

Social Media & the Science of Virality

What does it mean when you say that something has “gone viral”? (Check out the examples of viral content on the slides after this one if you need some ideas...)

YouTube

- I. Since its start in 2005, YouTube has grown from a site devoted to amateur videos to the world's most popular online video site, with users watching _____ worth of video each month, and uploading _____ worth of video every minute.
- II. **What did YouTube look like when it first started?**
- III. **Where did the idea for YouTube come from?**
 - A. **How could posting videos from these 2 events help launch a site like YouTube?**
- IV. Since its first video, “Me at the Zoo,” YouTube has grown into a site for sharing videos, reposting content from network tv, screening advertisements and today, influencers streaming original content to broad audiences.
- V. **What company was one of the first major companies to embrace YouTube's advertising potential?**

 - A. Watch the 3 ads (including the most recent ad released last week.)
 1. **What can you say about Nike’s advertising? Who and what do they support as a company?**
- VI. In 2007 YouTube launched a program that let people get paid for their viral content.
 - A. **This made it possible for what?**
 - B. **What are two examples of content that’s gone viral by regular people?**

WATCH THE VIDEO: “Why Videos Go Viral”

- I. According to Kevin Allocca in his TED Talk, there are 3 factors that determine whether a video will go viral. Explain each of the factors and give an example for each.
 - A. Tastemakers (famous people who other people listen to when they recommend something):
 1. **Example:**
 - B. Communities of participation (groups of people who are inspired to participate, copy and make their own versions to share):
 1. **Example:**
 - C. Unexpectedness (surprise, interest):
 1. **Example:**
- II. In the end, consider what Allocca says - that sites like YouTube are a new kind of media and a new kind of culture where “anyone has access and the audience defines the popularity.”
 - A. **What does that mean? Explain what he’s saying in your own words.**

DEFINE: **Virality**

- I. **What do we know about why people share content online? (LIST the 5 main reasons people share online.)**
- II. **What role has social media played during this pandemic? (Give 2 examples)**

CONSIDER: What kind of content do YOU enjoy watching and/or sharing on your own social media?