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StoryLabs Launched to Create and Educate the Next Generation of Storytellers

Global transmedia experts join to launch story innovation lab in four countries

Sydney, Toronto, Los Angeles, London- August 26, 2010. Support for the evolution of storytelling enabled by new technologies took a giant leap today with the founding of StoryLabs, an organisation of leading international multi-platform and transmedia creators dedicated to the education and mentoring of storytellers. Powered by a unique worldwide mentor network, participants will benefit from the rich knowledge and experience of renowned professional experts including innovative digital producers, games creators, TV and Film writer/producers, social media and community experts and transmedia content creators.

“Technology has created both new tools and new ways to reach connected audiences. Mastering these new storytelling tools in the changing media landscape is the mission of StoryLabs,” said Gary Hayes former BBC Senior Development Producer, CCO MUVEDesign and Australian StoryLabs Founder. “StoryLabs experts are the actual pioneers and commercial leaders in their fields pushing the frontiers of storytelling across many different platforms. StoryLabs is dedicated to the evolution of storytelling through its incubator labs and a persistent mentor community”

Storytelling 2.0 and Specialised Development Tracks

StoryLabs deep focused project mentoring cycle will go from incubation to production and distribution providing an education in the writing and design process and best production practices. Development tracks include: Ad Lab focused on cross media advertising, Mobile Media Lab, Community Lab focused on Social Media Story, Games Lab, Innovation Lab focused on story around new services & product and Transmedia Lab focused on the development of new forms of storytelling.

“The elements of a good story that engage an audience such as story arc, compelling characters and good production values don’t change in a transmedia world,” said Matt Costello, US StoryLabs founder and writer of *The 7th Guest*, *Doom 3* and the 2010 E3 award winning *Rage*. “But, we are seeing new forms of storytelling that for the audience are part rich narrative, part play and game as they become co-creators and ‘users of story’. We are here to enable that kind of innovation. “

StoryLabs mentors, who have had extensive experience in other lab environments, will provide a hands-on opportunity for brands and media properties to advance new story formats and to shape a fully integrated story based transmedia solution.

“Towards the end of the 90s there was a real energy around interactive storytelling which has slowly evolved into today’s buzzword, transmedia” said Neil Richards, UK StoryLabs Founder and Director of The Mustard Corporation. “We intend to go beyond the hype and at the heart of StoryLabs is a belief that

whatever the platform or purpose, however participatory or shared - there are universal qualities of good story-telling.”

StoryLabs Network and Engagement Futures

StoryLabs is also hosting an evolving mentor and participant online network that will allow experienced incubator labs mentors and participants to continue to engage in the creation of new form storytelling. There are twenty four renowned global story and experience creators listed on the StoryLabs site, four from Canada, nine from Australia and seven from the US and UK.

“Entertainment shouldn't be restricted by national boundaries.”, said Tony Walsh, Canadian Founder and CEO of Toronto-based Phantom Compass: “StoryLabs recognizes that great stories are universal. Our network connects top international mentors to creative personnel, propelling emerging projects towards global markets and audiences.”

The StoryLabs network invites TV/Film writers, games storytellers, advertising writers and others who want to evolve their projects to initially provide expressions of interest at StoryLabs.us/submit and begin a conversation about changing the face of storytelling.

“I am seeing a tremendous shift in the foundations of the film and TV industry as storytelling becomes dramatically more experiential”, said Brian Seth Hurst, CEO of cross media strategy firm The Opportunity Management Company who is currently at work with transmedia pioneer Tim King on the *Conspiracy For Good*. “Working with some the top TV and Film creators I am deeply aware of their desire to understand and develop new ways of reaching and including the audience and building vibrant communities. In the early days of TV new production processes were developed that became standard, I see the StoryLabs serving that function relative to new forms of storytelling. I am truly honoured and excited to be part of this initiative and I know participants will greatly benefit from the polled expertise.”

StoryLabs are planning incubator labs for the first quarter of 2011 and Screen Australia are already onboard as a first sponsor. Other agencies & funding bodies who want to bring the StoryLabs process and incubators to Canada, UK, US or Australia can become a regional partner or sponsor in the first instance by contacting info@storylabs.com.au

For more information, press only:

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For more information on StoryLabs:

More info, images and video links - <http://storylabs.us/press>

Current list of mentors - <http://storylabs.us/mentors/>

To submit expression of interest & project overviews - <http://storylabs.us/submit/>