

## CONTAGIOUS CONTENT: VIRAL VIDEO ADS IDENTIFICATION OF CONTENT CHARACTERISTICS THAT HELP ONLINE VIDEO ADVERTISEMENTS GO VIRAL

### ABSTRACT

Why do some online video advertisements go viral while others remain unnoticed? What kind of video content keeps the viewer interested and motivated to share? Many companies have realized the need to innovate their marketing strategies and have embraced the newest ways of using technology, as the Internet, to their advantage as in the example of virality. Yet few marketers actually understand how, and academic literature on this topic is still in development. This study investigated which content characteristics distinguish successful from non-successful online viral video advertisements by analyzing 641 cases using Structural Equation Modeling. Results show that Engagement and Surprise are two main content characteristics that significantly increase the chance of online video advertisements to go viral.

**Keywords:** Virality; Marketing Innovation; Innovative Marketing Strategies; Viral Video Content; Structural Equation Modeling.

### RESUMO

Por que alguns anúncios de vídeo *online* se espalham de forma viral enquanto outros passam despercebidos? Que tipo de conteúdo mantém o público interessado e motivado a compartilhar? Muitas companhias perceberam a necessidade de inovar suas estratégias de *marketing* e adotaram novos meios de usar tecnologias como a internet a seu favor. No entanto, poucos publicitários entendem como, de fato, fazê-lo, e a literatura acadêmica sobre o assunto é escassa. Este estudo investigou quais são as características dos vídeos que distinguem anúncios virais bem-sucedidos e malsucedidos analisando 641 casos por meio da Modelagem de Equações Estruturais. Os resultados mostram que engajamento e surpresa são as duas principais características que aumentam significativamente a chance de anúncios de vídeo online se tornarem virais.

**Palavras-chave:** Viralidade; Inovação de Marketing; Estratégias de Marketing Inovadoras; Conteúdo de Vídeo Viral; Modelagem de Equações Estruturais.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Due to the emergence of innovations and new technologies marketers have now arrived in an era where a powershift has taken place, which has caused a significant change in marketing strategies (Page, Westoby, Southgate & Brown, 2010). Even though decades ago the media was spoken of as a hypodermic needle: directly injecting marketing messages in the brains of consumers, nowadays, consumers are deciding what content to watch, when to watch it and what will become popular (Shaw, 1997). The worldwide acceptance of new technologies as the Internet and Social Media Networks allows consumers to interact and engage with all kinds of online content, which in return is paving the way to many new possibilities for marketers to connect to them (Muntinga, Moorman & Smith, 2011). Social Media platforms have been pointed out as the way for marketers to interact with consumers about brand related content, where consumers are at times even acting as marketers by sharing branded messages autonomously spreading contagiously (Henning-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh & Gremler, 2004; Sheehan & Morrison, 2009). This process is also called virality and takes place when “a piece of internet content has been or might be shared in a short amount of time” (Urban Dictionary, 2014).

The rise and mass adoption of the Internet is a double edged sword for marketers. On the one hand, a piece of content could spread globally by a marginal effort from a company from the moment they publish it online, as consumers will do the work by sharing the video as, metaphorically speaking, a virus or even an epidemic (Broxton, Interian, Vaver & Wattenhofer, 2011; Dobeles, Toleman & Beverland, 2005). This has many advantages as viral advertisements are spoken about to be free advertising due to consumer sharing process instead of the company's efforts of spreading content (Teixeira, 2012). The other advantage relates to the fact that content received from peers is proven to be more persuasive and engaging than when received from a company, resulting into increased brand awareness and likability (Southgate et al., 2010).

On the other hand, due to the internet marketers have become less powerful in directly targeting consumers as the adoption, spread and popularity of the message is more part of the consumers than ever before. Producing viral content therefore is often spoken about to be the most difficult to achieve marketing success (Watts, Perretti & Frumin, 2007). The quest to understand what kind of viral content to create for their consumers is paramount for marketers. In the existing academic literature this demand for

clarification is also present as the few have written about this topic and perspective of virality, and especially viral content characteristics (Subramani & Rajagopalan, 2003; West, 2011; Woerndl, Papagiannidis, Bourlakis & Li, 2008).

Although it seems an uncontrollable process from this point of view, some researchers argue that this process is not just a fortunate combination of events, but rather a phenomenon that can be controlled (Jain & Goswami, 2012; Milkman & Berger, 2010; Sundararajan, Provost, Oestreicher-Singer & Aral, 2013; Teixeira, 2012). The idea behind this is that the companies need to tap into a certain distinctiveness of viral content that would stimulate people to watch and share (Southgate et al., 2010). What is interesting to investigate is what distinguishes video advertising content that becomes such an epidemic and which does not. Once defined, marketers are able to hold on to guidelines to optimize virality. This research will tap into this question and will try to answer the following: which content characteristics are related to viralization?

Many aspects of the viral process were already explored in the literature. Bampo, Ewing, Mather, Stewart and Wallace (2008) mapped three roles involved - the media agent to make sure the video gets shared, the social aspect of the network it has been posted on and the behavior of the consumers sharing the content. Woerndl et al. (2008, p. 33) identified similar and even more factors. Five elements in total based on their study, where they concluded that “the overall structure of the campaign, the characteristics of the product or service, the content of the message, the characteristics of the diffusion and, the peer-to-peer information conduit” all have a significant influence on the viralization of marketing content (Woerndl et al., 2008, p. 33). This research will contribute to the existing knowledge by more thoroughly investigating the content of the message of viral communication as mentioned to be a critical factor for viralization in the research of Woerndl et al. (2008).

This particular perspective was selected since the content has to be decided upon and produced before the social mechanism comes into play. Why would a video be shared if it is not engaging or interesting in any way for the viewer? Without the appropriate or suitable content, as claim, the social mechanism will not be relevant. Also, at this stage producers and/or managers are still in control, opposite to the social mechanism when it is already published when the producer might only have limited control (Jain & Goswami, 2012). The aim of this paper is to develop an understanding of which content characteristics have a significant

positive effect on virality of online video advertisements. It will improve marketers' knowledge on the phenomenon and also the academics.

## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The phenomenon of virality requires upfront clarification to get an understanding of the differences with traditional marketing, in particular advertising, strategies and the modern era. With the traditional media, the media corporations primarily decided for consumers what was worth watching, what they would watch and what would become popular (Broxton et al., 2011). Yet, over the years this situation has changed drastically due to rise and mass acceptance of new technologies of which especially the Internet and Social Media has caused a powershift, allowing people to interact, share and even create their own content. This facilitated the beginning of a new phenomenon: virality.

The most traditional type of virality, started with one of the first versions of the Internet, also called Web 1.0, which enabled people to email online messages or images they liked to their peers (Freeman & Chapman, 2008; Juverston & Draper, 1997). Later on, with the Web 2.0 which included the development of Social Media and sharing tools, consumers were empowered to be actively involved and participate with the content they viewed online and share it with their peers instantly on Social Media platforms (Jain & Goswami, 2012). After this development, any hurdle to like, comment upon or share online content was removed and the user became more powerful than ever before. Within this newly shaped environment with a more powerful consumer, the word share obtained a new connotation. It meant that consumers could interact with what content was interesting enough that they actually wanted it to be shared and known by a greater public, while advertisers obtained a lesser grip on their marketing success (Daughtery, Eastin & Bright, 2008).

Producing viral content does not differ that much from other types of communication or marketing message: it is about targeting a specific group, with an appealing message via the most appropriate platform or medium (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). The viral process takes place when the presence of certain characteristics of content could make it 'sell' itself and make the sharing of this content via Social Media Networks almost inevitable, possibly resulting in an exponential trend which is exactly the definition of virality (Teixeira, 2012). Several terms arose within the marketing industry to describe the exact same thing (virality);

social media marketing, buzz advertising and eWOM or even Word-of-Mouse, all referring to the same phenomenon of viral marketing (Freeman & Chapman, 2008; Petrescu & Korgaonkar, 2011).

As why people share is closely connected to what people want to share and therefore convey to other people (Milkman & Berger, 2012; Muntinga et al., 2011). Consumer decision making, behavior and motivations towards media has been a profound topic with a great foundation in literature, for instance Uses and Gratifications theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs as well as Emotional Contagion Theory. Media theory Uses and Gratifications originated in the 50's and was propagated by McQuail (1994). This theory explains why people select certain media and how they use it to gratify their needs. Since its beginning, the theory has been widely used by scholars to explain consumer behaviors with different types of media and recently also the Internet (Ruggiero, 2000; Song, LaRose, Lin & Eastin, 2002). Next to this, this theory has also been used to explain why people are active on Social Media (Raacke & Bonds-Raacke, 2008) and perform brand related (promotional) activities on Social Networks (Muntinga et al., 2011).

The Uses and Gratification theory combined with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory explains that people inherently have a hierarchical ordination of needs (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). The lower ones representing the more fundamental needs (e.g. shelter, safety, food) and once these are fulfilled people have the tendency to strive for satisfying their higher needs as well (e.g. socialization, self-actualization, self-esteem). As described by McQuail (1994) and concluded by a later study specifically direct to Social Media usage, people use media for four main reasons as is the case with other types of media. People use media to inform (1), entertain (2), socialize (3) and seek their self-identity (4) (Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009).

In many socially oriented studies, sharing behavior has been a permanent topic in an offline (Fiske, 1991) as well as in an online context (Milkman & Berger, 2012). Some research claims that sharing takes place solely with the idea of an outcome expectancy – to get something desired in return for an action – as the Social Cognitive Theory implies (Bandura, 1997). Others argue that it could serve as an emotional outlet (Buechel & Berger, 2012; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999) or as a way for self-enhancement or altruism (Hennig-Turau et al., 2004). The research of Muntinga et al. (2011) concluded that people share brand related content for five reasons: to create a personal identity, socially integrate and interact, for entertainment and empowerment.

Milkman and Berger (2012) took a more detailed look into this topic and identified this

particularly with viral videos. Their research reports that virality of content is driven by aroused emotional and practical value. The emotional reasons reported to share videos are mainly when highly affective arousal takes place, for instance to bridge an incongruity in the mind, strengthen a social bond or understand something better (Milkman & Berger, 2011). For instance, they concluded that positive content is more likely to be shared than negative content (Milkman & Berger, 2011). Practical motivations for sharing behavior are reported to be social interaction or self enhancement which relates more to what Muntinga et al. (2011) or Henning-Turau et al. (2004) concluded.

Another research conducted by Dobeles, Lindgreen, Beverland, Vanhamme and Van Wijk (2007) also connected the particular relevance or value to aroused emotions by the content. Six primary emotions were researched and confirmed as activated by viral videos in particular: surprise, fear, anger, sadness, joy and disgust. After analyzing nine popular online viral video campaigns, they found that surprise is the main type of emotion leading to sharing behavior. Any other type combined with surprise also increased the virality (Dobeles et al., 2007). A recent study by Teixeira (2012) which specifically studied online video advertisements also confirmed that emotions aroused by an advertisement play an important role, concluding that surprise and enjoy were the main emotions aroused by viral videos.

These conclusions relate to the Emotional Contagion Theory which claims that emotions and moods can be shared among people by exposing them to your own emotional state (Pugh, 2001). This is true in case of offline as well as online communication (Hatfield & Cacioppo 1994; Kramer, Guillory & Hancock, 2014). This got re-confirmed by the research of Milkman and Berger (2012, p. 2): “sharing positive content may help boost others’ mood”. This also works the other way around Li, Yee-Loong Chong & Ch’ng (2015) concluded that sharing negative content can in return make people sad. Therefore, people share to affect others which means that videos should tap into emotions people would like to share with others. For instance, attractive and memorable content has been concluded to stimulate sharing behavior (Phelps, Lewis, Mobilio, Perry & Raman, 2004). Frankly, it is surprising that it innately all relates back to emotions, since emotions within videos increase the probability of people processing and remembering the information, therefore more easily resulting into sharing it (Phelps et al., 2004).

After studying why people share and what kind of content people are more willing to share, it is still hard to define how this works in technical terms. Some theories in Media Studies have researched this

before (Fourie, 2004). Generally, this subtopic is divided into three areas: cognitive effects – media messages affect our thinking about something; affective effects – media messages can influence our feelings about something; and conative effects – media messages can impact our behavior towards something (Fourie, 2004). Reviewing the three areas, especially the Media Theory related to conative effects are pertinent to this study. According to this sub theory, the conative function is the content that is aimed at impacting the viewer to persuade it to perform certain behavior (Fourie, 2004). A marketing message always contains conative signs intended to move the viewer to undertake a desired action. This could be for various goals to activate a consumer to buy a product or support a political party. This particular activation has been researched by several different articles on the basis of Social Media and user action and confirmed to also have a significant effect in this online Social context (Ellisson, Steinfield & Lampe, 2007; Nyland, Marvez & Beck, 2007; Valenzuela, Park & Kee, 2009).

This conclusion gives a foundation to the main question of this study: what kind of content is being shared, so the aim is to identify these conative signs in online video advertisements persuading people to share and making it go viral. As can be concluded from the literature, content affects the viral process significantly. This mainly has to do with emotions evoked during the consumption of content online and there are no integrative models available concluding upon this topic and especially related to the branded video ads. The particular signs or elements in video content creating these emotions will be explored in more detail in the next paragraphs concluding to the research model. The relevance of this study therefore is clear by proposing and testing a model integrating the reviewed theories, that will try to explain virality.

### 3 METHOD

This study investigates which content characteristics of online video advertisements cause viewers to share. It has descriptive and also causal character. The descriptive element comes from fact that we tried to explain what is going on in the viral process, based upon the literature and interviews during instrument development process. The causal element lies in the consequential relationship between the content characteristics invoking a response from its viewers to share the content. This study was developed in three phases - literature review; focus groups with internet users to check the potential constructs and help building the research

instrument and finally the survey with the final participants.

The instrument was applied to international students living in the Netherlands. Both male and female participants took part in the study in an equal manner. The selection of this population was supported by the findings of Chi (2011), Chu (2011), Eckler and Bolls (2011) and Madden (2009) indicating the age group of 18 – 30 with the most significant sharing behaviour and also the higher awareness and active presence online, especially on Social Media (Jain & Goswami, 2012). In the third part of the research participants were stimulated by six advertising videos on YouTube and then responded an online questionnaire. All participants acted in the study on a voluntary basis and no reward was given to participate in the study.

The six video pack consisted of three successful online viral video advertisements, selected based on rankings of marketing agents online that indicated those to be viral; all had over 12 million views online and relatively a substantial number of likes. They were: Dollar Shave Club (Our blades are f\*\*\*\*\* great – 20M views), Dove (Real Beauty Sketches – 66M views) and Volvo Trucks (The Epic Split – 82M views). The other three, non-viral, were: Blackberry (What the Z10 can't do – 1TH views), Toyota (Swagger Wagon – 1,5M views) and Cheetos (Sick Day, 9000 views). This practical approach was held based on the argument of Pirouz, Johnson, Pirouz, and Thompson (2012) claiming that indicators of virality are number of views and likes.

### 3.1 Research Model

The research instrument developed exists out of three constructs, two independent and one dependent were selected and operationalized:

#### 3.1.1 Surprise

The first group of characteristics activates the consumer to share since it is something that stands out from the crowd, is novel (Wu & Huberman, 2007) or in other words a conative sign that surprises people (Dobele et al., 2005; Lindgreen & Vanhamme, 2005; Texeira, 2012). According to the literature, it is all about the unusuality and distinctiveness of the content that could make it go viral (Southgate et al., 2010; Texeira, 2012). Yet, one of the things that makes it instantly more relevant is the fact that viral content most of the time is new or told in a new manner for the viewers which can be and has been before labelled as SURPRISE (Jain & Goswami, 2012). This construct is labelled as surprise and is made up of 3 variables, measured on a seven point Likert

scale: originality, uncommonness, unconventional as found in academic literature.

- Originality in fact could be seen as something that is new, people have not seen before in this particular state in a positive way. This is one of the characteristics that makes content go viral, since it most of the time is outstanding or new for all viewers making it attractive to see (Jain & Goswami, 2012).
- Uncommonness means that people are not per se new to the content as its type, but also in the way it is shown. So different from the standard. This can work out in many different kinds of forms; it could amaze, surprise, show humor and/or intriguing (Dobele et al., 2005).
- Unconventional relates to something different or strange from what people would expect.

#### 3.1.2 Engagement

The second construct is based on the idea that a viral video needs something to make people relate to, identify with, think about and don't alienates it from the content they are watching. According to Dobele et al. (2005) and Milkman and Berger (2012), viewers share content they have an emotional connection with, stating that content should provide emotional value. This summarized is something that has been named ENGAGEMENT as also done by Dobele et al. (2005). The construct engagement is made up of 4 variables: relevant, interesting, enjoyable and like.

- Relevant relates to the idea that in some way the video should deliver pertinence to the viewer (Jain & Goswami, 2012). The video should stir something within the viewer leading him/her to share it. It should have an engaging message Dobele et al. (2005) that intrigues (Nealon, 2007).
- Interesting content should make a person feel involved and interest them (Twose & Smith, 2007). Milkman and Berger (2010) pointed out that the value of the content being shared is of paramount importance. The word 'value' is often interchanged with the word interesting as argued by the research of Jain and Goswami (2012) all relating to the idea of relevance to the viewer.
- Enjoyable means that viewers should have a feeling of enjoyment or laugh-out-loud (Nealon, 2007) when watching the video. This item has also been pointed out by the research of Texeira (2012) as joy.
- Like means that viewers should have the feeling that they like what they are watching and that it is fun (Dobele et al., 2005).

### 3.1.3 Virality

The dependent construct, was measured by three variables: number of likes, dislikes and views of an online viral video advertisement. This was similar to the research of Alhabash and McAlister (2014). According to them people on Social Media show to others via liking, sharing or disliking what they think and feel about a particular piece of online content and those could be seen as a proof of virality. As Milkman and Berger (2012) and Teixeira (2012) confirm, virality primarily has to do with emotions. Therefore, these three were used as measurements that make up the construct virality: likes, dislikes and

views. Both constructs surprise and engagement can be found back in other researches as being categories significantly affecting virality (Dobele et al., 2005; Jain & Goswami, 2012; Milkman & Berger, 2012; Teixeira, 2012).

The two hypotheses follows:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Video Ads with high levels of Engagement influences positively virality.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Video ads with high levels of Surprise influences positively virality.

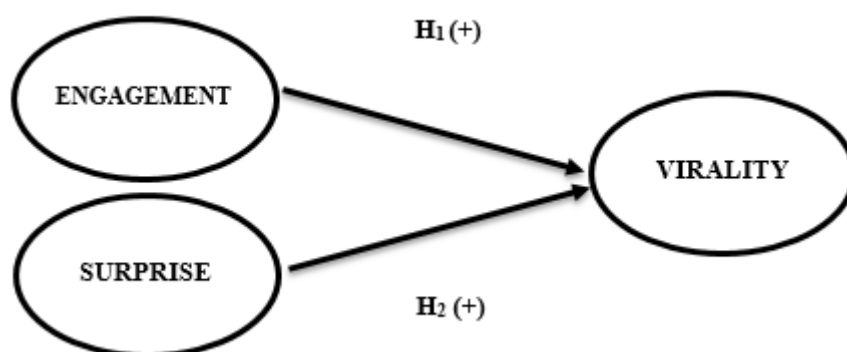


Figure 1 - Research Model

### 3.2 Construct Validity And Reliability

The constructs were tested for validity and reliability in compliance with Aaker, Kumar and Day (1995), Churchill (1979) and Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson (2012). Content validity was achieved by pretests with three specialists in the field, allowing the improvement of the questionnaire. The final version measures three constructs through 10

items. Construct, convergent and discriminant validity (Bagozzi et al., 1991; Garver & Mentzer, 1999; DeVellis, 1991) were assessed using CFA (Byrne, 2010; Kline, 1998). Construct reliability was also estimated. All statistics yielded adequate values, indicating that constructs were valid and reliable (See Table 1). Analysis were performed using SPSS and Amos software.

Table 1 - Reliability and Validity testing of the constructs of the Research Model.

Construct	Items	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Sq. Mult. Corr.
Engagement	4	0.771	0.931	0.900	-
Surprise	3	0.732	0.891	0.817	-
Virality	3	0.935	0.977	0.965	.211

### 3.3 Model Fit Indexes

The fit measure most commonly used reported model adjustment is chi-square/df, = 3.895. This result shows that an acceptable value taken into account that there are more than 200 cases in the

analysis as reported by Hair et al. (2012). They suggest that other indices should be taken in consideration - RMSEA, GFI, AGFI and CFI in order to assess fit (as seen in Table 2). The indices indicated the model fit.

**Table 2 - Model fit indexes.**

Measures	Research Model
Chi Square / d.f. (CMIN/DF)	3.895
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	.067
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	.966
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	.936
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	.984

## 4 RESULTS

### 4.1 Hypotheses

Hypotheses were tested by the Amos procedure using ML estimation and significances were tested by bootstrapping, providing the errors (Table 3). Both Hypotheses were supported at  $p < .05$

level (Table 3). Engagement influences Virality, as expected (Dobele et al., 2005; Milkman and Berger, 2012) significant at  $p < .001$ . Surprise also influences Virality, with less impact as can be seen by the .134 coefficient, significant at  $p < .05$ , also confirming (Lindgreen & Vanhamme, 2005; Teixeira, 2012; Wu & Haberman, 2007). Both constructs could explain 21% of Virality.

**Table 3 - Hypothesis testing.**

H <sub>i</sub>		Path		Std Estimate	Error	P	Result
H <sub>1</sub>	Engagement	->	Virality	.351	.060	$P < .001$	Supported
H <sub>2</sub>	Surprise	->	Virality	.134	.065	$P < .045$	Supported

## 5 DISCUSSION

The current media landscape lead to a complete power shift from media towards consumers. Where consumers obtained more possibilities to interact with media and marketers have lost power in deciding what becomes popular and is seen the most. As people are interacting more and more online, companies are aiming at producing content that will become viral. This is exactly what this research has attempted to answer, by proposing and testing a model that can be used by companies when producing content to optimize the chance of their content going viral. From this study, we can conclude that a video advertisement should be

engaging and surprising for a viewer to watch. This can be translated into having elements that attract the viewer's attention (surprise), retain it and make people to share it (engaging) (Teixeira, 2012).

This work added to growing area of research on virality by proposing and testing a conceptual model to explain virality based upon content characteristics. The theoretical foundation used for this research comprises of four main: Uses & Gratifications, Emotional Contagion Theory and Social Cognitive Theory. This research contributed to the current academic knowledge available in two ways. First, it is an interesting finding as abundant research claims Surprise to be maybe the most important cause of virality

(Lindgreen & Vanhamme, 2005; Wu & Haberman, 2007), while this research has pointed out that Engagement to be an even more important influencer. This research also confirmed results found in previous research as existing studies found these two constructs to be of significant importance (Dobele et al., 2007; Southgate et al., 2010; Teixeira, 2012). Third, it provided a continuation on previous research as the research of Woerndl et al. (2008), who suggested future research to thoroughly explore and define which kind of content characteristics cause viralization.

## 6 PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The practical implications of these results are that marketing agents should focus on including at least Engagement and Surprise in their video advertisements in order to increase the chance of it going viral. The seven elements described in this research can be considered as checkpoints to actually include in the content. These characteristics fulfil the uses and gratifications of the viewers watching the content (Raacke and Bonds-Raacke, 2008; Ruggiero, 2000; Song et al., 2002) and what is necessary in the current landscape to actually convince people share online advertorial content (Teixeira, 2012).

It must be clear that it is not necessarily about investing great amounts of money on the content, as consumers themselves also produce amateur content that goes viral all over the world. What marketers should take from this research is that the focus should lay on Engaging and Surprising the viewer. Content should be unique in some manner, interest the viewer and should be shown in a positive manner so that it is perceived as content that is likable. Illustrating this by the stimuli used in this research, the video of Dove – Real Beauty Sketches – does this for instance in a more serious manner with a relevant message in the end. While the advertisement of Shave Club – Our blades are f\*\*\*\*\* great – contains these content characteristics in a more humoristic manner, by selling razors in an original way. Next to this, content should be unconventional, uncommon and enjoyable as the Volvo – Epic Split – is an example illustrating this showing Van Damme standing and slowly going in a split on two trucks driving: clearly possibly to evoke such emotions within viewers.

The example of a non-viral ad such as Cheetos – Sick Day – evidently illustrates the exception of an important content characteristic: relevance. The participants in the study often reported that the video stays vague till the end and does not seem to have a reason for them to keep on watching or to have watched. It must be clear that

this sets off viewers and is one of the reasons that the video did not go viral. Important to conclude is that these elements have some creative freedom of how they can be used as in the example of Dove and Volvo who use these characteristics in a completely different manner. At the same time, the successful videos all showed the content characteristics that resulted from this study to be important to increase the chance of virality of video advertisements.

This research had some limitations next to the contributions it made to the existing research on virality as well as implications for marketers. In the end, we could only explain virality partly, this is why more research should be conducted to distinguish the content characteristics leading to virality and to understand the greater picture of other possible drivers of virality. Possible future research could tap into more drivers as shock and identifiability and the link between gender and other demographic attributes and which type of advertorial video content gets shared. Another limitation was that solely six stimuli were researched and the sample was limited due to the age and geography. Hence, a bigger sample and greater number of stimuli in the search for more drivers. Also, the model developed is something that should be handled with caution as it can't be directly translated to reality. The fact that it now has been studied with viral video advertisements and that Engagement is more powerful than Surprise is the greatest contribution of this study to the existing domain of literature on viral content, as it creates a different perspective on what is already known.

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