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Introduction

You probably already know that one of the most effective forms of marketing happens to be word-of-mouth marketing. When someone hears about a product or service from someone they know, it's much more powerful than hearing the same message from the company selling the product. After all, the company has a stake in the situation!

For many years, word-of-mouth marketing has been something most companies had to hope for. There was little they could do to actually attract word-of-mouth other than providing a great product and excellent customer service.

Then some smart marketers realized they could actually ignite this kind of marketing on their own. They started out with “publicity stunts”, but over the years, this has evolved into what we now call “viral marketing”.

In this report, you're going to learn some ways you can get viral marketing working for you!

Successful Viral Campaigns

What makes a successful viral marketing campaign? Why do some marketing pieces go viral and others do not? How can you make sure your own campaigns perform well?

These are all very common questions regarding viral marketing. And there are no easy answers to any of them. It's easy to look at successful campaigns and say, "Oh, well that campaign was successful because..." However, what made that campaign work might not necessarily work for a similar campaign.

The thing about viral marketing is that you can never fully predict how people will react to something. You can spend thousands of dollars on market research and still not have a truly accurate picture of how people will react to a live campaign in the real world.

The truth is that even multi-million dollar marketing agencies don't always get it right. In reality, most viral campaigns never actually go viral at all. They are created for that purpose, but they don't work.

All you can do is create a campaign that has a **good chance** to go viral. There are no guarantees!

So what **typically** makes a good viral campaign?

- **Humor** – Many successful viral campaigns contain an element of humor, often revolving around it.
- **Shock Value** – Many successful campaigns have some shocking or outrageous elements.
- **Uniqueness** – For a campaign to go viral, it usually has to be something people haven't seen before.
- **Value** – Sometimes simply offering a truly outrageous deal such as something good for free or at a ridiculously low price is enough to get a campaign to go viral.
- **Sympathy** – Many viral campaigns include an element of sympathy. For example, commercials for the ASPCA show cute animals that have been mistreated. People talk about these videos, because they are very emotional.

While these elements exist in most viral campaigns, they aren't always enough to cause a campaign to generate buzz. Even when they do, they often don't generate the level of buzz you're hoping for.

There have been thousands of funny and unique television commercials that have come out in the last year or so, but only a handful of those are truly memorable enough to go viral.

It's difficult to separate the successes from the failures, because at first glance they all seem to be similar. A funny commercial is a funny commercial, right? But it's not that simple. Simply being funny is not enough to get people talking.

When you're working on a viral campaign, one of the most important things you should realize is that there is **no way** to guarantee success with viral marketing. It's just not possible. No matter what you do, you are helpless once the campaign is released. You're at the mercy of the whims of the public.

Just understand that not every viral campaign will succeed. You should make sure to incorporate as many of the elements as you can, but in the end, the public will decide what it likes.

Don't give up if you create a campaign that doesn't go viral. Simply try again with a new campaign.

Viral Opt-Ins

One of the best ways to use viral marketing is to build an email list. Many people concentrate on sending viral traffic to their sales pages, but it's a better idea to send that traffic to a squeeze page in order to build your list.

Let's say you have a product you've just released, and you are trying to build buzz around that product. You could send all of your traffic straight to the sales page, but what if people don't buy right away? They might never return, and they would be lost forever.

However, if you sent that traffic to a squeeze page and offered them some sort of freebie to join your email list, you could email them several times about your product, increasing your chance to make a sale.

Additionally, you could market to that person many times over the coming years. Whenever you released a new product or wanted to promote a product as an affiliate, you would have your email list to do so.

This increases the effectiveness of your viral campaigns, because it gives you people to market to even if future campaigns don't do as well. They become long-term customers.

When you build a squeeze page, try to offer users something related to your viral campaign. If your campaign is a funny video of a golfer missing his swing several times, you might offer a free report about how to improve your golf swing accuracy.

Build your freebie to speak to the market. Make sure it's something they would really appreciate, and make it high-quality so they expect that your paid product will be even better.

Inside your freebie, you can put marketing for your paid product. This way, you're marketing to people in your viral video, in your freebie, and on your mailing list, as well.

Everything you do should be about maximizing the effectiveness of your campaigns. Make sure you're marketing your product every chance you get, and that you're building your list so you can market to them over and over instead of losing them forever.

Viral Videos

Perhaps the easiest type of content to get to go viral is video. People just tend to react better to videos, because not everyone has the capacity to fully understand and comprehend the written word in the same way they understand video.

Videos are also very easy to share. One quick link is all someone needs to send someone to your video, and it's easier to convince someone to watch a video than it is to convince them to download written material and read it.

Of course, creating viral videos can be tricky. Remember, you can't guarantee something will go viral to the extent you would like it to. However, most videos have the potential to bring in traffic, even if they don't go viral in a big way.

When creating a video, try to remember these tips:

- Don't automatically use humor. Not all markets will respond well to humor, and it could hurt more than it helps. Try to anticipate what your target customer would be interested in.

- Hire actors to appear in your videos that your target market would identify with. If your target market is a male age 18-35, don't hire older women. If your target market is older women, don't hire a teenage boy.
- Make sure you don't offend your target market. Many viral campaigns fail because they don't properly anticipate a negative reaction from their audience. This is especially true in humorous pieces, which can backfire easily.
- Be certain to edit the audio and video carefully. Any distracting camera problems, color issues, or audio anomalies can detract from your message.
- Make sure you deliver your marketing message! So many people concentrate on creating a video that will go viral that they actually forget to add their marketing to the video! Don't forget this crucial element.
- Concentrate on providing a quality video that people will enjoy, and the viral element should take care of itself.

Viral Written Material

While video is usually more effective for viral marketing than writing, this isn't always the case. Sometimes good written material can easily go viral. It depends on your target market, and what you offer.

I have seen free eBooks downloaded over half a million times! That's some powerful marketing! Not all material will be downloaded this often, but can you see the potential?

When creating written material for viral marketing, you need to ensure that you create material people will truly want to read. Don't write about what you want to write about. Write what people want to read!

I know that sounds obvious, but you would be surprised how many people fail in this aspect. They write whatever they happen to want to write about, without caring what their readers want.

Written material is usually educational. How-to products are common, as are advice pieces. Many people choose to give away a free chapter of their main product, or they write a product that complements their product very well.

Let's say your product is an electronic cigarette that helps people quit smoking. You could write a report on ways to quit smoking, including your own product as one of the top methods. Then you could offer this as a free report.

Some people prefer to keep their free reports behind an opt-in, which is sometimes a good idea. However, if your viral marketing **actually is** a free report, this may not work as well.

People won't be so quick to tell others about your report if they know the person will have to sign up to your email list to get it. They generally want to tell people about stuff they can get quickly and easily, with no hassles. That's why video can work so well. If you want written material to work that well, it might be a good idea to avoid requiring people to opt-in.

However, you can certainly offer an optional opt-in on the page where you give away your report. Offer people a discount on your product as an incentive for signing up, or maybe give them a 7 day email course by autoresponder that expands on the content in the report.

This will help your content go viral more effectively, while still giving you the opportunity to build your list.