

Storytelling Unleashed - leveraging the platform economy in a direct world

IAB Canada



Chris Stefanyk

Head of Brand Partnerships

September 17, 2019

A surreal, painterly illustration. The background is a vibrant, swirling sky in shades of orange, red, and yellow, with thick, expressive brushstrokes. Numerous small, colorful balloons (blue, yellow, pink, purple) are scattered throughout the sky, some appearing to float and others to be part of a larger cluster. In the lower center, a small, dark silhouette of a person stands on a flat, dark ground, holding a large bunch of colorful balloons that float upwards. The overall mood is dreamlike and celebratory.

Wattpad. Where brand stories live.

Today:

1. The Wattpad story / What is Wattpad
2. The disruption of entertainment and publishing
3. Direct-to-consumer model is a new way for creators be be discovered
4. Gen Z content trends

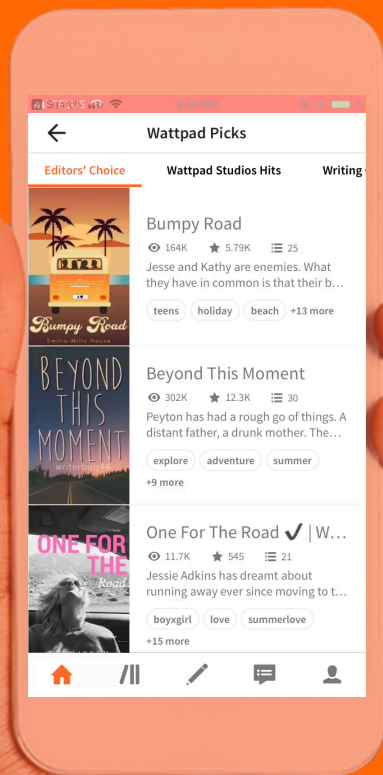
The Wattpad Story











Wattpad is **THE**
social network for
stories.



Video



Audio



Images



News



Blog



Stories

We are now one
of the fastest
growing and
most engaging
social platforms
in the world

+100,000

new signups per day

Primarily **Gen Z** audience

+665 million

unique story uploads

+50 languages

23 billion minutes
spent on Wattpad per
month


+80 million

monthly global audience

A content-driven social
experience.

An inclusive and
positive community
filled with diverse
users.



A photograph of a diverse group of young people, primarily Black and Hispanic, looking at a smartphone together. In the foreground, a Black man with short curly hair and orange headphones is smiling. Next to him, a Hispanic woman wearing a black hat and a red and black plaid scarf is also smiling. In the background, two other young people, a woman in a pink headscarf and a man in a red cap, are looking at the phone. The background is slightly blurred, showing a green fence and some foliage. An orange diagonal banner is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

"I got frustrated when I was going to bookstores, seeing the same types of people doing the same things. My reality is surrounded by black people and minorities, we don't get the same type of literature" – *Wattpad Survey – LGBTQ+, African American Urban Fiction Readers, US Spanish readers.*



Disrupting
traditional paths
to entertainment
and publishing

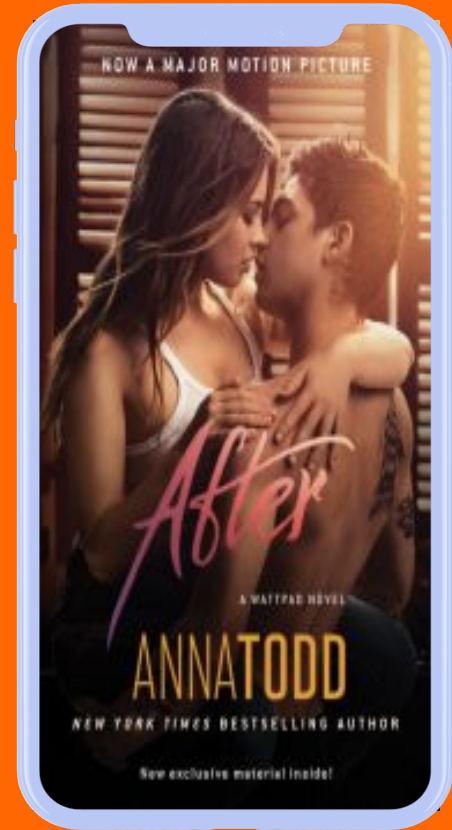


Meet Anna.
She joined Wattpad to read
stories.

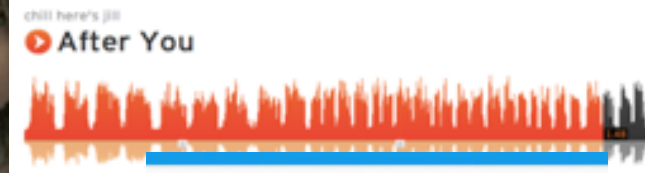


Today she is the writer of a 3 part series completed on Wattpad.

With over 1.6 BILLION reads



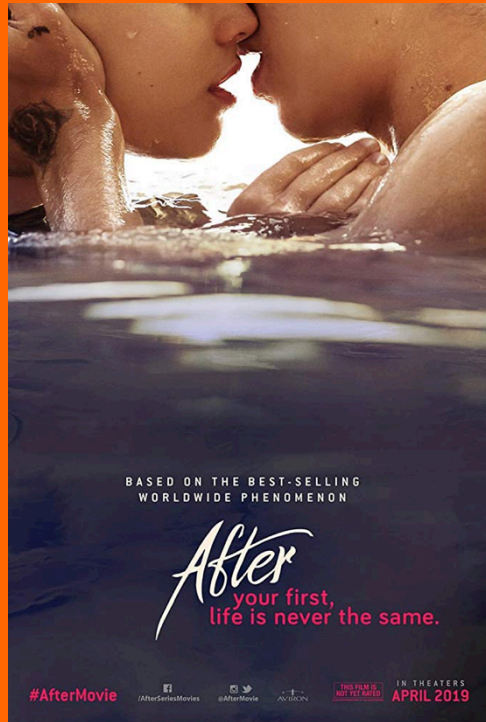
I
DONT
KEEP
CALM
WHEN
ANNA
DOESN'T
UPDATE



After became a VIRAL hit!



Simon & Shuster picked up the publishing rights. It became a NYT bestseller.



And then made it to the big screen!

How did we know After was going to be a success?

The data told us it would be.

Once upon a time in 2013, an engineer noticed **5% of our audience** was reading After.



The After movie teaser trailer
was posted on Nov. 26th 2018

5 minutes later....

...It was trending worldwide!

Worldwide trends · [Change](#)

#OT18Gala9

331K Tweets

Miki

84K Tweets

Marta

86.4K Tweets

Sabela

20.9K Tweets

Duke

115K Tweets

#OTChat 

23.1K Tweets

#AfterMovie

Anna Todd, Wattpad, and 2 more are Tweeting about this

Fast-forward to February 2019...

'After' was the top trailer the week following the launch!

TOP 10 MOST POPULAR FILMS OF THE WEEK

ranked by Social Engagement and Interest Scores for the week of Feb 18 - 24, 2019

TOP 10 FILMS: SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT SCORE

RANK	FILM	STUDIO	SCORE	% CHANGE WoW
1	After	Aviron Pictures	929,742	-33%
2	Captain Marvel	Disney	706,783	69%
3	How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World	Universal Pictures	584,515	58%
4	Five Feet Apart	CBS Films	541,369	7%
5	Alita: Battle Angel	20th Century Fox	439,540	21%
6	Tyler Perry's A Madea Family Funeral	Lionsgate / Summit	326,982	275%
7	Rocketman	Paramount	246,490	>10,000%
8	The Secret Life of Pets 2	Universal Pictures	200,982	1,726%
9	Fighting With My Family	MGM	178,565	215%
10	Detective Pikachu	Warner Bros.	125,778	-24%

Opening weekend...









verizon 2:39 PM


< **DEADLINE**

HOME / BOX OFFICE / BREAKING NEWS

'Shazam!' Grows To \$164M Overseas; 'After' Has Intense Offshore Awakening – International Box Office




By Nancy Tartaglione 
April 14, 2019 1:01pm



Aviron

UPDATE, writethru: A varied offering of holdover titles and a handful of new entries in staggered

 **luciane** 
@ludamiami

[Follow](#)

I AM LEAVING TO WATCH AFTER! 5th time baby @annatodd @wattpad #MyAfterTicket



8:54 PM - 13 Apr 2019

After: One of the most
talked-about movies
of 2019!

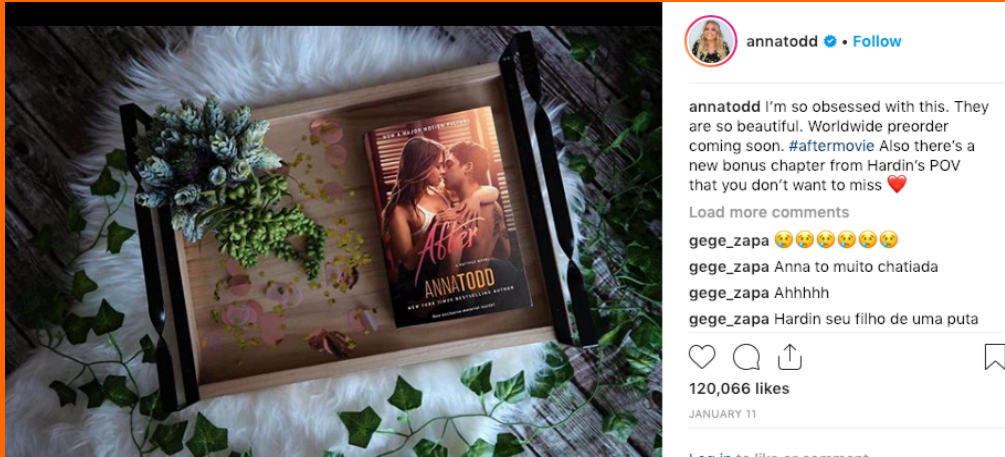
#1 movie in
multiple countries

#1 indie movie of
the year

\$70 million+ in the
global box office



Today, Anna Todd is a modern day influencer



Her secret sauce?
Engagement with her
audience and truly caring
about her fans

The background is a vibrant orange color. It features several abstract, geometric shapes in shades of blue and white. In the bottom left corner, there is a stylized illustration of a person with dark hair, wearing a blue shirt, looking towards the right. In the top left corner, there is a stylized illustration of a person's face in profile. In the top right corner, there is a stylized illustration of a person's torso and arms. The overall design is modern and artistic.

The direct-to-consumer
model is a new way for
storytellers to be
discovered

The background is a vibrant orange color. It features several abstract, geometric shapes in shades of blue and white. In the bottom left corner, there is a stylized, dark blue silhouette of a person with short hair, wearing a dark shirt, looking towards the right. The overall design is modern and minimalist.

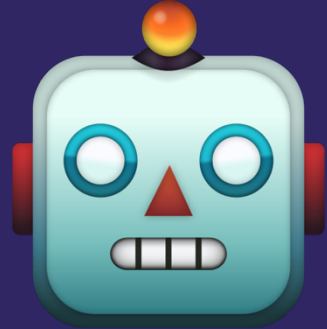
Let's talk a bit more about
data

What is machine learning in the context of storytelling?

Machine Learning uses algorithms to find patterns in data, and then makes predictions based on those patterns.

Our Story DNA technology looks for patterns in stories.

Featured Wattpad Stories



(Training Data)

Use case: 2018 Watty Awards



Wattpad's Version of the Oscars
4% Identified (~6k) of over 150k EN

Story DNA Machine Learning
technology helped our judges
go from 150,000 to 6,000
entries.

Social Cues

Sharing, Adds to Library,
Commenting



Prior to StoryDNA
We Found Stories
Through Trend Data

Readership

Fast Growth, Time Spent,
Upward Trend
Demographics

Story Quality

Writing Style, Grammar,
Sentence Structure

Social Cues

Sharing, Adds to Library,
Commenting

Now with
StoryDNA
we can identify great
stories before they
collect significant
readership

Readership

Fast Growth, Time Spent,
Upward Trend

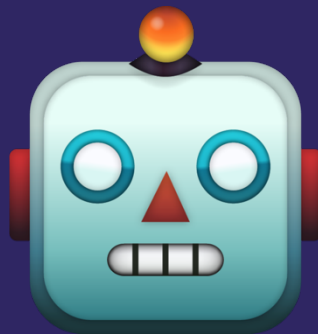
Story Sentiment

Emotion in a Story,
Overall Reader Sentiment
in Comments

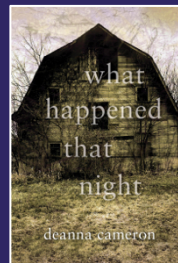
Using machine learning to discover high calibre content

What were we looking for?

Diverse voices
Captivating stories
Highly-engaged reader community
Underrepresented genres



Our Fall 2019 Wattpad Books List



Machine learning is only as good as the data set it starts with, and we are starting with the most diverse set of stories ever found in one location.

Our data reflects our community, which is highly Gen Z female and includes minority and marginalized voices from around the world.

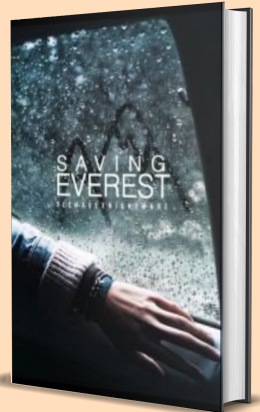
Access to data &
community gives us
unparalleled insight,
allowing us to best
understand content
trends resonating
with Gen Z



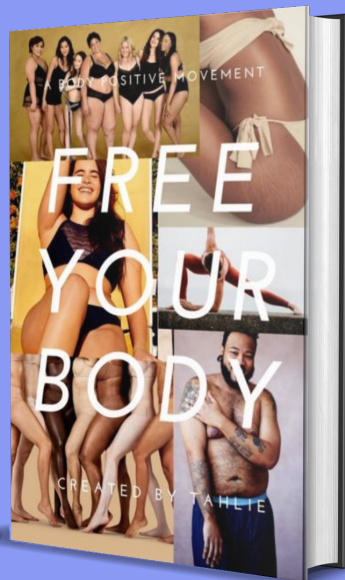
Stories that stigmatize mental illness

Mental health is the greatest social issue facing Gen Z.

#Depression, #Anxiety, #MentalHealth, and **#FreeMentalIllness** averaged **47.8 million** minutes every month over the last 6 months.



The rise of characters of diverse shapes and sizes



122 million
minutes

spent reading stories
tagged **#FreeYourBody**,
#BodyImage, **#PlusSize**,
#Curvy, **#BodyPositivity**,
#Insecure over the last
180 days

Romance for everyone

Readers spent on average **2.6 million** minutes reading stories tagged **#MuslimRomance**, **#MuslimLoveStory** and **#IslamicLoveStory** each month over the last 6 months.



51%

increase over the
previous year



New literary voices are breaking ground in genderfluid and transgender narratives

49%

of Gen Z identify with a sexuality other than straight

1.29 billion

minutes spent reading LGBTQ+ stories last month

56%

increase in stories tagged **#Transgender**, **#Agender**, **#GenderFluid** and **#Nonbinary** last year



Global warming interwoven into story genres

376%

increase in reading time on
stories tagged **#GlobalWarming**





Storytelling can
drive social
impact and
brands can be
part of this
positive
movement



National Geographic raised awareness of the plastic crisis through the first-ever global writing contest



The program drove real change
in behaviour.

Over **75,000** pledges.

Reduction of single use plastic
by **90M!**



Key Takeaways

1

Gen Z loves to read!

3

The next generation storyteller is creating with their audience

2

Data-driven platforms are creating new direct-to-consumer models

4

Understand what your audience cares about (Gen Z cares about purpose)

Entertaining and connecting the world through stories

Chris Stefanyk

Head of Brand Partnerships

 @ChrisStefanyk

 chris@wattpad.com

wattpad 