

10 Most Viral Marketing Campaigns Of All Time

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Have you seen any video or post go viral on Instagram or any other social media platform? Did you ever share a post on your feed or with your family? What made you share that post? Was it funny, emotional, or relatable? When was the last time you were humming a jingle or slapping a famous brand slogan in casual conversations? All these questions have a common thread running through them. It is called viral content. Today, let's decode the 10 most viral marketing campaigns of all time.

What is a viral marketing campaign?

A viral marketing campaign means something that has caught the attention of the whole market. It is a successful marketing campaign. In today's day and age, it has the highest number of views, shares, likes, and comments. In short, the audience is most engaged with the brand. A viral marketing campaign has high recall value and makes a brand memorable.

One of the major factors in viral marketing is social media interaction with the audience. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and even LinkedIn have a huge role to play. Creating a campaign is one aspect, but getting the desired virality in the form of audience engagement is another aspect of it. Let's decode the 10 most viral marketing campaigns.

Top 10 most viral marketing campaigns of all time.

1. Blendtec's "Will It Blend?" (2006)

In 2006, a mixer-blender company, Blendtec, took the marketing and advertising world by storm. It came up with the genius campaign "Will It Blend?" The founder and CEO, Tom Dickson, was the face of the videos, in which he would blend unconventional and unthinkable stuff to demonstrate the high power and high performance of the blenders. It had an iPhone, an iWatch, Amazon Alexa, and whatnot. The campaign was out-of-the-box, funny, and engaging. Since it was crazy, people shared it across different platforms, and the videos garnered massive success. Check out the videos [here](#).

Humor, newness, creativity, absurdity, curiosity, and entertainment demonstrated the product, created a desire to purchase it, and thus generated nationwide sales. The main hero of the success of the campaign is, of course, the Blender itself. Had it failed to blend unusual tough stuff, then the campaign wouldn't exist.



(image credits: <https://tvtropes.org/>)

2. ALS Ice Bucket Challenge (2014)

One of the popular challenges was the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge in 2014. It started as a social media campaign to raise awareness and funds for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis ([ALS](#)), often referred to as Lou Gehrig's disease. What started as a small challenge transformed quickly into a viral sensation across the US and the globe, with millions

participating in the challenge. It has many celebrities, such as [Mark Zuckerberg](#), Oprah Winfrey, and [Bill Gates](#), as well. It collected funds up to 200M.

In the challenge, one or someone else would pour on themselves a bucket filled with ice water and then nominate another person. The nominated person has 24 hours to complete the challenge or donate funds to the ALS charity.

The success of the challenge campaign was the chain reaction, celebrity participation, solving the purpose of the challenge for funds, creating awareness, and videos posted on social media on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter with the hashtag [#IceBucketChallenge](#) for more impact.

3. Nike “Just Do It” (1988)

This was an iconic campaign by Nike back in 1988. The slogan “Just Do It”, a mere three words, encapsulated the emotion of the whole campaign. It has an emotional feel, a push to get athletic and fit. It redefined the whole advertising industry and athletic and fitness brands. This campaign gave Nike powerhouse status in the sportswear industry.

“Just Do It” has an iconic recall value and is associated with the Nike logo. Simplicity, emotional touch points on determination, motivation, getting on in life, achieving it all emotion, and celebrities like Michael Jordan and Serena Williams were the real face of Nike. They were not regular faces of the brand, but they embodied the feelings of the slogan through their actions and great achievements in sports.

Thus, it helped Nike create a legacy and a brand identity and dominate the sportswear industry for more than 30 plus decades.



(image credits: pinterest:wallpaper safari)

4. Dollar Shave Club's Launch Video (2012)

Humor is magic. It cures illness and also brings attention to an ad campaign, just like Dollar Shave Club's launch video in 2012. The ad starts with its founder, Michael Dubin, with a witty script: "Do you think your razor needs a vibrating handle, a flashlight, a backscratcher, and 10 blades? It went viral with millions of views and established itself as a new brand in the men's grooming market. Watch the video [here](#).

The video tapped into the issues faced by men using the then-shaving razors, addressing overpriced razors, the inconvenience of using bulky razors and buying them in stores. Nobody would think that a mundane product like a razor could be marketed humorously. The witty and funny script, clear USP vis-à-vis current products (such as low prices, good blades at a reasonable price of \$1 with home delivery every month), solving a problem in using current razors, engaging video visuals and production, good use of humor to talk about razors to the target audience - men, and creating a desire to join the Dollar Shave Club and save on regular razor costs.



(Image credit: businesstime.com)

5. Old Spice's "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" (2010)

A brilliant ad that redefined men's grooming products. Tapping into two great insights - men using women's perfumes and women wanting their men to smell like their crush, brought a wonderful campaign featuring actor Isaiah Mustafa. It had creativity, humor, memorable catchphrases, impeccable dialogue delivery by the actor, and great video direction.

Lines like "Look at your man, now back to me", "I am on a horse" and "The man your man could smell like", hooked the viewers; the visuals kept changing from a bathroom to a ship to a horse, etc. The [video](#) was seamless with each scene; the dialogue delivery was threaded with humor, creativity, and a great video script.

The video went viral on social media, bringing in a new product for men, young and old, increasing its market share, sales, and revenue. Old Spice, to date, has revived its place as a well-sought brand in the men's grooming niche.

6. Dove's "Real Beauty Sketches" (2013)

Beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder. That's what Dove's "Real Beauty Sketches" said to the audience. Dove collaborated with forensic sketch artist Gil Zamora to create composite sketches of women based on their self-descriptions and the descriptions of strangers who had briefly interacted with them. The goal was to showcase the often harsh self-criticism women create and the impact of societal beauty norms on their self-perception.

It was a powerful video that showcased how one is overly critical of one's self in comparison to how others view them as kinder, more beautiful, and happier people. The ad campaign was a success. Its major reasons were emotional storytelling, diverse representation, an empowering message, and quick sharing due to its emotional impact. The campaign won several awards, advocated for body positivity, challenged conventional beauty standards, and created a unique brand name for Dove.



7. Oreo's "Dunk in the Dark" (2013)

The "Dunk in the Dark" campaign by Oreo took place during Super Bowl XLVII in 2013. It is considered one of the most successful real-time marketing efforts during a major event. There was a power outage during the game, causing a 34-minute delay in the third quarter. Oreo, with its agency 360i, took this opportunity and created a simple yet effective ad on the spot. The ad featured an image of an Oreo cookie in partial darkness, accompanied by the caption, "Power out? No problem. You can still dunk in the dark."

The ad became an instant hit and garnered widespread praise and attention for its timeliness and creativity. It went viral in the form of tweets, likes, shares and

engagement across various social media platforms. It was a great example of real-time marketing and seizing an unexpected opportunity.

8. Snickers: "You're Not You When You're Hungry" (2010)

The central idea of the campaign is based on the notion that when people are hungry, they are not themselves. Snickers, being a candy bar, is positioned as the solution to changing individuals back to their normal selves. The campaign was created by the advertising agency BBDO and was known for its humorous and creative approach. The campaign gained popularity through a series of TV commercials. These ads typically had people behaving oddly or upset due to hunger, and the situation would be resolved after the person ate a Snickers bar.

Some of the ads included popular celebrities like Betty White, Joe Pesci, and Robin Williams. The success of the campaign was not limited to TV commercials. Snickers utilized various channels, including social media, print, and outdoor advertising. The hashtag #EatAsnicker #GrabAsnicker was widely used.

The campaign received numerous awards for its creativity and effectiveness in advertising, including recognition at major industry events such as the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity.



9. L'Oréal, "Because You're Worth It" (1971)

L'Oréal, a global cosmetics and beauty company, launched a campaign in 1973 and has since become one of the most iconic and successful beauty campaigns in history. The tagline "[Because You're Worth It](#)" aims to emphasize a more inclusive message that extends to a broader audience (originally "Because I'm Worth It"), which was created by the copywriter [Ilon Specht in 1971](#).

The primary aim of the campaign is to empower and inspire women to embrace their individuality and self-worth. It encourages women to feel confident and deserving of high-quality beauty products. The campaign featured spokespeople, including well-known celebrities and models (like Jennifer Lopez, Eva Longoria, and Beyoncé).

The "Because You're Worth It" campaign has had a global impact, resonating with women of various ages and backgrounds around the world. It has contributed to L'Oréal's status as one of the leading beauty brands globally. The brand created numerous ad campaigns under the "Because You're Worth It" series, each emphasizing the theme of self-worth and personal empowerment. These campaigns include ads across various media channels, including television, print, and digital platforms.

The "Because You're Worth It" campaign has not only been successful in promoting L'Oréal products but has also made a lasting impact on the beauty industry by promoting a message of self-confidence and empowerment.

10. Red Bull's Stratos (2012)

In 2012, Red Bull orchestrated a groundbreaking marketing campaign, "[Stratos](#)," that captivated global audiences. The campaign involved Austrian skydiver Felix Baumgartner's record-breaking freefall from the stratosphere, and it showcased Red Bull's commitment to extreme sports, innovation, and brand experience.

The centerpiece of the campaign was Felix Baumgartner's mission to break the sound barrier during a freefall from the edge of space. On October 14, 2012, Baumgartner ascended to the stratosphere in a helium balloon and jumped from an altitude of approx. 128,100 feet, breaking multiple records and achieving supersonic speeds during his descent.

The key factors that made this campaign a success were live-streaming globally on various platforms, including YouTube; engaging millions of viewers in real-time (8 million concurrent views on YouTube); high-profile partnerships between the brand, aerospace company Stratos, and various other collaborators in the campaign; breaking several records; and creating new records. Read the full story [here](#).

Red Bull leveraged social media to amplify the campaign's reach. The event generated immense buzz on platforms like Twitter and Facebook, with users sharing updates, reactions, and highlights. The Stratos campaign received many awards, including a Webby Award for Online Film & Video, a Cannes Lions Titanium and Integrated Grand Prix, and a Guinness World Record for the "Most concurrent views for a live-streamed event on YouTube."

The brand's ability to seamlessly integrate extreme sports, technology, and live-streamed content showcased the potential of experiential marketing. The campaign

set a high bar for brand stunts and highlighted the effectiveness of creating unique, shareable experiences to engage and inspire audiences globally.

Conclusion:

No brand focuses on going viral. The virality comes from an insight, which gives birth to a brilliant idea. The rest of the campaign is followed by execution and great marketing tactics. The essential ingredients for viral content is of course a good ad, but combined with relatability and authenticity. The ad pushes the audience to the edge of their seat, makes them think, smile, and makes them snap their fingers and say, "This is damn good". It has to keep the audience engaged, and makes them share your content with their friends and family, giving the impression that 'Hey, this is cool stuff I found on the internet.'

Get the basics right, and virality will follow. Apart from that, no brand should make 'let's go viral' as their only end goal. It will come as too desperate and even a big turn off for your loyal fans.