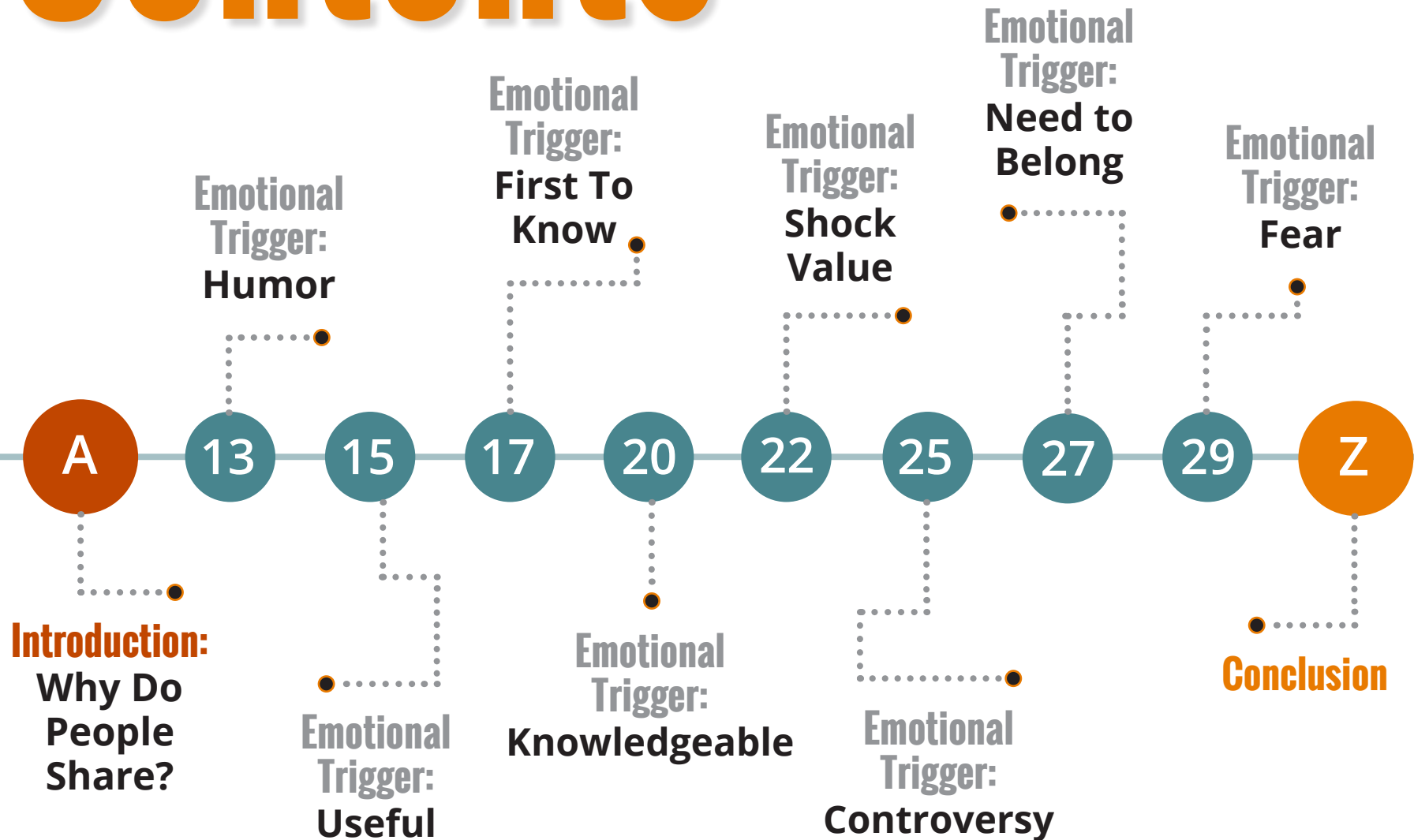


How to Get More Shares on Social Media **By Using** **Emotional Triggers**



Contents



Why Do People Share How can I make something go viral?



It's the universal question—what do I need to do to make my content go viral? Well, we're here to tell you that there is a 100% effective, always-works, super-secret technique that can not fail!!!! Ready? Here we go. The secret is:

Create a post that has mass-appeal and then get lucky.

Not coincidentally, that's also half of our super-secret, lottery-based retirement plan.



In all seriousness though, going viral is a buzzword that people use to describe a very successful social media post or piece of published content—but it shouldn't be your goal to go viral. Your goal should be to create content that people want to share on a consistent basis and, over time, you may get lucky enough to have something reach that

**mythically
magical state of
VIRAL.**

In the meantime, however, you need to work on your shareable content. The good news is,

there IS an effective way to make sure you're creating posts that people will want to share.

[Click to Tweet](#)

Good content is at the heart of all highly-shared posts, but there are hundreds (if not thousands) of great content pieces that go unshared every day. Is it because they're not promoted correctly? They didn't use the right hashtags? The authors are not connected to the right people in Facebook?

No.

INTRODUCTION

Sometimes it's not about the topic or the content itself but about **HOW** the **content is delivered and what it says about the person who shares it**. That's right - much of "shareability" is about how the sharer will be perceived because of what they share. Before retweeting or sharing a link on their wall, the sharer asks themselves:



"How will it make me look?"

"What will people think if I share this?"

"Does this link make my butt look fat?"

If sharing your content won't make a person look good and help them maintain the image and perception they want to cultivate, then it won't be shared. Period.

When it comes to determining what content is "share worthy",
three things matter:

TONE

STYLE

**EMOTIONAL
TRIGGERS**

**When creating social media content for your company,
consider these elements.**

TONE - How You Say What You Say



When it comes to tone, **many companies make the mistake of being professional for professional's sake** ("Someone might think we don't know what we're talking about if we don't use the right jargon!"). On social media especially, that can come across as very stiff (and worse, not very share-worthy).

There's a reason why BoostCase's First Quarter Growth Chart didn't go viral (even though the background was the exact right shade of cornflower blue). It's because no one cares — and even for the people that do, you can bet that they don't want their friends to know they care. . .

Bringing Back BoostCase

If you've read **our other eBooks**, you're familiar with BoostCase.

As you may recall, they are a hypothetical company that sells phone cases of all kinds, but their most popular product is the \$49 BoostCase which protects a smartphone, but also has built-in components that boost cellular signals in weak service areas. This company is effectively using social media to boost its bottom line and engage its customers in real time. Keep an eye out for several BoostCase Study callouts throughout this e-book that will show exactly how a smaller to mid-sized company can use emotional triggers to grow their social media presence. (See what we did there? A little play on words combined with humor to catch your attention.)





When it comes to tone, companies must find the right balance between stuffy and edgy. Some companies can push the envelope more than others, but even companies in traditional fields (finance, law, education) can push their tone forward to help make their content more shareable on social media. You don't want to come across as a drunken, cursing sailor (unless you are selling the Drunken Sailor edition of Rosetta Stone's Language Learning Software) but content with an overly professional and jargon-laced theme is not as likely to get shared. Our best overarching tip is write it like you say it, not how you'd write it for a term paper or your annual report. There is a ton of sharable value in using a conversational tone that shows you are a human being.

STYLE - Make That Content Shine



Style is an easier one for companies to “digest” --

this is all about HOW your content looks. Is it easy to read? Does it include a

looks. Is it easy to read? Does it include a bulleted list? Paragraph headers? No one wants to read, let alone share, a big block of text. It's not that people on social media have a short attention span, it's just that they have a low tolerance for long form copy (and be fair...they do have "other" things to do — all of those funny cat pictures aren't going to just look at themselves). **Studies show that**

in today's technical age readers prefer to skim, so make

sure your content is skimmable. Include headers, bulleted

lists, pictures and graphs and generally make it so that your

reader can understand what you're saying without having to read every

line of text. You can even **use bold text throughout** paragraphs

to make the right content stand out versus what the eye may naturally

pick up. (See what we did there? Just don't get over zealous with the CTRL +B).

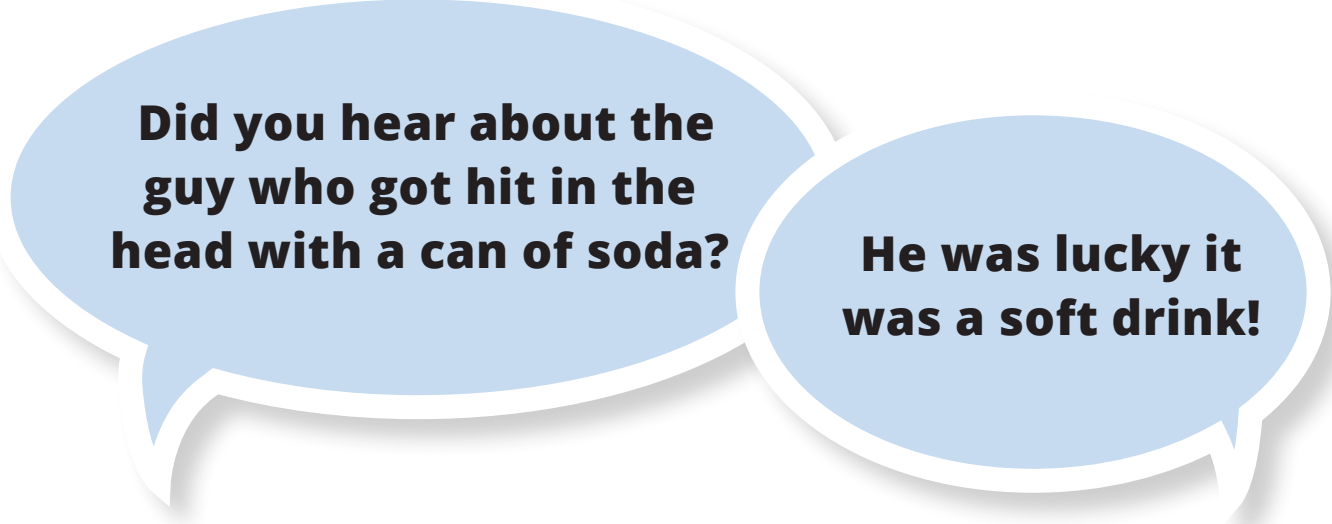
Understanding The Motivations Of Your Readers

By far the most subjective—and important—reason people share is emotional. Excellent shareable content just “connects” with readers on a level that makes them want to share it. When content with the right tone, style, and (most importantly) emotional triggers hits their social media stream, they can’t NOT share it.

The rest of this eBook is dedicated to explaining the eight emotional triggers that get people reading and sharing:



HUMOR - The King of the Triggers



Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of soda?

He was lucky it was a soft drink!

By now you are almost certainly gasping for air as laughter wracks your body. Catch your breath, it's ok—we'll wait.

Admittedly, there's a chance we don't have a future as comedians (so it's a good thing we're so good at social media management), but humor is probably the most instinctive item on the list of emotional triggers. You see something funny, and you immediately want to share it—everyone loves a good joke or a clever ad. And, because people share based on what they want people to think about them, funny content is shared so that their friends will think the sharer is also funny.

That's why Kmart's recent "Ship-My-Pants" social media ad campaign was so successful. If you didn't see this on a friend's Facebook page or Twitter stream, you're one of the few. And you quite possibly need more friends. **This ad will go down in social media infamy.**

We totally shipped our jeans when we saw it—and we're not alone. In just over a week this 30-second spot received close to 13 million views. It was certainly edgy for the family brand, but definitely funny and the shares and views show that it was successful!

You don't have to be a major established brand to use humor effectively either.

DollarShaveClub.com is another recent success story. **They leveraged this ad** to catapult themselves to success, receiving over 10 million views since it was created.



Everyone's sense of humor is different (as is evidenced by our jokes in this eBook), but humor has universal appeal. If your content can be funny, your content will be shared.

USEFUL - Helping People Help People

This one is more within most company's comfort zones. In these instances, people share content because it's useful, answers a question, or improves their life.

Unfortunately, this is also the crutch that many companies lean on when creating downright boring content. **Don't be too literal with the information.** Yes, someone somewhere may need to know how to most-efficiently (and completely) recalibrate all of the control gaskets on their reticulated-redistributed...zzzzzz....

cough Ahem. The point is, you're going for interesting content, not technical manuals. Remember to **focus on useful information that your customers would want to know—and want to share.**

Useful content offers a chance to be a little creative and get inside your customer's heads. If you sell kitchen supplies and bakeware, for example, why not post a list of the "10 Best Desserts For Summer...Fall...Holidays" (bonus points if one of the recipes requires an obscure item you sell like a castle-shaped Bundt pan or R2D2-shaped cookie press). Customers who bake can never have enough recipes and they're likely to have friends who bake too.

The key point to remember is that useful content doesn't need to tie directly back to your product or service. It should be relevant to your target market and it should be suited to their needs and interests. The following BoostCase Study is a good example of this.



BoostCase is on the cutting edge of the mobile culture—and they want their customers to know it. Their target market is young, affluent, active people who hike, run, bike, and camp. In a recent newsletter, BoostCase included a succinct little review of the best new running apps for smart phones including a preview of a few that are still in development.

Their newsletter readers ate it up so BoostCase also tweeted a link to the online

review and posted it on their Facebook Wall. The review was shared and read by over 20,000 people and they saw an immediate bump in online sales as a result.

BoostCase is planning similar reviews of other apps for hikers, bikers, campers, and those crazy folks who jump off perfectly good buildings and cliffs (there's gotta be an app for that—like a free sanity test).

Boost- Case Study

FIRST TO KNOW It's Cool To Be A Trendsetter

So, we all know someone like this. **He's GOT to be the first to know and he's GOT to make sure you know he knew it first.** His middle name might as well be "Retweet" and he can usually be found in line outside the Apple store (hey, they're probably releasing something new sometime soon). He may be annoying—but he can also be your best friend on social media—if you write about something cutting edge, he will share it. No, he's GOT to share it.



People who share content like this want to break news and be the leading source of information for their network. All those gossips you remember from high school? They grew up and graduated to social media. Sharing breaking insider news is a sure way to trigger this audience and drive shares.

EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS: FIRST TO KNOW

There's a second edge to this sword, though. Being first to comment on an emerging trend also means you are taking a risk:

"Next Christmas the iPod will be dead, finished, gone, kaput" --

Alan Sugar, British business magnate, media personality, and political advisor, 2005

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home."

-- Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

"The Americans have need of the telephone, but we do not. We have plenty of messenger boys." --

Sir William Preece, chief engineer of the British Post Office, 1876

As you work to be the first, you will almost certainly be wrong at some point. The good news is that being wrong isn't the worst thing in the world—especially if you can recognize your fault. If you're right more than you're wrong, being wrong can actually be a positive too. An article looking back on what you were wrong about is just as likely to be shared as one that talks about what you were right about. Just look at all the prediction about what will be in the next iPhone.

EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS: FIRST TO KNOW



Seriously, I want that iPhone. BoostCase wants that iPhone. Heck, even my Grandma wants that i-Phone. And clearly readers of World Star Hip Hop want that iPhone. But chances are it's not true. **The cool thing is that it presents a cool concept and starts the conversation about what people really want in the iPhone 6.**

KNOWLEDGEABLE

Making Experts For Fun and Profit

People share information that is specifically related to their expertise or area of interest. They want to show (or give the impression) that they are knowledgeable and an expert in their industry.

One of the great things about social media (besides tweeting pics of your breakfast, of course) is that it's a perfect forum for digital knowledge exchange. From impact events and academia to shared interests and business, people use social media to share knowledge.

However, this is another area where companies fall prey to being boring. Data

is a part of knowledge, but you need to be selective. When preparing content, consider this, can you imagine someone posting it on their wall with:

Hey did you know . . .

Great article about . . .

Haven't I always said this?

If you can't imagine it, it could mean your post is filler or lame. Or, both *shudder*. Keep your content useful, current, and filled with interesting information and the gotta-know-it-alls will take it from there and share it.

BoostCase noticed a new state law was passed in New Jersey stating that no new cell towers can be erected within 50 miles of a housing structure. They posted a summary of the new law and explained one of the potential impacts on their target audience: a weak cell signal. (Flashback reminder: BoostCase is a hypothetical company selling iPhone cases that boost cell signals)

Their post was shared so much in the Garden State that BoostCase created a limited-edition “I <3 New Jersey” BoostCase that “towered” over other sales in that state.

Boost- Case Study



SHOCK VALUE - You HAVE to see this.

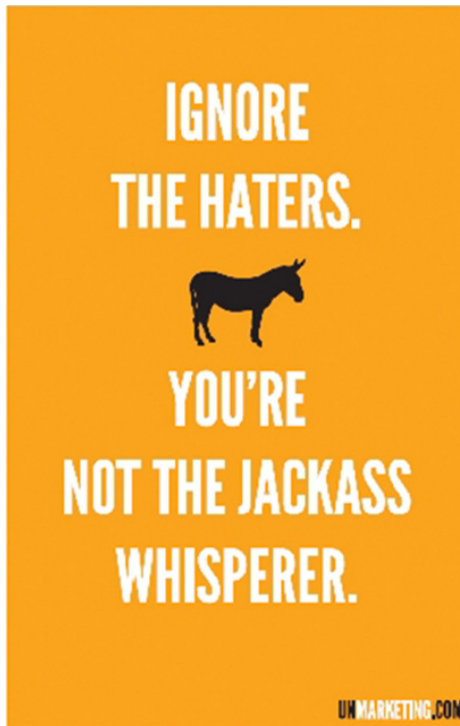
This emotional trigger is not unlike humor in that it's instinctive - people can't NOT share it. This could be a photo or post that is just so . . . oh, what's the right word... "OMG!!!!!" that people must share it.

For example, this recent photo that went viral on Facebook:

This New Zealand mother left her sleeping newborn in the car so she could do some shopping! Even more shockingly, she had the audacity to leave her cell phone number so strangers could contact her if something was wrong with the baby. The picture generated hundreds of comments, shares and likes (which were actually 'dislikes' – are you listening Facebook?).



Of course, a shocking photo like this would not work for a business, but every industry has information that is shocking. To capitalize on this emotional trigger, be sure to post it.



If you can't find shock value, then create it. Scott Stratten, a Canadian social media expert, famously quipped, "I am not the jackass whisperer" when asked how he handles haters. That line and the image he created to go with it went viral in social media marketing circles.

It was shocking because it included a swear word (*gasp*) but also because it was so true.

It got marketers to sit up and take notice—Oh, we don't have to address the ~~jackasses~~-haters? Yay! It also got... "re-used without permission" by a bunch of ~~jackasses~~-copycats, but when it comes to sharing, emulation really is the most sincere form of flattery.



BoostCase came across a stunning yet shocking photo of a mountain climber taking a selfie with his iPhone on the Pacific Ocean Wall of El Capitan, Yosemite National Park, California. The photo alone is enough to give an acrophobic heart palpitations. BoostCase attached the photo to the following Tweet: So, how many bars do you think he has? #donottrythisathome

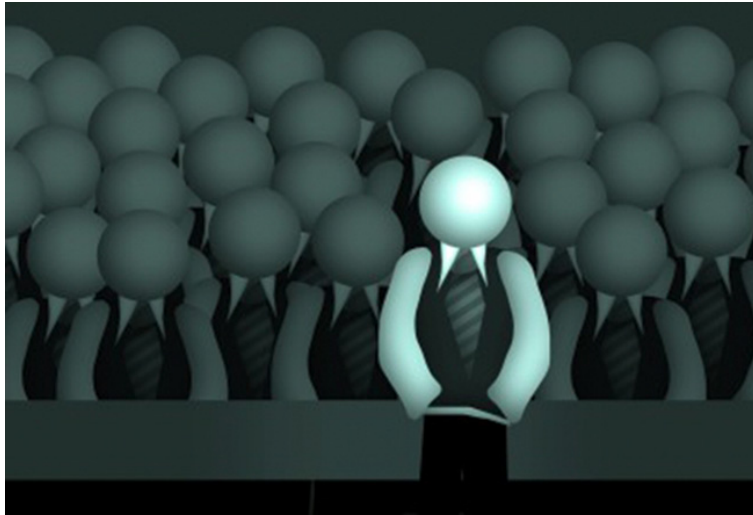
It got tons of Favorites and ReTweets and even sparked a few positive, unsolicited Tweets about BoostCase. One shocking photo. One simple Tweet. Lots of social sharing.

Marketing on social media can be shockingly easy sometimes!

**Boost-
Case
Study**

CONTROVERSY

It's not (always) about starting a fight



Controversy is a similar trigger to shock value but lacks the broader appeal. Not everyone is comfortable sharing controversial stuff. Weird Uncle Fred is the exception. Fred is the one who couldn't resist talking about a divisive issue around the Thanksgiving table that led to the great Mashed Potato battle of '05. If there is something that is going to set off a firestorm of controversy, Uncle Fred is gonna share it. Who taught him how to use Twitter anyway?

Most people aren't Uncle Fred.

When it comes to politics and religion, people may not share content even when they AGREE with it. **If you plan on posting some controversial content you know your followers will appreciate, don't expect them to necessarily share it.** That's not to say you shouldn't bother posting controversial content—it's just that it takes a bit more finesse to get people to share "hot button" material.



But, just the right mix of controversy can pay major sharing dividends.

For example:

In the wake of the Boston Marathon bombings, social media was awash with controversial content about gun control, immigration, Islam, etc... All of it was captivating but people were not necessarily sharing because of the implied endorsement and uncontrolled subtext (if I share this will I be labeled anti-Islam?).

Jason Falls of Social Media Explorer, however, talked about the impact of social media as it pertains to the Boston Marathon bombings.

Jason's post took a different bent

and brought up the very issue of the legal implications of false reporting on social media. What, wait? People could be PROSECUTED for sharing false information? Even if they didn't know it was false? That was quite controversial. A lot of people disagreed with him and the ensuing debate was heated to say the least, but it got shared even if it was along with a comment like "Can you believe what this crackpot said?". What he said wasn't OFFENSIVE, just PROVACTIVE. And, while it touched on the issue at hand, it was both meaningful on its own merits (it wasn't headline chasing) and it didn't have any implied subtext.

Your posts shouldn't be controversial for the sake of controversy—you want your controversial content to be meaningful on its own. In other words, don't be Uncle Fred.

NEED TO BELONG

Nothing is as comfortable as Fitting In

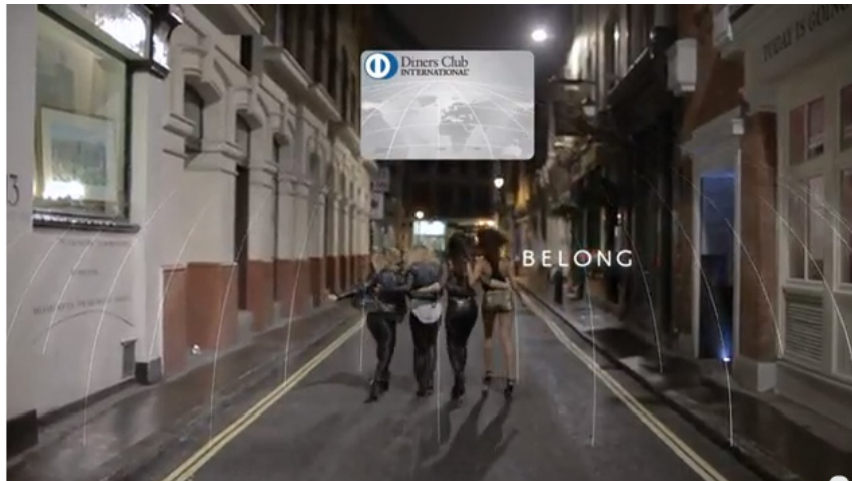
Social media is all about finding community, somewhere to belong. Think about it: followers, groups, friends, likes—even the vernacular is all about a social circle and acceptance. As such, the need to belong is a huge emotional trigger when it comes to sharing.

Perhaps more than any other emotional trigger, this one is aspirational. It's about how people want to be viewed and what groups they want to be accepted into. For example, someone who wants to be viewed as healthy and active and "accepted" by the running community would share content about carb loading before a big run (and not share about the triple-fudge decadence cupcake they just ate).

What we post and share may not be an accurate reflection of who we really are, instead social postings are an image of the person we want to appear to be. Take our profile picture, for example. It is literally the most flattering picture we have ever taken: we look tan, relaxed, young, and our hair was perfect. That is how we want people to view us for all eternity.



EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS: NEED TO BELONG



Diner's Club recently ran a social media contest to get people to share videos about the clubs they belong to—it didn't have to be about Diner's Club, it could be a book club, wine club (actually aren't all book clubs really wine clubs with 300 page coasters?), running club, etc. It was all about

exclusivity and the feeling of belonging; the feeling of being special. They honed the 'need to belong' to a keen edge with this campaign.



If you want to capitalize on this emotional trigger, create content that implies exclusivity and gives the user a sense of being welcomed and belonging.

This particular trigger is also the one that causes personalized content to resonate so well. If you reach out to a potential customer one-on-one, they are likely to retweet that message because it shows how special they are, and they want their friends to know it.

FEAR - What Did I Forget, What's Going To Happen?

Fear is a powerful emotional trigger for sharing content on social media. This is not fear in the traditional sense -- "Oh my God a BEAR! Run!" or "Here comes another Tweet from Uncle Fred!" Instead, it's more subtle and you see this sort of fear-based messaging all the time in social content. Typically, it's related to careers:



Five Tips to Not Lose Your Job In this Down Market!

***If You're a Marketer Who Wants to
Keep Your Job, Read This NOW!***

I think we found the new subhead for this eBook!

Do This . . . Or Get Left Behind!

People not only read this kind of content, they share it. It not only helps to allay their fears, but it also allows them to be the one to help others allay theirs. If you're able to craft helpful content that plays off your customers' fears, it's fair game UNLESS it's unnecessarily sensational. No one likes a fear monger and you don't want to get a reputation as the company that cried wolf.



At the beginning of summer, BoostCase came up with a list of the Top Ten US Travel Destinations with the Worst Cell Reception. It included certain national parks, stretches of well-traveled highways, campgrounds, tourist hot spots, etc. The list played upon people's fear of dead zones and that content was shared like crazy.

BoostCase sales increased right before the big summer travel season and people Tweeted and posted to their Facebook wall with their BoostCase protected smart phones all summer long from even the most remote locations.

Boost- Case Study

The key to successfully generating shares (and hopefully going viral) on social media is to understand why people share content. They do it to:

- **MAKE PEOPLE SMILE (Humor)**
- **INFORM (Useful)**
- **SHOW OFF (First to know! FIRST!)**
- **JOLT (Shock Value)**
- **INSTIGATE (Controversy)**
- **CONFORM (Need to Belong)**
- **BECAUSE THEY HAVE TO OR ELSE (Fear)**

You can craft content that includes all or some of these emotional triggers. If you stay true to your brand, think outside the box a bit, and utilize proven social media marketing principles, you should have no trouble creating share-worthy content.

Now that you know how to get tons of LOLs and OMGs, how are you going to manage the flood of engagement on your social profiles?

That's where Rignite comes in!

With Rignite you can:

- **Manage all your social media accounts from a single all-in-one dashboard**
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