or surveys, we can go beyond small sample sizes and pre-defined questions. We access the entire digital landscape and filter out noise, paid content and surface-level chatter to isolate only the content bearing rich Narrative structure.

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SURFACING YOUR NARRATIVE LANDSCAPE

Protagonist algorithms then surface a set of Narratives based on predictable structures, emotionally loaded words, arguments, grammatical phrases and linguistic patterns.

RESULTS

Protagonist surfaced 12 core millennial narratives that presented new opportunities for the network's go-to-market strategy, messaging, content, and advertising partnerships. We exposed the nuances of the complicated relationship millennials have with the previous generation and its politics, their struggle with technology and its impact on developing relationships, and big picture ideas like defining happiness.

THE PROTAGONIST ADVANTAGE

Our platform has the unique ability to determine the full cognitive argument wherever one exists regardless of location, length or format. The Narrative Landscape shows you the full range of beliefs that matter to your priorities. These are the chess pieces you need to drive strategy.

2

Know how beliefs are associated with key topics, issues, and events

DECIPHERING THE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF KEY NARRATIVES

Protagonist technology isolates the most impactful Narratives by scoring each on its reach, engagement, and consistency. You see both positive and negative Narratives in the conversation, highlighting the highest volume, fastest rising or most polarizing presence to help you prioritize.

RESULTS

Protagonist found that key events relevant to multicultural millennials sparked emotionally-driven and polarizing dialogue. Conversations about key issues like climate change, government policy, and the presidential election caused spikes for key Narratives in the landscape, knowledge that would be vital to creating a dynamic Narrative Strategy.

THE PROTAGONIST ADVANTAGE

We not only tell you why your brand is favorable, but the stories that people are connecting with it. This is a unique look at: What's working against you? Is it strong? Polarizing? Fleeting? Changeable? Worth spending dollars to fight?

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3 Know how to work with beliefs to win

YOUR NARRATIVE STRATEGY

Once Narratives are deciphered, we create a strategy that tells you which Narratives to amplify, reframe, counter, or avoid based on the Landscape, available resources and alignment with your overall strategic objectives. We also find the "white space" areas in the public discourse aligned to your goals, those that have no clear owner and allow to you to carve out a winning position.

RESULTS

To attract and win with the target demographic, the network had to use the Narratives with the biggest impact in its programming. Protagonist showed them which topics to feature, informed character and plot development, even tonality for show dialogue.

THE PROTAGONIST ADVANTAGE

Unlike traditional market research or automated testing, Narrative Analytics taps into the sentiment behind expressed beliefs, navigating the complexity of human dialogue on a mass scale. Your resulting Narrative Strategy is a data-driven way to change the overall conversation, an approach that drives the entire discourse affecting your business.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY VIA MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE

Protagonist's Messaging Architecture becomes the basis for the strategy used by teams in communications, creative, product and others across the organization. We provide recommendations on how to alter messaging, syntax, voice, leverage influencers, media channels or other factors significant in managing the Landscape.

RESULTS

Protagonist determined messaging and channel recommendations to acquire multi-cultural millennial viewers for the network. We also informed their advertiser strategy. The entertainment company was able to gain big brands' attention and help prioritize the content for ads based on the Narrative themes in each program, and the way that different brands and categories resonated with the target.

THE PROTAGONIST ADVANTAGE

We reveal which media channels to activate, which stakeholders to address, how to leverage partners, and which messaging will strengthen your target Narratives to affect the behavior you want. This is a strategic approach only made possible by social scientists and advances in modern machine learning. It's a way to validate what Marketers could only intuit until now.

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4 Win and keep on winning

CONTINUOUS CONTROL WITH NARRATIVE SUBSCRIPTION

Many factors can sway public perception at the drop of a dime. Narrative Subscription helps you stay in the driver's seat by tracking changes in your Narrative Landscape and signature over time so you can continue to proactively maneuver the dialogue. As new data emerges, it is mapped against benchmarks and measured to identify new Narratives. Real-time tracking and correlation show impact to your campaigns and actions against competitors.

It's the ultimate way of evaluating the effectiveness of a campaign, with closed feedback loops to improve marketing decision-making. Finally, your Narrative Subscription provides access to Narrative Experts who provide strategic guidance on a monthly or quarterly basis to help you maintain control.

RESULTS

The revelations about millennial beliefs, fears and motivations lead the entertainment company to create the first iteration of its programming on the new network and launch successfully.

The network is still in its infancy, but millennial response to ads, program viewership and advertiser spending is already showing signs of a bright future for the streaming network. With Narrative Subscription, they'll make sure the programming formula continues to resonate.

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HERE ARE SOME OF OUR WINNERS

TECHNOLOGY

vmware | hp | Marketo | Microsoft | Linked in

RETAIL & ENTERTAINMENT

WB | HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL | Starbucks

FINANCIAL SERVICES

MetLife | charles SCHWAB

PHARMA & HEALTHCARE

Blue Shield of California | The Advisory Board Company | Pfizer | California Health Care Foundation | NOVANT HEALTH

FOUNDATIONS

BILL & MELINDA GATES foundation | Lumina FOUNDATION | OMIDYAR NETWORK | THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

ENERGY

AERA | PG&E

GOVERNMENT

United States of America | U.S. Department of Homeland Security | Department of Defense

CPG

General Mills | MARS

Check out our other use cases here:

Winning a Narrative Battle

Energizing and Protecting Your Brand

Contact us at info@protagonist.io to get started

PROTAGONIST

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