THE FUTURE OF STORYTELLING°

PHASE 2 OF 2

THE FUTURE OF STORYTELLING: PHASE 2 is one installment of Latitude 42s, an ongoing series of innovation studies which Latitude, an international research consultancy, publishes in the spirit of knowledge-sharing and opportunity discovery for both established companies and emerging entrepreneurs.

Latitude°

Summer 2013

42°

MEDIA & CONTENT

HIGHLIGHTS°

For Content Creators

- **Level up on the character-audience relationship**
  Audiences want to get deeper inside the minds of characters; they want to see things from their perspectives and, in some cases, develop personal relationships with them. Would chatting with a character on Facebook really be so different from chatting with a real friend there?

- **Push the limits of how, when, and where stories are told**
  As characters become more "3-D," why shouldn't they live full, 24/7 lives? People are intrigued by the idea of real-time story-worlds where events keep unfolding whether or not we happen to be tuning in.

For Brands and Marketers

- **Embrace new narrative techniques, once and for all**
  Audiences agree that there's a big opportunity to make ads feel more like content people would naturally choose to engage with—by providing back-story about a brand or product, visually immersive experiences, game elements, and so on.

- **Think of the real world as another platform**
  These days, many of us carry around smartphones that not only work synchronously with other devices, but are capable of interfacing with real objects and places. Maybe the definition of "cross-platform" needs a makeover? (Retailers, this especially means you.)

For All Storytellers

- **Heed the second (and third) screens: here's how**
  When it comes to secondary devices, some might think it's all been done before. (We beg to differ.) Top opportunities include interacting with characters, earning rewards, accessing bonus content, and more.

- **Recognize many audiences and many ways to engage**
  While it's easy to generalize about "what audiences want," people desire vastly different things from stories—such as very passive vs. highly interactive experiences.

BREAKING NEWS

Under Ender's Command, Dragon Army Wins Two Battles, Two Days

SPORTS

Jour
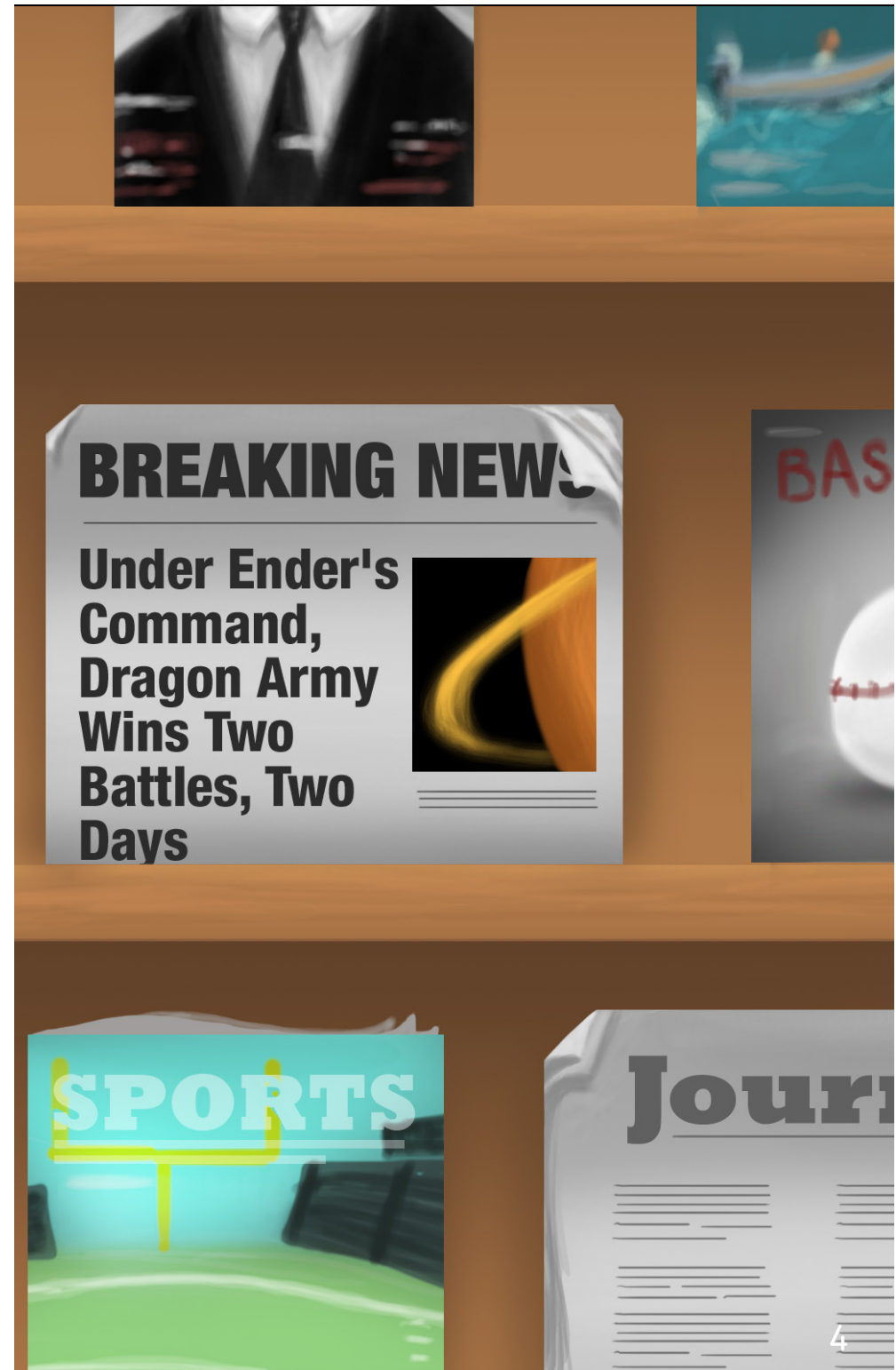
WHO IS THE NEW AUDIENCE?
WHAT DO THEY WANT?

Based on a segmentation analysis of people's motivations for engaging with stories and their interest in various second screen experiences, we uncovered four audience archetypes: Seekers, Relaters, Realists, and Players. The graphic below maps the archetypes to Latitude's *4 I's of Storytelling*. (Darker shades of red indicate greater interest in each "I.") To explore audience data interactively or to discover your own archetype, visit futureofstorytellingproject.com.

IMPACT
The story affects my actual life, by inspiring me to discover more, make a purchase, better myself, or take action in some way.

INTEGRATION
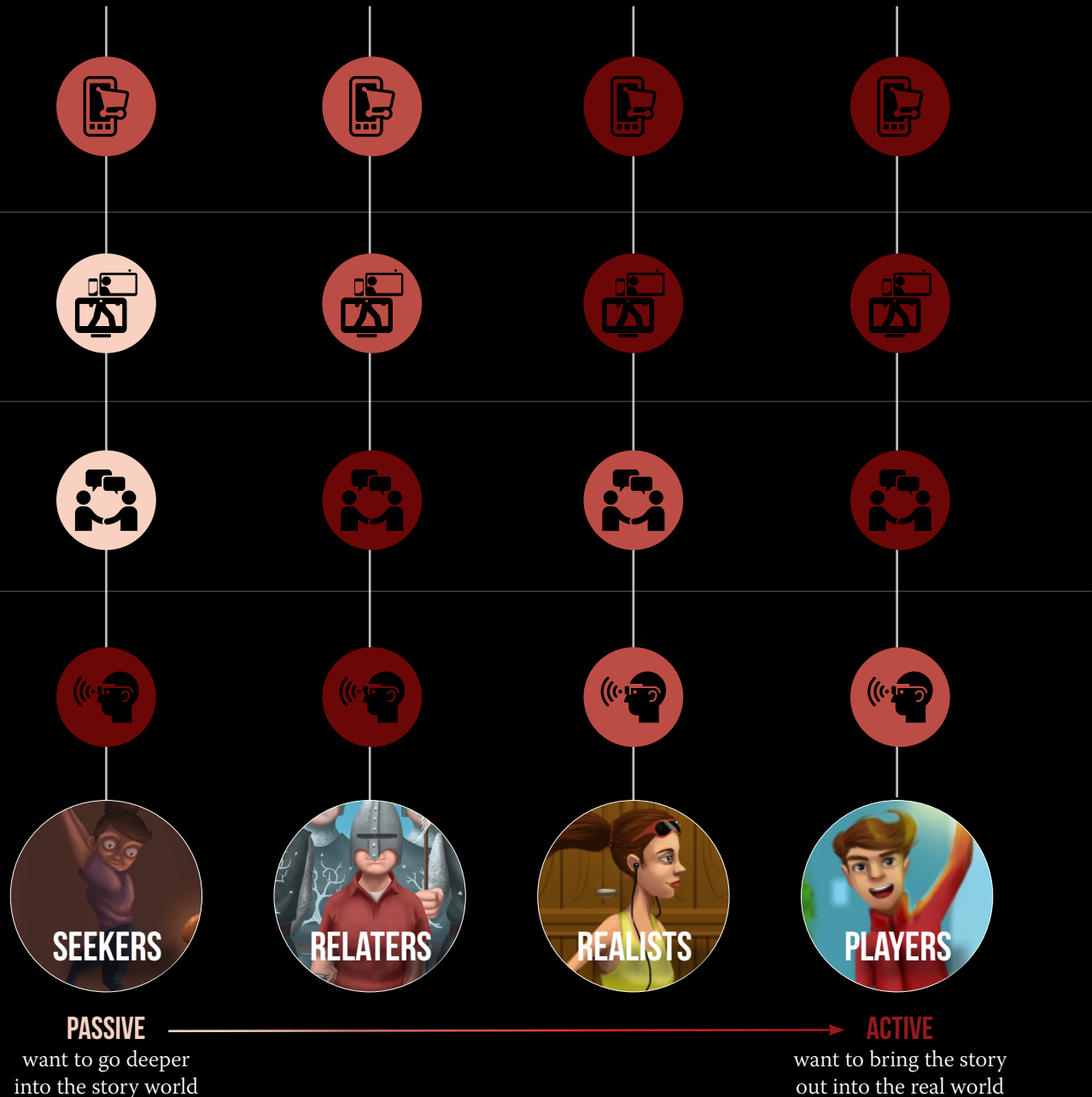The story plays out across platforms, or can interface with the real world.

INTERACTIVITY
I can interact with characters, the storyline, or other fans.

IMMERSION
I can go "deeper into" the story, by learning more about it or through heightened sensory experiences.

The *4 I's of Storytelling* (above) is a framework Latitude created by analyzing themes present in the future storytelling concepts generated by Phase 1 participants. It represents not only a desire to delve deeper into stories, but also to bring stories out of the screen—both literally and figuratively—to mingle with our actual lives.

SEEKERS   **RELATERS**   **REALISTS**   **PLAYERS**

PASSIVE ⟶ **ACTIVE**

want to go deeper into the story world

want to bring the story out into the real world

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SEEKERS

This group is all about going deeper into the story, exploring different worlds, and learning new things—making them voracious information seekers. **They want more back-story, more bonus content, more sneak peeks—more, more, more.** And they want it without distraction; Seekers are least likely to use a second screen (for any reason — including looking up related content, emailing, shopping, texting, etc.) simultaneously while engaging with a story, but they do express interest in checking out related content at other times.

Profile
- **Gender:** skews female
- **Age:** more 35-59 year-olds
- **Genres:** drama, mystery & crime
- **Second screens:** computer, tablet
- **Values:** escape via mention stimulation, focus, depth of experience
- **I's:** immersion

Top Future Requests
- Look up back-story about the characters, setting, or plot
- Explore or interact with the story's setting (e.g., explore a room or landscape, examine objects, etc.)
- Access more "sneak peeks" from episodes or sequels

What Brands Should Know
- Generally value learning and opportunities to go "deeper into" content
- More likely than other archetypes to pay attention to ads
- Appreciate humor and creativity in ads, as well ads featuring deals
- Rely strongly on friend recommendations & quality of a brand's reputation
- Often recommend products & services to friends, but place much less emphasis on social media relative to more traditional word-of-mouth methods
- Typically discover new content via TV commercials/promos & friends

RELATERS

An intensely extroverted coterie when it comes to content, Relaters want to discuss and share their favorite narratives with friends and family, in-person and online. Naturally, social media plays a key role for this group both in discovering and staying committed to content. **Relaters aren't just looking to bond with other people, though; they enjoy forming deep, emotional connections with characters**, especially when these connections uplift or inspire them.

Profile
- **Gender:** roughly equal split between men & women
- **Age:** typically under 35, including many teenagers
- **Genres:** comedy, drama, reality
- **Second screen:** smartphone
- **Values:** sharing, optimism, relating
- **I's:** interactivity (with others & the story), impact

Top Future Requests
- Interact with characters in a way that's not pre-scripted
- See things from a particular character's perspective, or switch between different characters' perspectives
- See, hear, or touch the story-world (e.g., have an immersive sensory experience via virtual reality, 3D effects, etc.)

What Brands Should Know
- Generally value engaging with characters and socializing (especially via social media)
- Prefer relatable brands; they feel that what they buy plays a role in defining who they are
- Enjoy humorous ads, as well as game-like and visually immersive ones
- Rely strongly on friend recommendations via social media and frequently recommend to others this way
- Typically discover new content via TV commercials/promos & friends

REALISTS

The idea of integrating narratives into the real, physical world intrigues this down-to-earth crowd, especially if it leads to tangible or meaningful outcomes such as making a purchase, learning something new, or influencing how a story ends (e.g., by voting). **Realists want stories that lead to personal growth, productivity, and all-around better living.** With feet firmly planted in the real world, they are more likely than other archetypes to gravitate towards non-fiction narratives.

Profile

- **Gender:** roughly equal split between men & women
- **Age:** more 35-59 year-olds
- **Genres:** documentaries, news, travel, advertising
- **Second screen:** computer
- **Values:** practicality, real-world relevance, self-improvement
- **I's:** interactivity (with the story), integration, impact

Top Future Requests

- Bring narratives out of the screen, into the real world, by involving actual places, people, or objects
- Discover new products or services through stories
- Learn more about the way characters live (or lived) & any larger historical or societal happenings surrounding the story

What Brands Should Know

- Generally goal-oriented (e.g., enjoy voting & contests, self-betterment, etc.)
- Feel TV is the anchor for social interactions & experiences on other devices; desire differentiated experiences across platforms
- Actively recommend brands via social media & other word-of-mouth
- Open to innovative advertising; many approaches work well
- Prefer ads that invite interest & don't try to persuade (e.g., branded content)
- Typically discover new content via official TV network sites & online ads

PLAYERS

These super-engagers are into just about everything—from following their favorite characters' Twitter accounts to becoming characters themselves. **They crave interactivity, gravitating towards narratives with game elements and a spirit of adventure or competition.** But why stop there? Players also want to take part in creating stories, such as by submitting ideas to writers or producers or authoring their own narratives. They're avid multi-screeners and mobile devotees (particularly attached to their smartphones and most likely to own tablets)—which may explain why they're extra enthusiastic about possibilities for integrating stories with the real, physical world.

Profile

- **Gender:** skews slightly male
- **Age:** more 18-34 year-olds
- **Genres:** diverse tastes including sports, comedy, horror, advertising
- **Second screens:** smartphone & tablet
- **Values:** enjoyment, agency, collaboration & competition, personal success
- **I's:** immersion, interactivity (with others & the story), integration, impact

Top Future Requests

- Compete with other fans in a game scenario, or collaborate with them to actually write or produce a story
- Become a character
- Have real-world actions affect events within a story

What Brands Should Know

- Desirable audience (e.g., tech-y, highly social, etc.) but can be hard to engage
- Least "TV-centric" archetype; high level of comfort with other devices
- Value brands with a high "cool factor"; interested in real world integrations
- Prefer non-traditional ads (e.g., branded content, ability to help shape the story, contests, game elements, immersive visuals, social media tie-ins, etc.)
- Typically discover new content via social media & online forums

"**I want technology to help me make sense of complex stories by providing family trees, characters maps, and biographies**. My dream is that, when I encounter a character I don't remember well, I won't have to flip back hundreds of pages scanning for where they've appeared previously. Instead, **I click on his or her name, and get a summary of everything I should know at this stage of the story, with no risk of spoilers.**" —Male, 28, London, UK
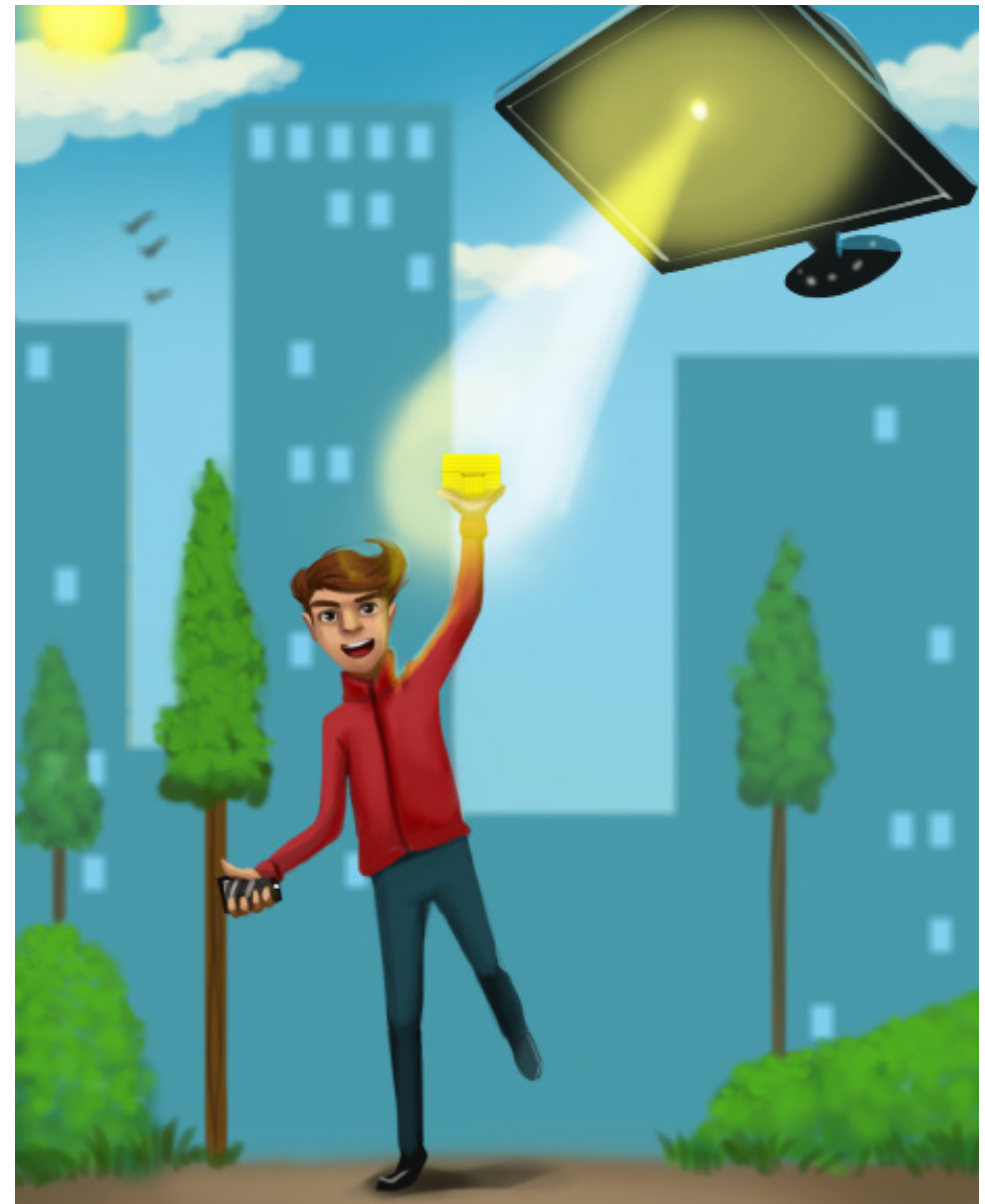
"It would be really interesting if a **TV show pitting two warring groups against one another could have battles and, ultimately, the outcome of the galaxy could be influenced by viewers**—be it through games, real-life 'quests,' knowledge-based contests, and so on. I think sci-fi is a good fit for this because reality is very arbitrary there, and the rules can bend to accommodate interesting and compelling cross-media integrations." —Male, 28, Cambridge, MA, USA