



Make 'em laugh

We trust the opinions of our peers and in the past, people gathered in pubs and canteens, or spent hours on the phone, swapping experiences with **people they knew**.

Today, more of them meet on the internet and share conversations with an ever expanding group of **people they don't know**. Whether it's on or off line, word of mouth opinion always seems more reliable. And it's the transmission of opinion that's the basis for social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

In theory, the social networks should present great opportunities for advertising but in fact it doesn't work that well as people are turned off by **obvious banner advertising** (known as ad-blindness). But a good viral video can create a buzz which thousands of people will happily pass on to each other.

Viral marketing involves blogs, forums, chat rooms but a 30 second video is a more powerful, low cost way to reach a large audience fast. It's an ideal vehicle for SMEs to compete with their bigger rivals who are often less switched on or scared stiff about doing something so fundamentally outside their comfort zone.

The best video virals use comedy to generate **positive associations** between users and brands. The adage "if you can **"make 'em laugh"** they'll follow you anywhere" still rings true. But make the viewing experience worthwhile so forget videoing mintos in coke bottles and aim to be far more creative and funnier.

How funny does funny have to be? **The funnier the better** and then some more! Also add something contentious and you might wake up a whole new audience. But don't just leave them laughing, gently manoeuvre viewers towards your potent end point call to action.

Remember that **the internet is global** and what works in Europe might be seen as offensive in other parts of the world, like the US of A where everything is that bit more extreme. In the land of the free, topics like religion, sexuality, bodily functions, contraception, etc are often avoided or require more subtle and sensitive handling whereas violence and oozing patriotism are a-okay.



Generally work on the principle that you can't make everyone happy but don't be so cautious that you fail to create any interest. The digital arena is highly segmented so think clearly about **who** it is you're aiming at and what's likely to turn them on.

And don't try to bend online customers to your will – your budgets will take a beating. All that's required is to give your viewers what they want in fast, easily digestible bites of information, delivered in a creative, entertaining manner, which makes them sit up and (most importantly) tell a friend. Then your brand can develop a seriously loyal following.

If you'd like to see how a viral video could bring 000's of new prospects to your website then call me on **01925 262 800** or email: gerryw@flyingveemgt.co.uk