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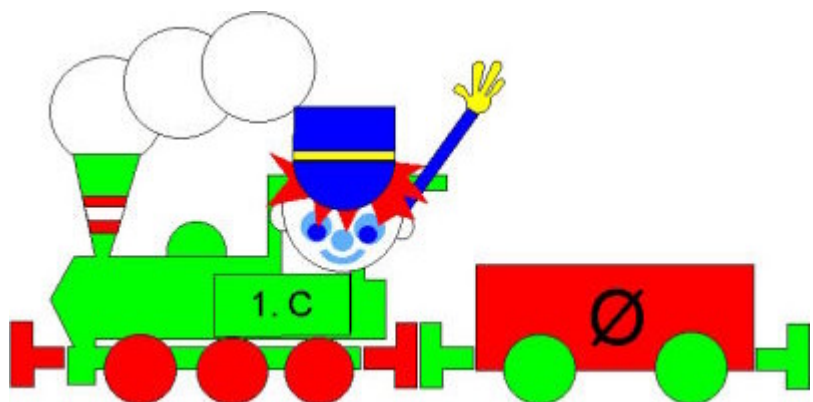
## Corporate valuez..zzzz...

by Asbjorn Lonvig

See "CORPORATE VALUES" by Michael Juul Jensen at the end of this article.  
Corporate values - it sounds boring. Corporate valuez..zzzz...  
Storytelling has recently been the buzzword in management.  
I went to a couple of storytelling seminars - zzzz..zstorytelling zzzz..zeminars!!!

Did you know that Pfizer Inc. has shown great interest in the combination of corporate values and storytelling as a sedative drug for those who suffer from insomnia?

Managing director Henrik Thorning, president and founder of Fiberline Composites, Inc. had won the Danish Industry Initiative Award.  
I always make an art work to the award winner.  
I met him in his factory - I was searching for some inspiration.  
He showed me everything - enthusiastically.  
He told me everything - enthusiastically.  
He had just finished a timeconsuming work of developing the corporate values for the company.  
But they were not implemented, yet.  
And.  
As he saw the logo I had made to 1st grad at Hedensted school.....



Henrik Thorning was excited.

Yes.

Yes.

Yes.

Make a story about **SOFUS**.

Exactly as pedagogically as the 1st grade logo.

Sure.

Sure.

And my very own storytelling concept had popped up.

A little bit of information to the reader:

Why a story about **SOFUS**?

Fiberline Composite, Inc.'s corporate values focused on **S**amspil=Interplay, **O**rdentlighed=decency, **F**orudseenhed=foresight, **U**dfordring=challenge and **S**und økonomi=Yield a profit. The initials says **SOFUS**.

(.....in English I still will call him **SOFUS**. **I**nterplay, **D**ecency, **F**oresight, **C**hallenge and **Y**ield a profit says **IDFCY**....we couldn't call him **IDFCY**?)

# The story about **SOFUS**

for Fiberline Composites A/S, Denmark

Hi! My name is SOFUS.

My name has five letters.

They are the initials (in Danish) of five keywords,  
that describes the values on which my company builds its business.

The first keyword is interplay.



**Sofus Interplay**

Here I am with open arms,  
 blue hair,  
 4 freckles,  
 large ears,  
 a big smile,  
 my very new overall trousers  
 and a red Shirt  
 inviting customers, colleges and cooperators  
 to play with me.  
 To work together with me.  
 Then it becomes more fun for me and more fun for you to go to work.

We will become more enthusiastic.

We will communicate better,  
 and what is most important,  
 we will be better troubleshooters concerning those problems,  
 that always will arise in an interplay.



**Sofus Decency**

Just for fun I have put on a halo.  
 I am not very holy.  
 I love beer and girls as everybody else.  
 But in a cooperation, I believe there must be some rules.  
 I keep what I promise.  
 If there are any changes in what we have agreed  
 we have to talk about it,  
 even if it can be difficult.

My intention is that whatever I have committed myself to,  
 will be achieved.

In this way I can assure myself and anybody else that my work will be done in the same way every time  
 achieving the highest possible standards.

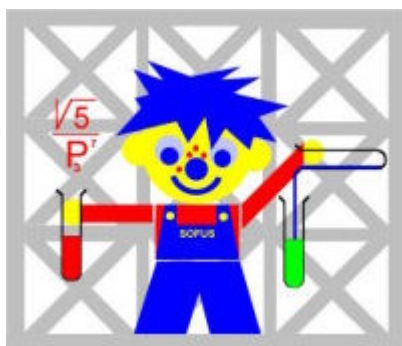


**Sofus Foresight**

It is hard to foretell, especially about the future. Said the Danish humorist Storm P.

However we are not supposed to foretell.  
 We have to find all the elements, all the facts  
 that can tell us what the future probably will be like.  
 We have to keep a sharp lookout all the time.  
 We have to make good educated guesses.  
 We have to find out our goals.  
 Then we know which way to point.

We always try to achieve our goals.  
 If there is something wrong about our goals, if they are not realistic,  
 we will have them adjusted.



**Sofus Challenge**

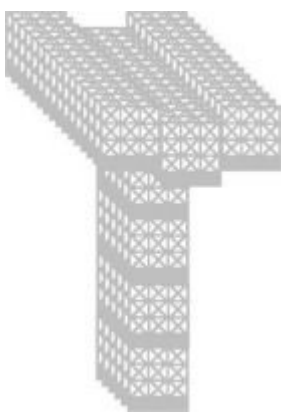
Recently I was in the city of all cities, Paris.  
 I was in the Louvre where I saw Mona Lisa, I was  
 in Montmartre,  
 here I saw Place du Tetre with all the exhibiting and working artists, and  
 I saw the huge white cathedral Sacré-Coeur.  
 And I saw everything else you have to see in Paris.  
 For instance the old Triumphal Arch and the new one.  
 I was at the top of them both. I had to use the stairs in the old Triumphal Arch,  
 but fortunately there was an escalator in the new Triumphal Arch.  
 The Danish architect Johan Otto von Spreckelsen has created a spectacular edifice.  
 Of course I was at the top of the Eiffel Tower, too.  
 But it is old.  
 It is rusty.  
 it is heavy, heavy, heavy  
 it must be hard to maintain.  
 When you are taking the escalator to the top it creaked and made disturbing sounds.  
 You almost believed that.....

I think Paris needs a new Eiffel Tower.  
 As I returned home I wrote to the Mayor of Paris:

*Marie de Paris Bertrand Delanoë  
 Hotel de Ville  
 5 rue de Lobau  
 75196 Paris RP*

I told about the new tower, it is 50 meters higher than the Eiffel Tower is today.  
 It is erected in the park Champ-de-Mar on Place Jaques Rueff between the river Seine and Ecole Militaire.  
 The new tower is constructed of light materials free of maintenance and of very strong materials.  
 Splendid idea, Bertrand Delanoë answered,  
 and asked for more details,  
 stressing that the architecture should be like that of Spreckelsens new Triumphal Arch.  
 Copying if possible some of the modernism and elegance of the new Arch in the Defence.

I went to my laboratory.  
 To invent the right material.  
 Concerning durability.  
 Concerning strength.  
 Concerning weight.  
 Etc.  
 And to find the right way to construct the new Eiffel Tower.  
 And finally to make tests.  
 As I had finished my work I showed the entire project to  
 Bertrand Delanoë.  
 He loved the project and he was enthusiastic about implementing it.  
 SOFUS had invented a brand new modular system of building blocks.  
 It was world news.



**The new Eiffel Tower built in Fibre Composites Materials  
- applying tomorrow's materials today**

Next time you are in Paris, you must visit Champ-de-Mar on Place Jaques Rueff.



**Yield a profit Sofus**

I have put on my office clothes and I have had my hair done.  
Now I am ready for talking about money.  
To keep a business going it is necessary to earn some money.  
Then we can still strengthen our knowledge and become less sensitive towards declining markets.  
Our customers must be as satisfied as we are.  
We must price our products reasonably, and sell reasonably,  
so that we yield a profit.

## for Fiberline Composites A/S, Denmark

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**And SOFUS became a hit.  
New SOFUSes and new stories were created**



[The story about SOFUS \(in English\) - storytelling with pedagogical motifs.](#)  
[Historien om SOFUS \(in Danish\) - storytelling](#)  
[The story about different SOFUSes \(in English\) - storytelling.](#)  
[Historien om forskellige SOFUS'er \(in Danish\) - storytelling.](#)

**As a tribute to the employee's children we made a coloring book in English, Danish and Italian  
that your children can download and colorize**

[The story ..get rid og Angry-Sofus \(in English\) - the coloring book.](#)  
[The story .....bliv fri for Vrede-SOFUS \(på dansk\) - malebogen.](#)

[La storia LIBERATI DA SOFUS ARRABBIATO \(in italiano\) - il libro da Colorare.](#)

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**"CORPORATE VALUES"**



*By Michael Juul Jensen  
Extracts from an article in e-newsletter INSIDER (www.insider.mondo.dk),  
published by Mondo A/S.*

*Translated into English and edited by Asbjorn Lonvig.*

The good story is met with sympathy in a time, where the noise of messages is so extremely loud.  
In USA the corporate storytelling is the latest tool in stakeholder-relations, and in Denmark the attention to this tool is increasing.  
In storytelling the company has the opportunity to illustrate it's potential, a potential that is not shown in numbers and digits and fancy business visions.  
Storytelling is the opportunity to communicate the values and goals of a company.

The good story is easy to remember and you want to tell it to others.  
It is an efficient tool to communicate important messages to all around a company - customers, suppliers, cooperators, competitors, employees, the press, politicians and not least stock-holders and potential investors.

In storytelling you have the tool to describe not measurable values and the development potential of a company.  
Concerning publishing these stories the corporate web site and e-newsletter of course are evident. It's quick and relatively easy.  
But it can as well be done by traditional means in the traditional media.  
The point is to tell a story that makes it quite clear that this exact company is something special.

Corporate storytelling started - not surprisingly - in USA.  
Some years ago Scott Rosenberg, the managing editor of the famous American e-zine Salon.com, wrote in an article "Story Time":

**"a beginning wave of interest from the corporate world - which is beginning to see narrative and storytelling as additional powerful tools in the marketing arsenal. In a business environment where 'branding' has become a mantra of power, many companies are beginning to think of advertising as an opportunity to tell their corporate story to the world. And marketers are looking for ways to capture stories from customers about how they feel about a company's products and services. Storytelling isn't just for kids any more - it's for CEOs, too."**

PricewaterhouseCoopers is one of the companies that soon found out the impact of a good story on a more efficient branding. One of the partners, Bill Dauphinais, have said to "Fast Company":

**"Brands are built around stories. And stories of identity - who we are, where we've come from - are the most effective stories of all. This is a powerful way to bring them to life."**

Coca Cola has established a storytelling center i Las Vegas.  
In "The World of Coca-Cola" the company percents an entire adventure world in text, sound and pictures based on the Coca-Cola-brand.  
Director Channel Deborah MacCarthy, Coca-Cola's College, says that there is a thoroughly prepared branding strategy behind this untraditionally initiative:

**"We wanted to bring the brand to life, to tell the stories of Coca-Cola, and to express Coca-Cola's core values: fun, refreshment, and specialness in people's lives."**

The director of IBM's Institute of Knowledge Management, David Snowden says about IBM's increased attention on the possibilities in storytelling:

**"Organizations are beginning to understand that storytelling is not an optional extra. Stories are something that already exist as an integral part of defining what that organization is, what it means to buy from it, what it means to work for it. These are the early days in understanding the use of stories in modern business. The results, however, are sufficiently good that we now know that there are major benefits to be achieved from the use of stories and from the development of storytelling skills."**

In the book "The Springboard: How Storytelling Ignites Action in Knowledge Era Organizations", Stephen Denning writes about how he - back in 1996 - discovered the power of storytelling in motivating an entire organization to understand visions and bring visions into effect.  
In his work as director of Knowledge Management in The World Bank, Stephen Denning had for several years needed a better tool in promoting new initiatives than numbers, reports, graphs etc.  
At a meeting with the management he had the job to promote a new information system.

For the first time he used storytelling.  
Here is the story Stephen Denning:

"There was a health care worker in Kamana, Zambia, who in 1995 was searching for a method to treat malaria. The worker logged on to the Web site of the Centers for Disease Control and within minutes found his answer. This story happened, not in June 2015, but in June 1995. This is not a rich country, it is Zambia, one of the least developed countries in the world. It is not even the capital of the country; it is six hundred kilometers away. But the most striking aspect of the picture is this: Our organization isn't in it. Our organization doesn't have its know-how and expertise organized in such a way that someone like the health worker in Zambia can have access to it. But just imagine if it had! We could get ourselves organized so that professionals have access to the resources needed. Just in time and just enough."

According to Stephen Denning this very simple story had an astonishing response from the management. The importance of having all information in one place only, accessible to everybody even in the remotest corners was suddenly very clear to the management. The following year a 'organization wide knowledge sharing program' was implemented. The experience was the point of departure of an intensive interest in storytelling, and in 2000 Stephen Denning published the book *The Springboard* on this subject.  
Stephen Denning writes:

"The attractions of narrative are obvious. Storytelling is natural and easy and entertaining and energizing. Stories help us understand complexity. Stories can enhance or change perceptions. Stories are easy to remember. Stories are inherently non adversarial and non-hierarchical. They bypass normal defense mechanisms and engage our feelings."

Stephen Denning writes first and foremost about "springboard stories", which have the purpose to engage people in organizational changes. But storytelling can have numerous effects inside the company - not least in relation to strengthening employees engagement in the company.

At the same time Stephen Denning points out the importance of that management listens to the employees' stories. These stories are very sensitive tools for measuring good and bad vibrations and the degree of enthusiasm - or lack of enthusiasm - concerning visions and the management's decisions.

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