

# OPPORTUNITY LAUNCH

## STORYTELLING 101

# WHAT MAKES A GOOD NEWS STORY?

Timing

Significance

Proximity

Prominence

Human Interest

# THE BEST STORIES...

**ARE ABOUT PEOPLE:** Audiences relate to (and remember) stories about individuals more than those about programs, concepts/ideas and organizations. Stories with emotional hooks are more compelling than those driven strictly by data. Put a face and story to a problem to help audiences relate to a situation.

**HAVE GREAT “LEDES”:** A “lede” sentence (or intro to a visual piece) presents the most important message, sets up the story and compels your audience to continue reading/viewing.

**PROVIDE CONTEXT:** It’s important to provide your audience with clear and concise context. In order to maintain their attention through your story, people need basic information to understand what’s at stake. Remember: WHO, WHAT, WHEN, HOW, WHEN? But, don’t overwhelm your audiences with too much background information.

# THE BEST STORIES...

**PROVIDE A TAKE AWAY:** As a storyteller, you need to be able to answer the following questions about your story: What is the point of your story? Why is it important to be told? What lesson is to be learned? Is it a cautionary tale? What do you want people to do with this new information? Is it a story of inspiration? You can summarize your main point at the end of your story to ensure the viewer understands the takeaway.

**SHOW DON'T TELL:** Challenge yourself to show the story, rather than tell. Find visuals that demonstrate the idea and help paint a clear picture for viewers. For writing, use visual language to describe details of smells, tastes, sounds and sights to help set the scene.

**ARE CLUTTER FREE AND ORGANIZED:** Provide enough details and context that support the story, but keep it focused and easy to read/watch. Keep the information flowing in order of relevance to the reader/viewer.

# THE PROCESS

DECIDE ON YOUR STORY/TOPIC/THEME  
RESEARCH THE SUBJECT  
FIND THE KEY PEOPLE  
INTERVIEW YOUR SUBJECTS  
OBSERVE SURROUNDINGS AND DETAILS  
FIND VISUALS FOR YOUR STORY  
CHOOSE SIGNIFICANT QUOTES/MOMENTS  
CHECK SOURCES, RESEARCH & SUPPORTING DATA  
CRAFT YOUR LEDE (WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW)  
CRAFT THE NARRATIVE FLOW  
WRITE & EDIT YOUR STORY  
PUBLISH YOUR STORY

# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## 1.) PREPARATION:

Before you go out and shoot think about a few things.

What do I want to shoot? How is it useful to telling our story? How many shots do I need to get? How much time to do I have to shoot this?

Make a shot list and list of interview questions/themes.

Make sure your batteries are charged before you head out.

# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## 2.) FRAMING:

Choose how you want to frame your subject (close, medium, wide).

Framing close creates a very personal shot for your audience.

Wider shots provide context of surroundings, but can be distracting.

When interviewing a person don't put them in the dead center of the frame.

Follow the rule of thirds—a little to the right or left of center, with them looking across the frame.



# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## **STAY STEADY:**

Always use a tripod during interviews. This will help you keep a steady shot so that the camera doesn't move when you move and you can pay attention to your subject.

Hold each shot of broll for at least 5 seconds (ideally 10 seconds)

Don't scan a crowd or a situation with the camera. Decide on a shot you'd like to record, get into steady position, and hit record. Allow subjects and action to move in and out of your frame, rather than following action.

## **SHOOT SHORT CLIPS:**

Don't leave your camera running for long periods of time. Decide what you want to capture and hit record when you're ready. Turn off your camera in between shots

No interview should be longer than 20 minutes for a 2-5 minute video.



# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## CHANGE YOUR SHOT:

During an interview, change the shot between each question. You can get a close shot of just the face, a medium shot with the head and shoulders, and a wider shot with some of the background. This allows for easier editing and less jump cuts.



When capturing a place or action, shoot wide, establishing shots (the exterior of the car garage); medium shots (the garage's sign); and interesting details (tools inside the garage).

Always keep an eye out for interesting perspectives, angles or shadows.

When you are shooting a group of people or a crowd, get close on faces, groups of two or three

# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO



CAPTURE WIDE, MEDIUM AND CLOSE/DETAIL SHOTS.  
THEY ALL PROVIDE CONTEXT AND CHARACTER TO THE STORY.

# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## BACKGROUND:

Pay attention to the background in your shots. Make sure it's not too busy or distracting (ie, a pole coming out the person's heads, or lots of activity behind them).

Does the background tell us something about the person we're interviewing? If you're interviewing a doctor maybe there's a stethoscope in the background, or a chalkboard behind a teacher.

It's best to have the light (from a window) behind or beside the camera. You can use natural light to brighten the subject but it's not a good idea to shoot into the light.

## SOUND:

Shoot interviews in a relatively quiet space. On-board camera mics pick up all sound equally—so if there is background noise it will overshadow the person you're interviewing.

Always wear your headphones while shooting so you are aware of all background noise. Use your body to block wind.

# 8 TIPS FOR SHOOTING VIDEO

## TAKE GREAT NOTES:

Write down what you shot with time, dates, location and names of subjects in your log book.

If something particularly interesting happens that you want to emphasize take note of it.

Take down details of the scene to help describe the story through words, as well.

Check off your shot list to stay on track.

# PRESS RELEASES

1. Attention-grabbing headlines and sub-headlines need to hit the most newsworthy items
2. The first paragraphs needs to be succinct and straight to the points
3. Include data and statistics to support your story
4. Proofread (again and again) for grammar and information
5. Include supporting quotes
6. Include contact information
7. Keep your press release under two pages, one page is ideal
8. Provide links and access to more information, quickly

# PRESS RELEASES

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Date/Timing**  
Release Date

**Title**

**Location**

**Paragraph 1/Intro**

**5 W's: Who, What, Where, Why, When**

**About/Bio**

**Contact Details**

6th January, 2009  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
33 TOP WEBSITE TIPS  
Sydney, Australia

ORBITAL's follow-up to their first single and short single 'CHIME' is released on FIVE records on 18th September.

Their name derives as much from the fact that they live on (well, we actually live) the M25 as from the orbital eye motif.

Brothers Phil and Paul Harrold are ORBITAL and have been experimenting on their 4 track tape machines at home for only about 12 months. The experiments were made to their first single 'CHIME' which really was almost purely chance in make as it was simply a note of the best time involved plus the rest of the tape itself.

After the success of 'CHIME' the boys went onto to buy better equipment, including their follow-up 'ORION' is of a higher technical quality, but the single was still made in their living room and then mastered at Tom George Studios in London.

Unlike many studio bands ORBITAL are quite active on the live scene, enjoying playing live so much that they often lose money through playing venues that are off the beaten track.

Phil and Paul are obsessive as being into a mix between a conventional band and a DJ - it isn't particularly interesting to watch but because they play their music in parties and clubs (rather than being made with a set program) it leaves a real sense of spontaneity with song structure, timing techniques and sound manipulation.

"We would prefer to be in the background playing, then release from the DJ moment and so people just love our music rather than expect an entertaining show" explained Phil, who with his brother Paul is currently experimenting with other visual mediums such as film and light that are complementary to their music.

ORBITAL are keeping a low profile just now as to give their time to work on the tapes and on their forthcoming album album.

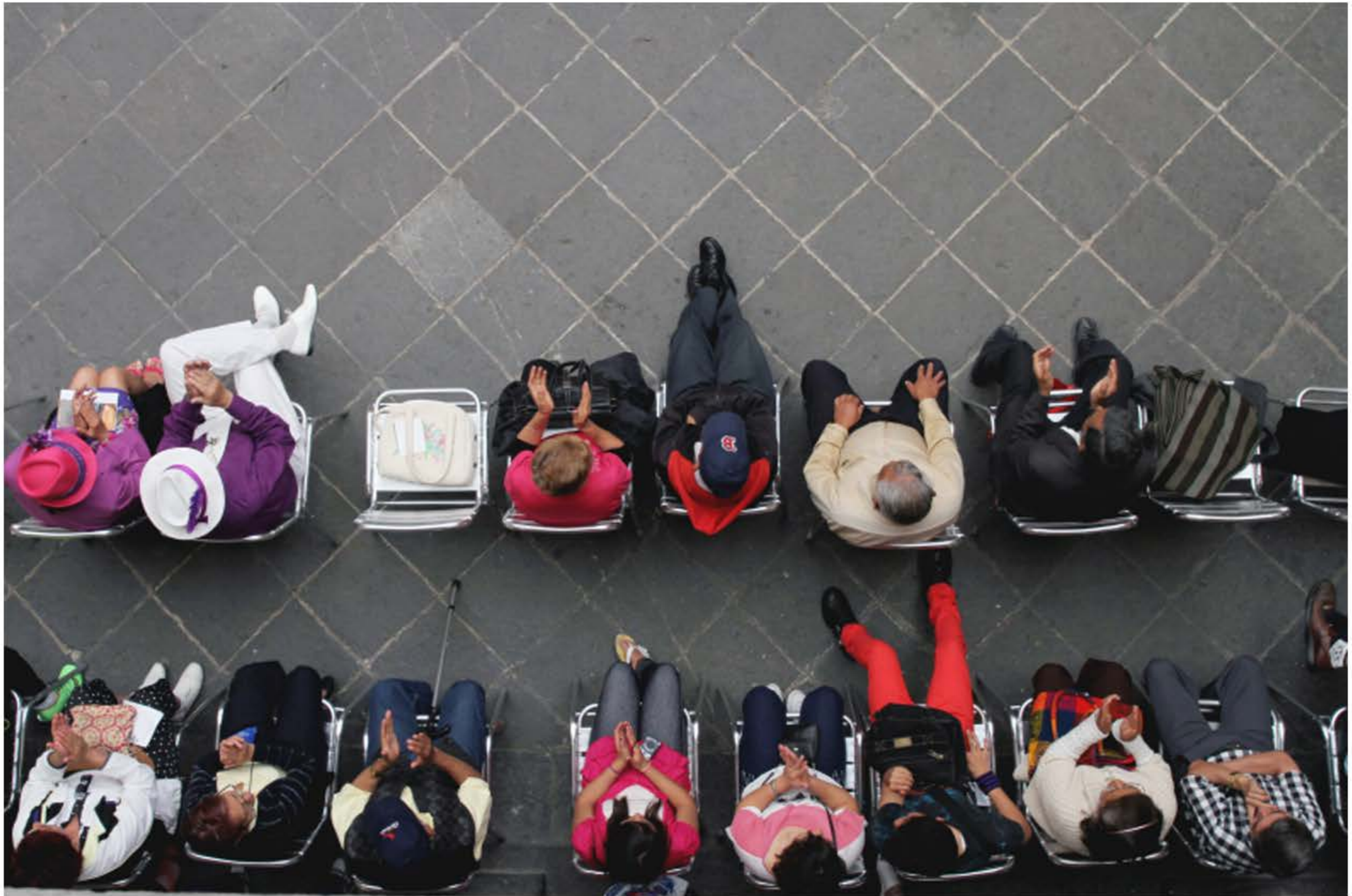
ORBITAL: Anal & Visual experiments

# PHOTO TIPS



look for golden-hour opportunities

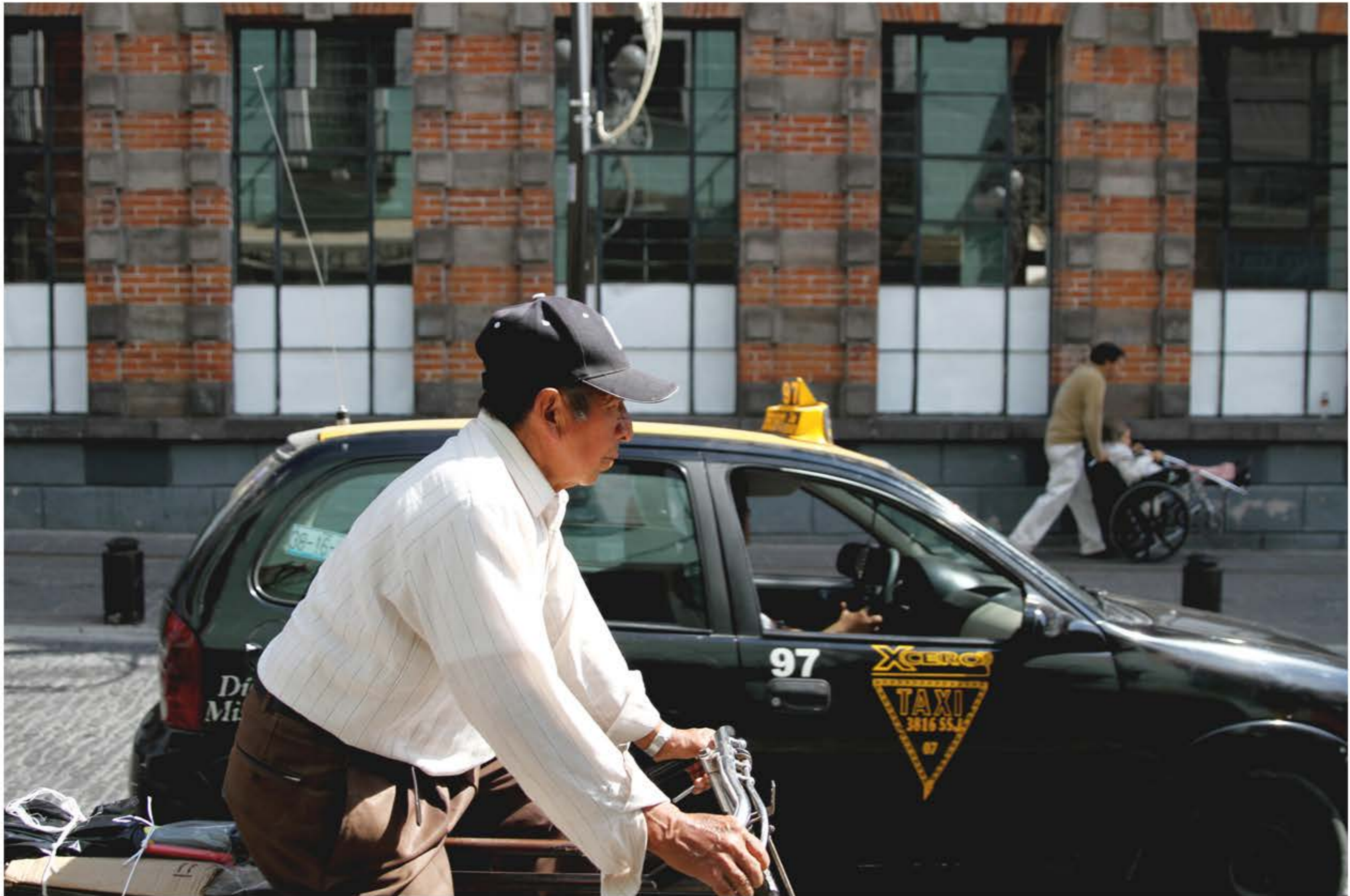
# PHOTO TIPS



find new perspectives

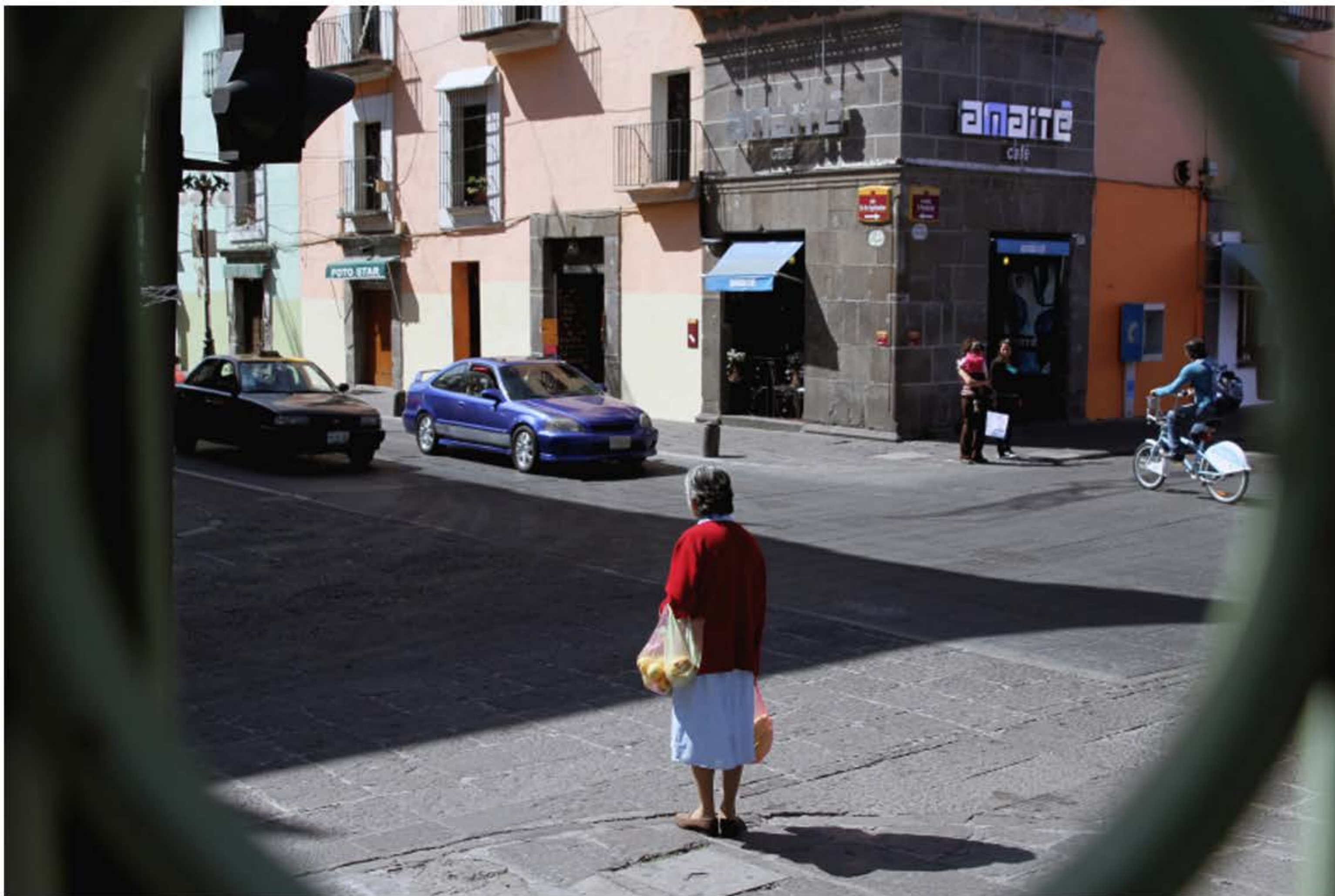


# PHOTO TIPS



capture action

# PHOTO TIPS



find frames in the environment

# PHOTO TIPS



look for light and shadows

# PHOTO TIPS



look for tiny details

# PHOTO TIPS



capture silhouettes

# PHOTO TIPS



wait for those special moments

# PHOTO TIPS



capture interactions/emotions between people

# PHOTO TIPS



find wide landscapes



# PHOTO TIPS



use a shallow depth of field to focus on specific portion of photo

# FINAL TIPS

practice makes perfect: you will never improve your storytelling skills unless you use them

tell stories you would want to read/hear/view

be inspired by others

be motivated and find your strengths & weaknesses

take the initiative to create something everyday

keep a blog of your experiences and things you learn

don't forget that YOU have a story to tell