THE AWESOME ADVENTURES OF MEGACORP'S MARKETERS

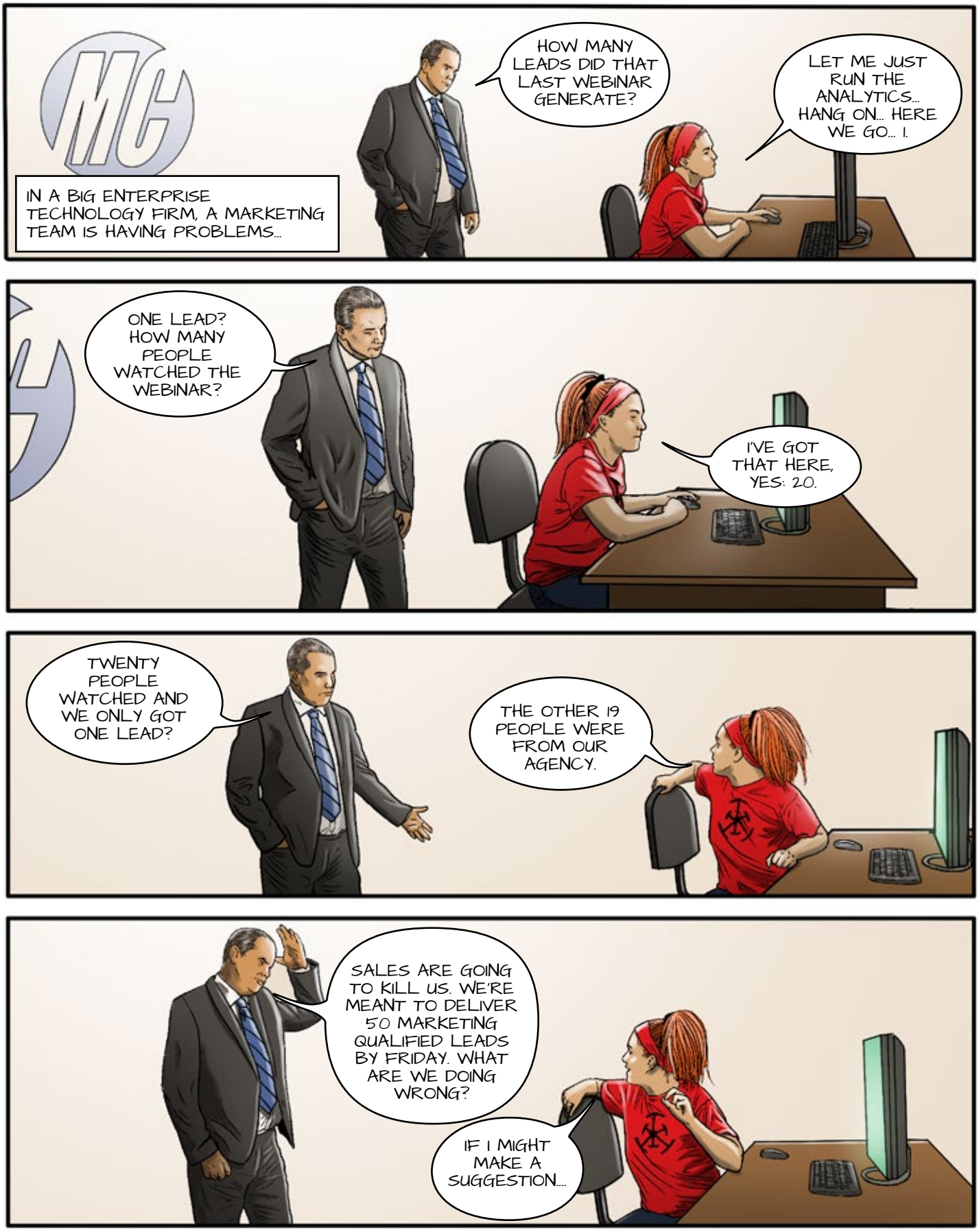
Or: How to Use Comics in B2B Content Marketing

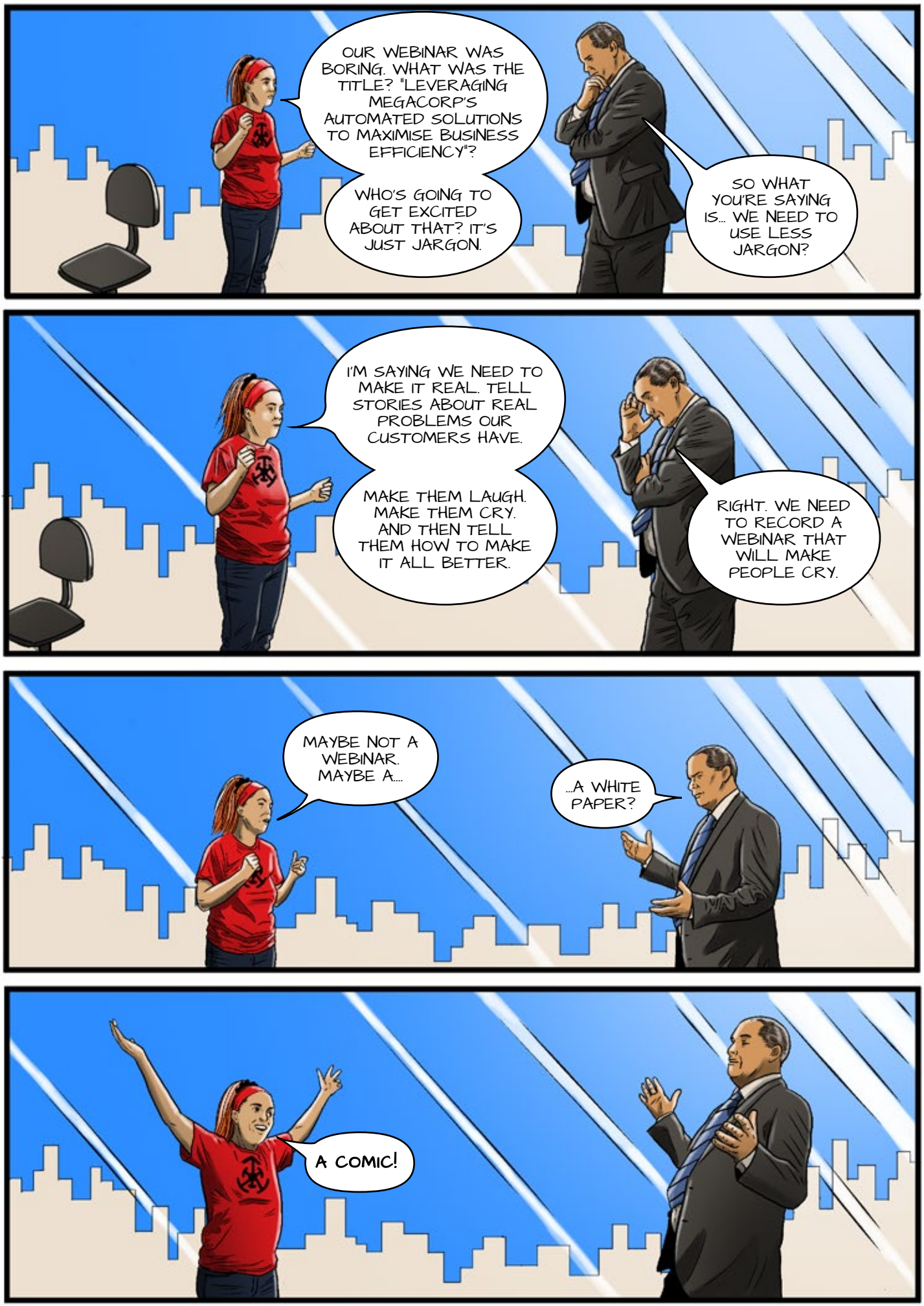


Story: Fiona Campbell-Howes
Art: Kirsty Swan
Letters: Emily King

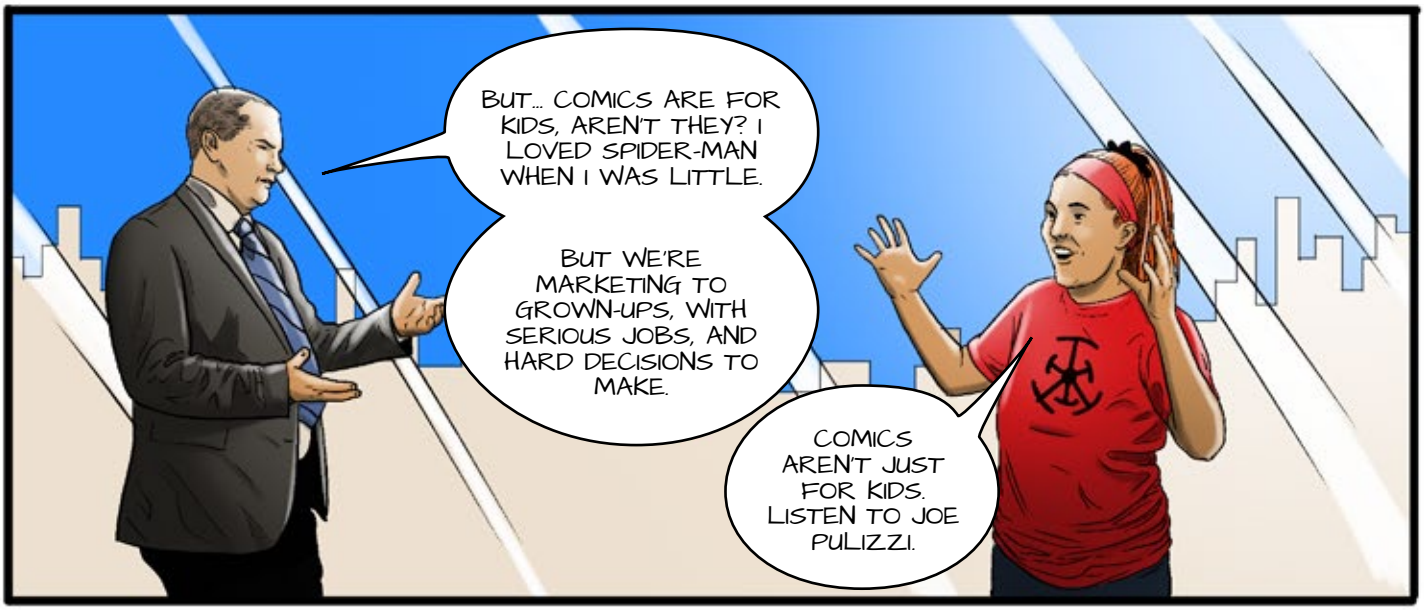
Radix Communications

INTRODUCTION: THE TROUBLE WITH B2B MARKETING

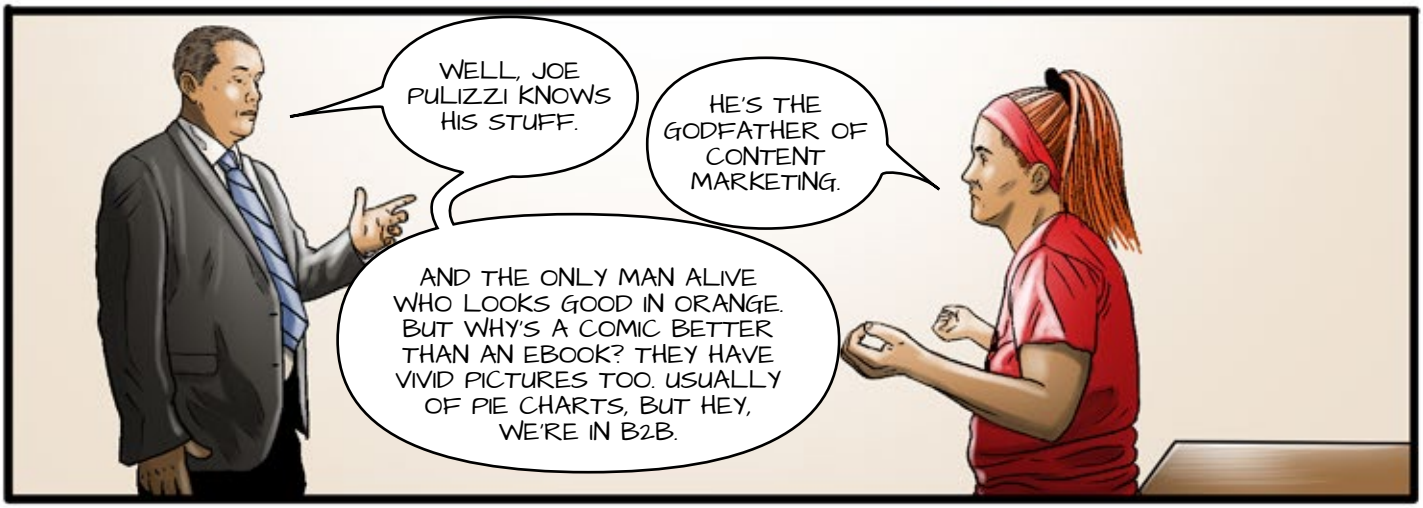


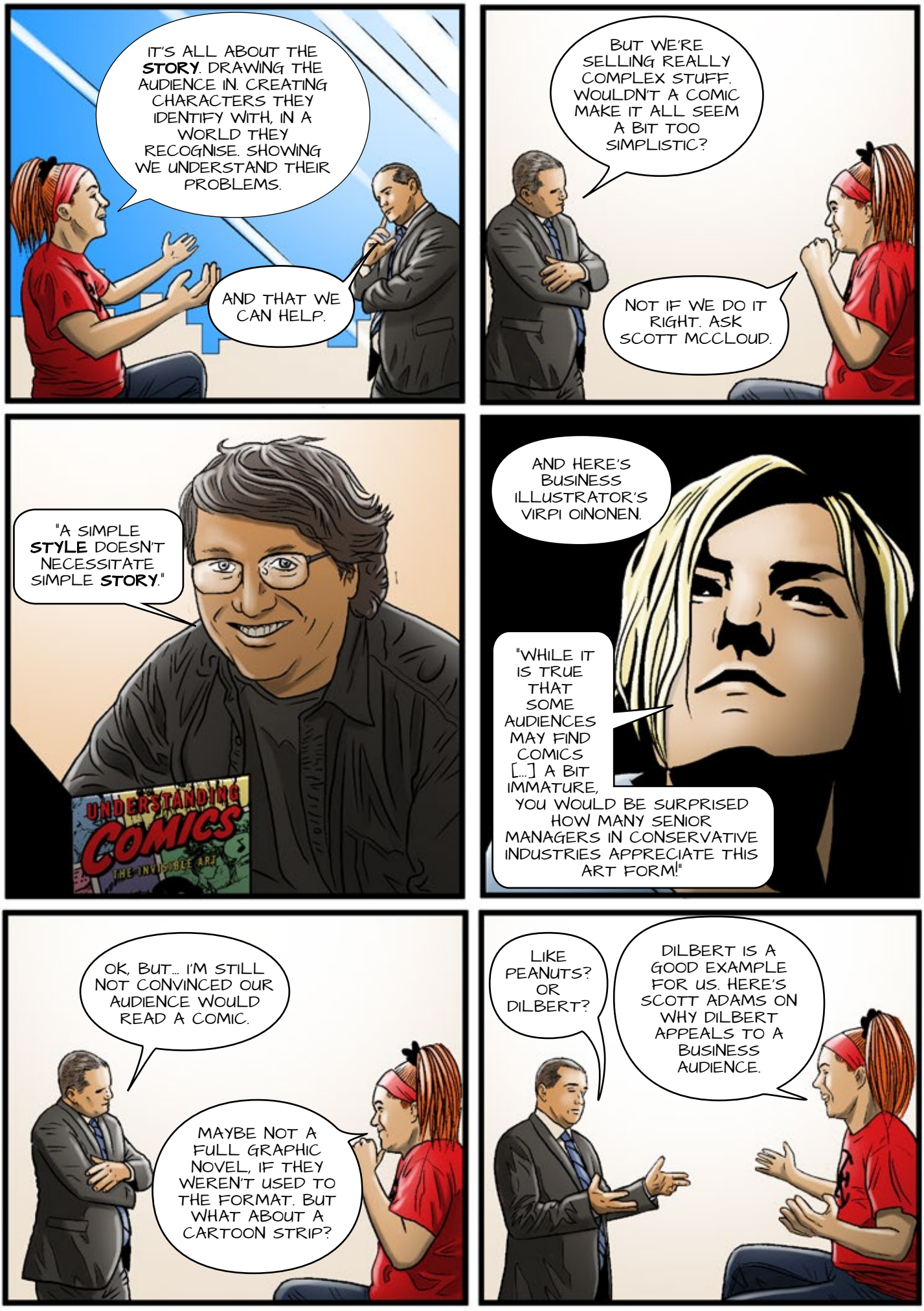

OUR WEBINAR WAS BORING. WHAT WAS THE TITLE? "LEVERAGING MEGACORP'S AUTOMATED SOLUTIONS TO MAXIMISE BUSINESS EFFICIENCY"?
WHO'S GOING TO GET EXCITED ABOUT THAT? IT'S JUST JARGON.
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS... WE NEED TO USE LESS JARGON?
I'M SAYING WE NEED TO MAKE IT REAL. TELL STORIES ABOUT REAL PROBLEMS OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE.
MAKE THEM LAUGH. MAKE THEM CRY. AND THEN TELL THEM HOW TO MAKE IT ALL BETTER.
RIGHT. WE NEED TO RECORD A WEBINAR THAT WILL MAKE PEOPLE CRY.
MAYBE NOT A WEBINAR. MAYBE A....
...A WHITE PAPER?
A COMIC!

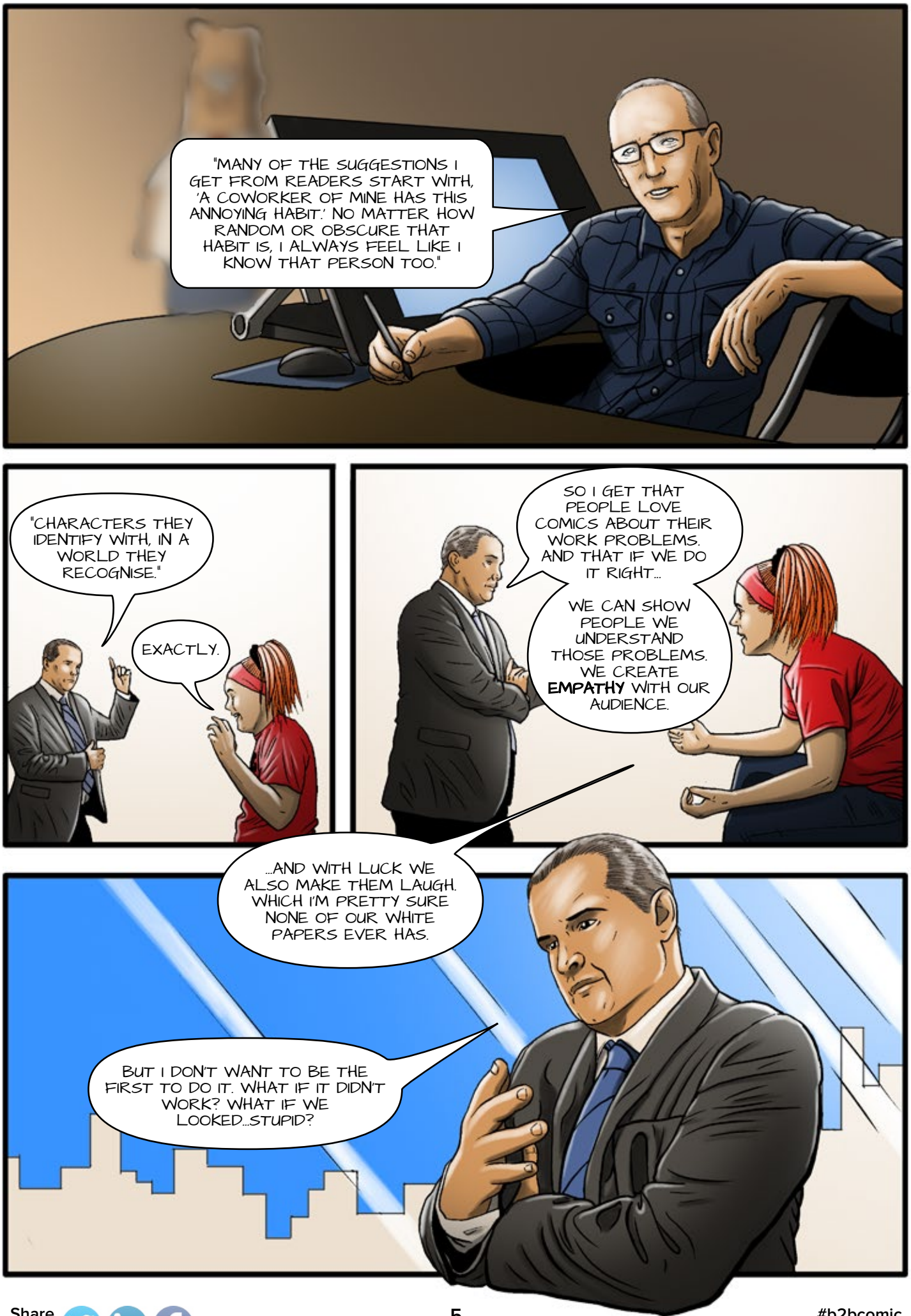
CHAPTER 1: WHY COMICS?








IT'S ALL ABOUT THE STORY. DRAWING THE AUDIENCE IN. CREATING CHARACTERS THEY IDENTIFY WITH, IN A WORLD THEY RECOGNISE. SHOWING WE UNDERSTAND THEIR PROBLEMS.
AND THAT WE CAN HELP.
BUT WE'RE SELLING REALLY COMPLEX STUFF. WOULDN'T A COMIC MAKE IT ALL SEEM A BIT TOO SIMPLISTIC?
NOT IF WE DO IT RIGHT. ASK SCOTT MCCLOUD.
"A SIMPLE STYLE DOESN'T NECESSITATE SIMPLE STORY."
UNDERSTANDING COMICS
THE INVISIBLE ART
AND HERE'S BUSINESS ILLUSTRATOR'S VIRPI OINONEN.
"WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT SOME AUDIENCES MAY FIND COMICS [...] A BIT IMMATURE, YOU WOULD BE SURPRISED HOW MANY SENIOR MANAGERS IN CONSERVATIVE INDUSTRIES APPRECIATE THIS ART FORM!"
OK, BUT... I'M STILL NOT CONVINCED OUR AUDIENCE WOULD READ A COMIC.
MAYBE NOT A FULL GRAPHIC NOVEL, IF THEY WEREN'T USED TO THE FORMAT. BUT WHAT ABOUT A CARTOON STRIP?
LIKE PEANUTS? OR DILBERT?
DILBERT IS A GOOD EXAMPLE FOR US. HERE'S SCOTT ADAMS ON WHY DILBERT APPEALS TO A BUSINESS AUDIENCE.


"MANY OF THE SUGGESTIONS I GET FROM READERS START WITH, 'A COWORKER OF MINE HAS THIS ANNOYING HABIT.' NO MATTER HOW RANDOM OR OBSCURE THAT HABIT IS, I ALWAYS FEEL LIKE I KNOW THAT PERSON TOO."
"CHARACTERS THEY IDENTIFY WITH, IN A WORLD THEY RECOGNISE."
EXACTLY.
SO I GET THAT PEOPLE LOVE COMICS ABOUT THEIR WORK PROBLEMS. AND THAT IF WE DO IT RIGHT...
WE CAN SHOW PEOPLE WE UNDERSTAND THOSE PROBLEMS. WE CREATE **EMPATHY** WITH OUR AUDIENCE.
...AND WITH LUCK WE ALSO MAKE THEM LAUGH. WHICH I'M PRETTY SURE NONE OF OUR WHITE PAPERS EVER HAS.
BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE THE FIRST TO DO IT. WHAT IF IT DIDN'T WORK? WHAT IF WE LOOKED...STUPID?

CHAPTER 2: WHO'S DOING IT?



2002



CARTOONIST HUGH MACLEOD OF GAPINGVOID STARTS DRAWING CARTOONS FOR MICROSOFT, DESIGNED TO ACT AS 'SOCIAL OBJECTS', OR CONVERSATION-STARTERS.

"YOU CAN'T JUST **START** BEING SOCIAL. YOU HAVE TO BE DOING SOMETHING LIKABLE AND SHARABLE IN THE FIRST PLACE. ANYONE CAN DO IT, IF YOU'RE DOING SOMETHING DELIGHTFUL."

2010



MARKETER-TURNED-CARTOONIS TOM FISHBURNE STARTS MARKETOON STUDIOS, CREATIN BESPOKE CARTOONS FOR SOCI SHARING, FOR BRANDS LIKE VODAFONE, ORACLE, GE, AND IN

2012

The Adventures of SARA BARLOW FIXED ASSET MANAGER

SAGE CREATES A COMIC-STRIP CHARACTER, SARA BARLOW, FIXED ASSETS MANAGER, TO SHOWCASE THE BENEFITS OF ITS SOFTWARE ON THE SAGE FIXED ASSETS BLOG.

2013



E-MARKETING PLATFORM MAILCHIMP CREATES A WEBCOMIC TO ALIGN THE MAILCHIMP BRAND WITH ITS SISTER APP, MANDRILL.

"THIS MARKETING MENAGERIE LENDS A LIGHTHEARTED VISUAL PUNCH LINE TO WHAT MIGHT'VE OTHERWISE BEEN A BUTTONED-UP HOW-TO."

2014

MARKETING AUTOMATION SOFTWARE COMPANY MARKETO USES COMIC-BOO STYLE ANIMAL CHARACTERS TO BRIN ITS DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO LEAD GENERATION TO LIFE.

"I WANTED TO BE PART OF THE CONVERSATION, AND BECAUSE I WAS THE ONLY ONE DOING CARTOONS IN THE SPACE, I GOT NOTICED."

GOOGLE USES A 39-PAGE ONLINE COMIC TO EXPLAIN THE TECHNICAL WORKINGS OF ITS CHROME BROWSER. THE ARTWORK IS CREATED BY COMICS LEGEND SCOTT MCCLOUD.

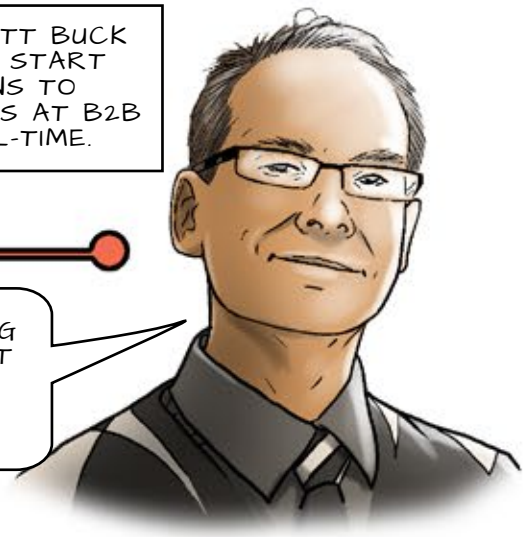


2008

"PEOPLE SEEMED GENUINELY SURPRISED BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEY UNDERSTOOD WHAT THEY WERE READING AND THE DEGREE TO WHICH THEY WERE INTERESTED IN WHAT THEY WERE READING."

2009

CARTOONISTS LIKE MATT BUCK AND ROB COTTINGHAM START RECEIVING COMMISSIONS TO DRAW THE DISCUSSIONS AT B2B CONFERENCES IN REAL-TIME.



"OCTOBER'S CARTOON-BLOGGING AT THE REAL-TIME WEB SUMMIT WAS A WELL-RECEIVED EXPERIMENT IN INNOVATIVE EVENT COVERAGE."

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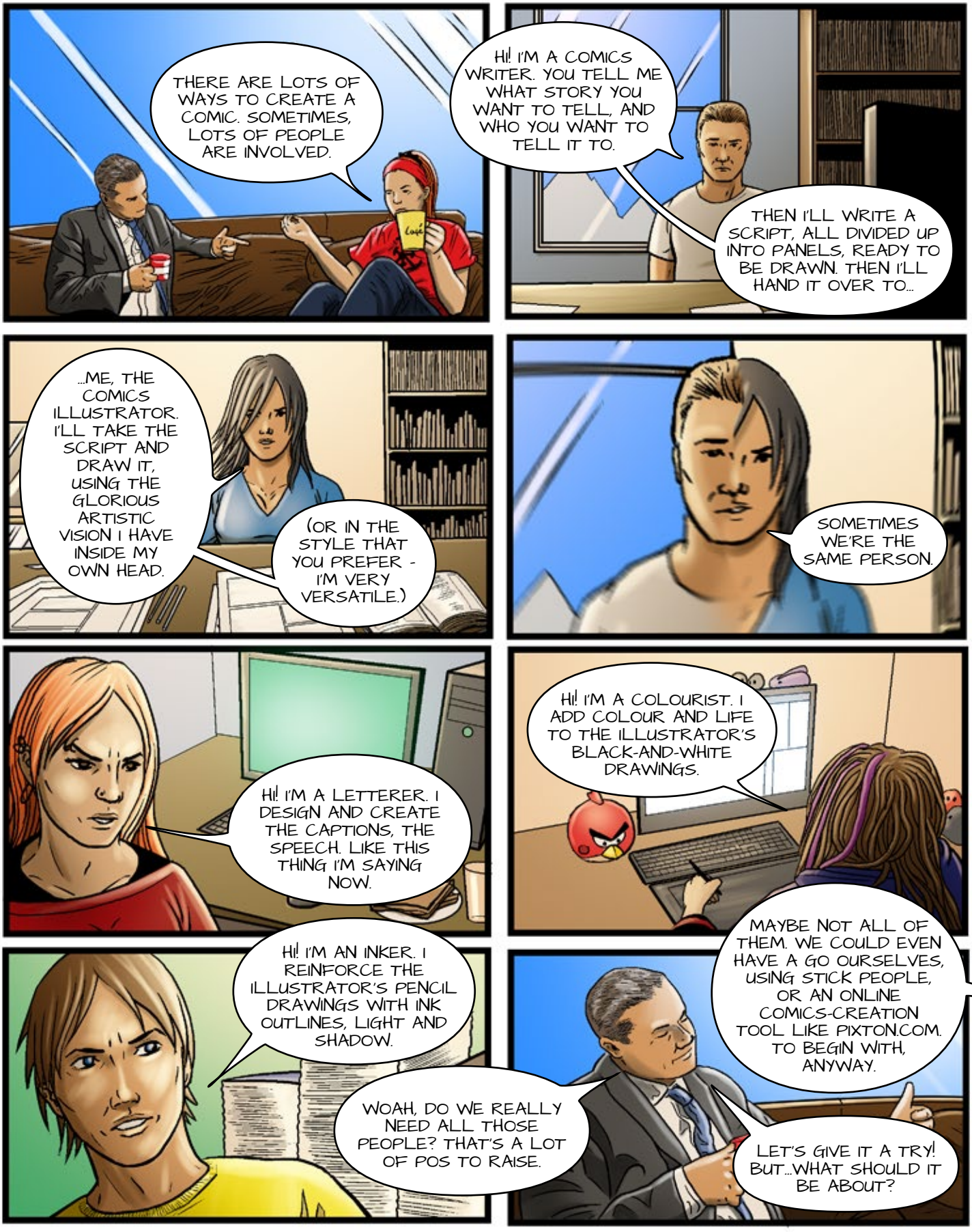
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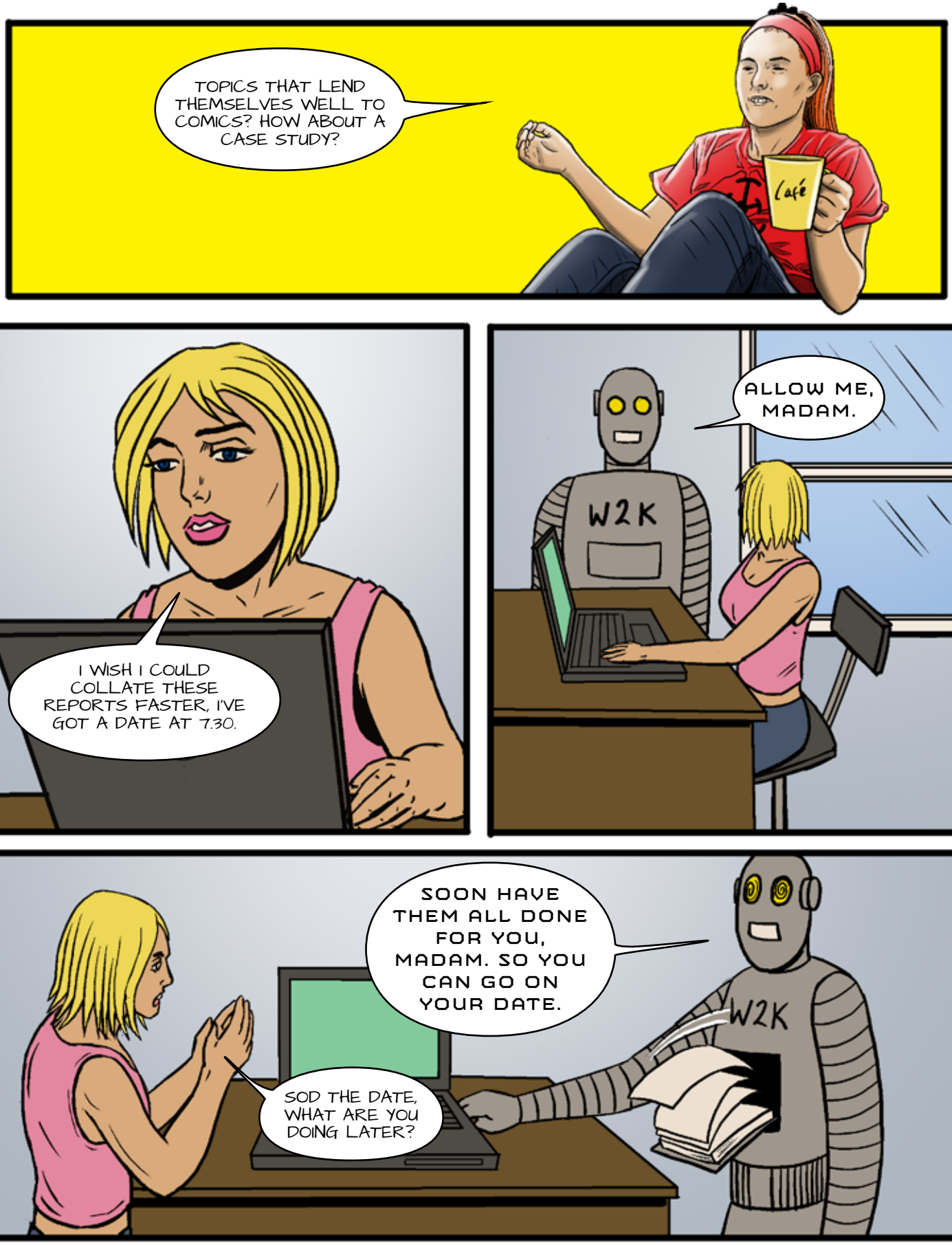
OK, SO LOTS OF PEOPLE ARE DOING IT ALREADY. I'M WARMING TO THIS. BUT HOW DO WE **MAKE** ONE?



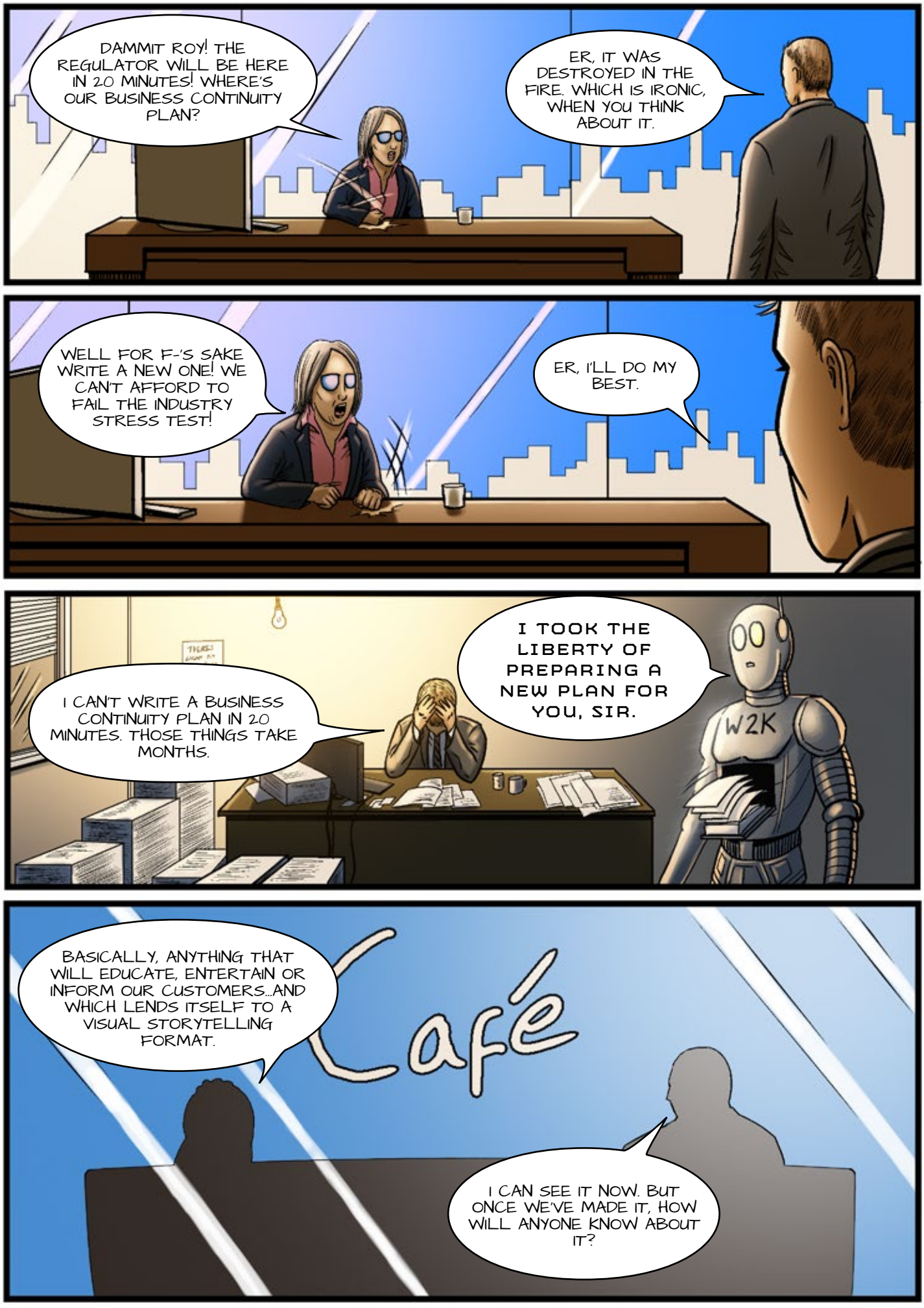
CHAPTER 3: DIY OR DELEGATE?



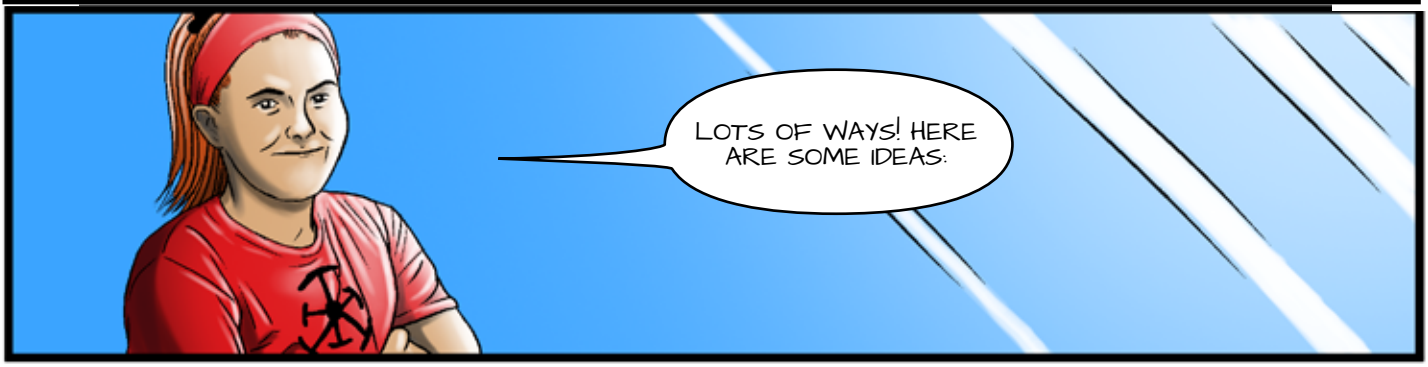
CHAPTER 4: THEMES FOR B2B COMICS

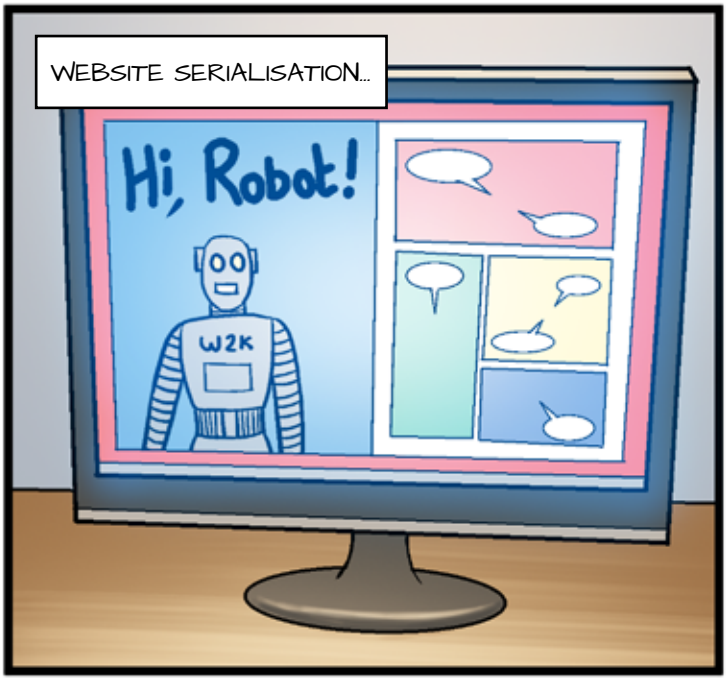


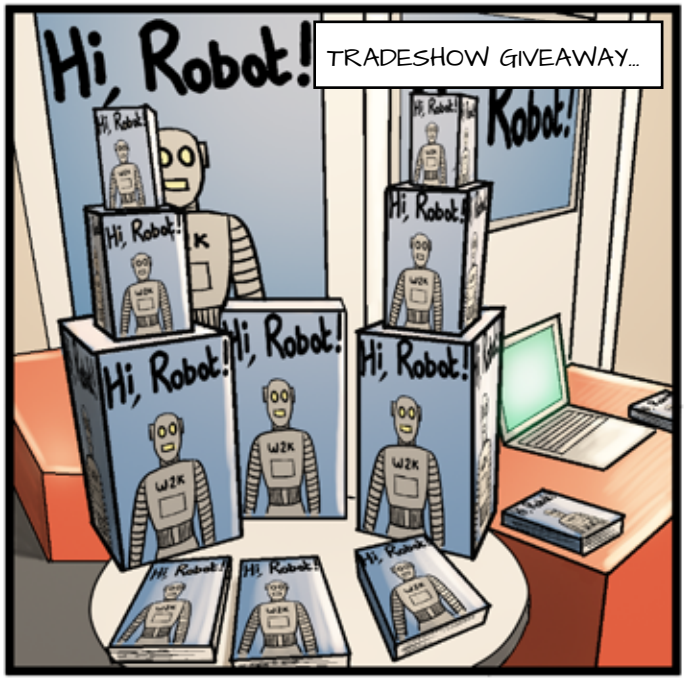

OR A BIT OF INDUSTRY HUMOUR, MAYBE...
I HEAR THE CEO HAS BOUGHT ONE OF THOSE TELEPRESENCE DRONES.
SO HE CAN ATTEND MEETINGS WITHOUT LEAVING HIS OFFICE? NICE.
I HEARD IT WAS SO HE COULD SPY ON EMPLOYEES.
SURELY HE'S TOO BUSY FOR THAT.
BACK TO WORK! BEFORE I ZAP YOU!
OR WE COULD EXPLORE A TOPICAL ISSUE AFFECTING OUR CUSTOMERS...
Café

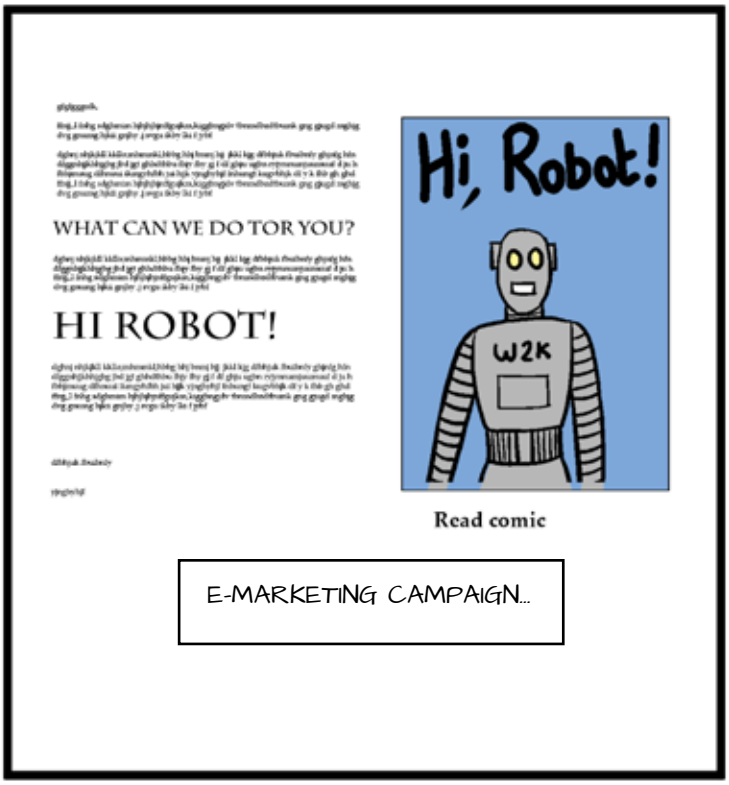

DAMMIT ROY! THE REGULATOR WILL BE HERE IN 20 MINUTES! WHERE'S OUR BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN?
ER, IT WAS DESTROYED IN THE FIRE. WHICH IS IRONIC, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT.
WELL FOR F-'S SAKE WRITE A NEW ONE! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO FAIL THE INDUSTRY STRESS TEST!
ER, I'LL DO MY BEST.
I CAN'T WRITE A BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN IN 20 MINUTES. THOSE THINGS TAKE MONTHS.
I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF PREPARING A NEW PLAN FOR YOU, SIR.
W2K
Café
BASICALLY, ANYTHING THAT WILL EDUCATE, ENTERTAIN OR INFORM OUR CUSTOMERS...AND WHICH LENDS ITSELF TO A VISUAL STORYTELLING FORMAT.
I CAN SEE IT NOW. BUT ONCE WE'VE MADE IT, HOW WILL ANYONE KNOW ABOUT IT?

CHAPTER 5: GETTING IT OUT THERE












ROBOTS, AWESOME!
Hi, Robot!
Hi, Robot!
PRINTED DM PIECE...
FIVE AWESOME THINGS WE SAW ON THE INTERNET THIS WEEK
SLIDESHARE EMBED...
Hi, Robot!
W2K
USING ALL OUR FAVOURITE TOOLS TO MEASURE ITS SUCCESS, OF COURSE...
salesforce
radian6
Google Analytics
ORACLE eloqua
Marketo
HubSpot
OK, I'M CONVINCED. LET'S DO IT!

Want to make a comic? We want to write it for you!

Two things make a really good comic: a great story and art that makes it come alive. If you're excited about including comic strips or even full-on comic books (like this one) in your marketing mix, we'd love to write the story for you.

Radix is a niche copywriting agency specialising in content development and brand storytelling for B2B technology brands. We've written reams of content in many formats (including comics) for brands including Sprint, Fujitsu, Salesforce.com, Veeam, Oracle, Xerox, VoxGen, MATS and Spirent and many more. Talk to us to find out how we can help you create content that stands out and gets results.

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