

# Evidence of Effectiveness of Viral Marketing Based on Case Studies

## Dowody skuteczności marketingu wirusowego na podstawie studiów przypadków

**Streszczenie.** Celem artykułu jest wskazanie determinantów skuteczności marketingu wirusowego na podstawie przypadków znanych firm globalnych. Omówiono sześć kluczowych zasad, które – jeśli są zachowane – zwiększają prawdopodobieństwo, że komunikat rozprzestrzeni się wirusowo. Do każdej z reguł dobrano przykłady ze świata biznesu, polityki, mediów społecznościowych. W artykule opisano również wady i zalety kampanii z wykorzystaniem marketingu wirusowego np. dla Coca-Coli.

**Słowa kluczowe:** marketing wirusowy, strategie marketingowe, marketing szeptany, reklama.

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of the following paper is to indicate the evidence of viral marketing effectiveness. In the first part of the publication the definition of viral marketing and evolution of this phenomenon are explained. Moreover, readers will become acquainted with the most popular social media platforms and their influence on viral marketing development. The second part of the article introduces a specific formula with elements that makes things go viral. It is six principles created by

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Jonah Berger, professor from University of Pennsylvania. Next, the advantages and disadvantages of viral marketing will be presented.

An effective advertisement is a good advertisement. A lot of things are included to build something snappy – professional graphics, ambient music, an interesting story. Nowadays it is so much harder to get customer's attention. Advertising messages are everywhere, people are tired of them and they have learned how to ignore them. Every company dreams to offer something that the customer will like and share. To achieve this, they need to prepare smart, valuable and interesting commercials that people will talk about. Social media platforms help to inform potential customers about new products and offers. They also encourage people to leave a comment, and share their message with others.

All of these principles are legitimate and it will be confirmed by providing real examples from successful companies. If companies follow this formula, they will have a much higher chance of becoming successful.

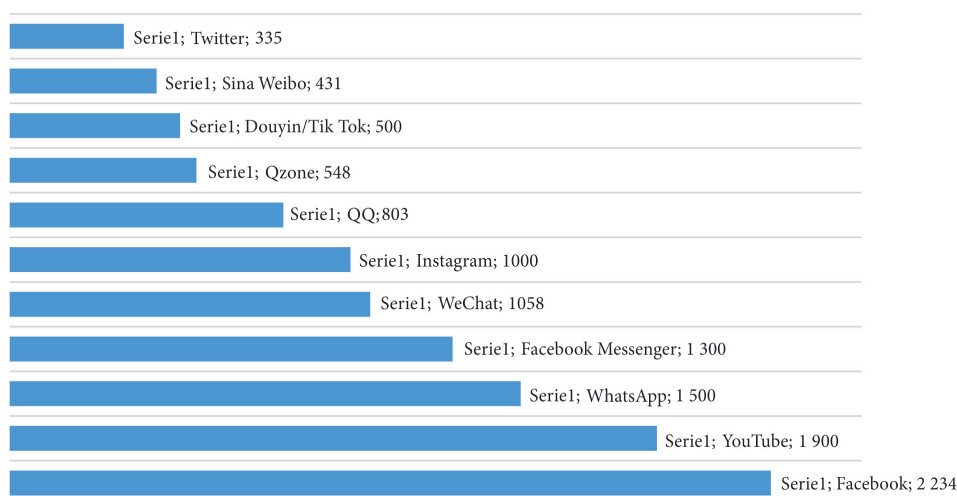
## 2. Definition and story of viral marketing

Viral marketing is a marketing technique which encourages potential customers to distribute company's information, services, and products among themselves via the Internet. This tool can also be described as a marketing strategy which involves users sharing messages to others. The expected result of this action is a multi-fold growth in sale.<sup>1</sup>

The most common channel to "go viral" is Social Media. The main reason is the lack of costs associated with the publication of advertising by the company and for the audience to receive and share the product with friends and "followers". Nowadays, it is very common to share information, pictures and videos online. People share with their virtual friends what interests them, gives them happiness, sadness, amusement etc. Often, they do not even realize that because of word distribution, they unconsciously promote the brand that runs the ad.<sup>2</sup>

According to statista.com portal, Facebook is still the most popular social network site worldwide (October 2018). Below is an abbreviated version of the most popular Social Media platforms in the world.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 The Economic Times, *What is 'Viral Marketing'*, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/viral-marketing> (accessed: 25.11.2018).
- 2 K. Kiwak, *Viral marketing*, The TechTarget, <https://searchsalesforce.techtarget.com/definition/viral-marketing> (accessed: 25.11.2018).
- 3 K. Petrick, *Most Effective Social Media Platforms for Viral Marketing*, <https://www.aumcore.com/blog/2016/06/29/most-effective-social-media-platforms-for-viral-marketing/> (accessed: 7.12.2018).



**Chart 2.** Most popular social network sites in the world in October 2018  
(number of active users in millions)

**Source:** statista.com (accessed: 20.11.2018).

Despite the fact that Facebook is the most active platform, not the whole content fits there. To post a campaign with viral potential, a business needs to choose the appropriate Social Media channel. It is suggested that Facebook is the most emotional platform. Facebook users seek personal connection, which is precisely the reason why this platform was created. On social media, it is important to be authentic and create a friendly atmosphere. When the message is genuine, it gives the consumer their trust and makes the possibility of sharing the media or ideas more likely.<sup>4</sup>

YouTube is the number two most active social network and leading platform for videos. People are posting, watching and sharing their favorite content there. In the group of 18–29 year-olds ads are more effective there than on the TV. It shows how Social Media affect today's generation. A lot of videos distributed there have viral potential, for instance, the most popular or funny moments, DIY, vloggers videos as well as educational videos. Recently people started to give more attention to videos with useful content prepared for enterprises. Michael Miller in his book *YouTube for Business: Online Video Marketing for Any Business* shows the three main tasks that video content marketing needs to achieve: to inform, educate and bring entertainment.<sup>5</sup> Also webinars – online workshops done with the use of

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>5</sup> M. Miller, *YouTube for Business: Online Video Marketing for Any Business*, Que Publishing, Indianapolis 2011, pp. 21–57.

technology that enables mutual communication between the meeting leader and the participants – are a good example of an effective tool.<sup>6</sup>

The third place in ranking for popularity is WhatsApp. This platform was created to help people all over the world communicate. In a commercial way this is a little bit complicated because WhatsApp does not sell advertisements. They made it clear from the start that they want to keep their basic strategy. They did this despite the fact that companies have found a way to get to their customers using tools like WhatsApp Bulk Sender or WA Panel – which help get to the customer with offers and products. Despite that, one of the main reasons WhatsApp exists is to exchange messages with friends and family. They talk about a plethora of things, also they recommend themselves products and share opinion about some brands.<sup>7</sup> This attitude takes us to the very beginning of viral marketing – word of mouth.

Word of mouth is the initiation of the natural behavior of the recommendation of goods by the consumer. Mark Smiciklas said that “word of mouth has the power to quickly build up or tear down the reputations of products, services and organizations”.<sup>8</sup> His point is that when people talk with each other, they do not care about brand reputation, they just tell their friends how they really feel about the product including also disadvantages. On the other hand if something surprised them positively, they will mention this and stress some advantages. When companies do a good job (e.g. take care of quality), there will be nothing to worry about. Unfortunately, customers can always find some reason for dissatisfaction. It can be caused by problems with delivery (even if this is not dependent on the business), an unpleasant employee or even a big line to the register. It can cause a really unpleasant experience that outweighs the satisfaction associated with the product. This shows that enterprise should take care of every detail associated with their product. We can be sure that customers are not going to lie to their friends and family. They will share the true information.

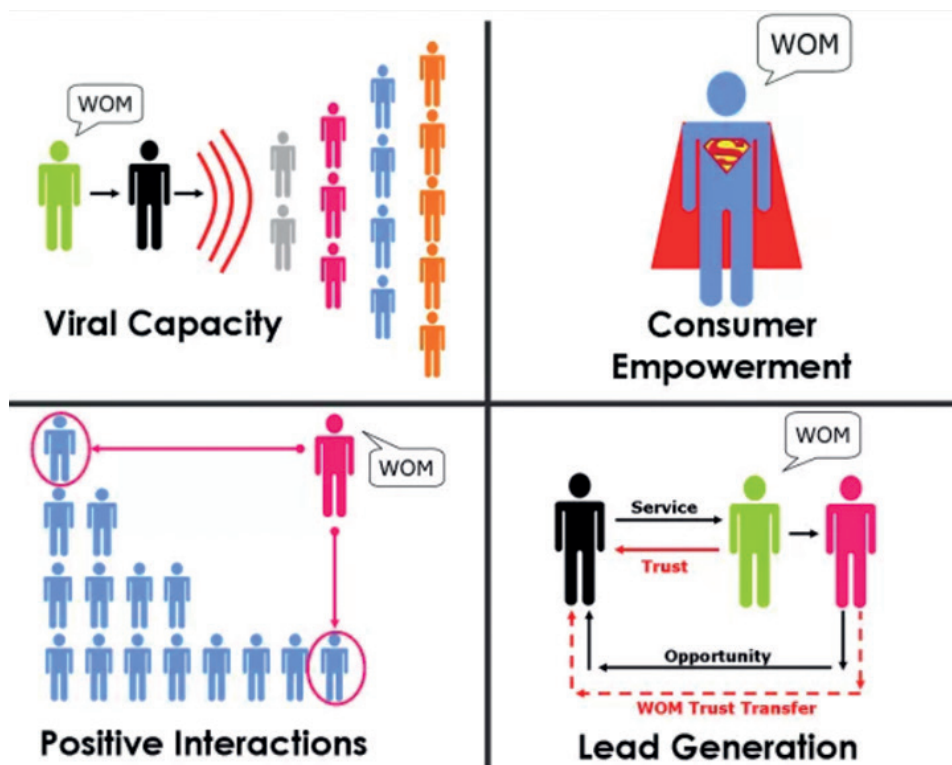
Furthermore, when we have a good product and customer service, word of mouth is our strength. People will probably say nice things about our brand. The figure below shows how it can translate into results.

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6 A. Olejniczak, M. Wielgus, *Videomarketing – przyczyny popularności trendu*, [in:] E. Śnieżek (ed.), *Trendy w Biznesie*, SIŻ, Łódź 2017, pp. 76–79.

7 Ratan, *Best tools for WhatsApp business marketing campaigns in 2018*, <https://yourstory.com/mystory/5cfb930b0a-best-tools-for-whatsapp> (accessed: 8.12.2018).

8 M. Smiciklas, *Word of mouth marketing*, <https://socialmediaexplorer.com/content-sections/tools-and-tips/word-of-mouth-marketing/> (accessed: 8.12.2018).



**Figure 3.** The essence of word-of-mouth marketing

**Source:** M. Smiciklas, *Word of mouth marketing*, <https://socialmediaexplorer.com/content-sections/tools-and-tips/word-of-mouth-marketing/> (accessed: 7.12.2018).

This picture shows that one person who shares an advert might get round with a message to a big group of people. It is good to know that negative word of mouth gets to people faster than positive information. Usually negative emotions are stronger than positive in the case of buying a product, so people share information about the brand subjectively and implicitly.

The word of mouth purpose is also about creating a buzz around the company. People need to receive something that they can talk about. Good introductions to that can be through free samples, brand events in public places (like shopping malls), competitions, degustation. Customers are then involved and they feel they are a part of something special, so after that they want to share their positive emotions with others. Thanks to this, the brand goal is achieved.

### 3. Evidence of viral marketing effectiveness

There are a lot of factors explaining why viral marketing is so effective. The main thing is that people are tired of traditional adverts and do not want to be encouraged to buy products so directly. A lot of customers have learned how to ignore commercials, and for companies it means that their actions are not effective. Because of that businesses need to prepare something unusual, to make people pay attention to their message. Jonah Berger – the expert of viral marketing, word of mouth and social influence has specified a scientific formula which answers the question – what makes things go viral. According to his book *Contagious. Why things catch on*, the author specifies six principles on how to make products or ideas go viral.<sup>9</sup>

The first one is **Social Currency**. It is about how people present themselves, they want to be different, more fascinating and interesting in the eyes of others. They share in social media whatever makes them look good. Nobody wants to show failures, boredom or ordinariness. This knowledge is very important for companies. If customers do not want to be average, they should not treat them like that. They ought to give them something unusual, and thanks to that make them feel special.

A great example is Coca-Cola which personalized 800 million bottle labels with names on them. Popular slogan *Share a Coke with...* tempts people to buy and share the popular drink with others. In the store customers were looking for a bottle with their name on it. Having a bottle with their name made them special, so they wanted to share this on social media.



**Figure 4.** Social currency in Coca-Cola activities

**Source:** Coca-Cola Bottling Company United, *Share a Coca-Cola Campaign... is that my name on there*, <https://cocacolaunited.com/blog/2013/08/02/share-a-coca-cola-campaign-is-that-my-name-on-there/> (accessed: 10.12.2018).

9 J. Berger, *Contagious. Why Things Catch on*, Simon & Schuster, New York 2013.

In 2014 Coke had 998 million impressions on Twitter and sold more than 150 million personalized bottles.<sup>10</sup> Lucie Austin who was one of the original brand executives in Australia to launch the campaign, perfectly sums up what Coca-Cola wanted to give people:

We gave consumers an opportunity to express themselves through a bottle of Coke, and to share the experience with someone else. The fact that your name is on a Coke bottle, it can't get more personal than that! The campaign capitalized on the global trend of self-expression and sharing, but in an emotional way. Coke is big enough to pull off an idea like this, which speaks to the iconic nature of the brand. Who would want their name on a brand unless it was as iconic as Coke? "Share a Coke" found the sweet spot by making consumers famous through the most iconic brand in the world.<sup>11</sup>

This campaign is a great example of social currency and a specific answer from Coca-Cola, which understood people needs, and gave them a product that helped them express themselves.

The second rule in Jonah Berger's formula is **Triggers**. It is about making people think about a brand by giving them short catchy reminders. Creating a slogan is one of the most popular and effective ways to stay in customer's mind for a long time. People repeat these to each other and finally, when somebody uses a phrase, it is not just a sentence, it brings memories and reminds them of a brand.

"Just do it", "Think Different", "I'm loving it", "A diamond is forever", "Tastes So Good", "Cats Ask for It By Name", "Because You're Worth It" – these are examples of some of the most popular slogans in America and in the world. A lot of people can say with no problem what brands imply in these slogans. Some brands never decide to translate them, because they want to stay in customer's mind in the same form everywhere in the world. Some of the lines of Nike products are made only with "Just do it" sign. They know the slogan is that popular that vast majority of the people will know what brand is that.

The next principle is **Emotion**. The author divided emotions into two groups. First – positive, like excitement, amusement, contentment. Second – negative, like anger, anxiety and sadness. All of these emotional states make people share, when they feel this kind of emotion. Obviously, nobody wants to share embarrassing things about their lives, so people don't really share when they get fired or their child fails the last math exam. On the other hand, a lot of people like to post when they get promoted, kids win something, or they are just doing great at school. This

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10 M. Hepburn, *The share a Coke story*, <https://www.coca-cola.co.uk/stories/share-a-coke> (accessed: 10.12.2018).

11 J. Moye, *Share a Coke. How the Groundbreaking Campaign Got Its Start 'Down Under'*, 17.07.2016, <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/au/news/share-a-coke-how-the-groundbreaking-campaign-got-its-start-down-under> (accessed: 10.12.2018).

example shows that principle number one (social currency) restricts from sharing emotional but shaming information.

It should be noted that people spend a lot of time being focused on the environment, politics, showbusiness, on whatever arouses their interest.

Additionally, social commercials are very emotional. When people see posts of a poor or sick kids, abandoned dogs, somebody who has just lost a house in fire, they are more likely to share and help. First of all, situations like that make us feel sad, and humans are full of empathy, so they want to help. Secondly, people think how they can help apart from money, so they get an idea to share the message with others. If they ask their friends to help, maybe somebody will have money for treatment. These kinds of posts also show our friends that we are good people, who want to help others.

Politics also brings really strong emotions. In 2016, during the presidential election America got divided into two different groups: Democrats and Republicans. In spite of the fact they have always had the same conflict, two years ago it was beyond what is considered normal. Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton's fans or opponents were posting and sharing their sets of beliefs in social media. People commented, argued, agreed, and expressed all types of emotions. Also after the result, the Internet users were posting their feelings about the vote. It didn't matter if they felt happy or angry, they didn't hesitate to show the world their positive or negative emotions.

The fourth step in the presented model is **Public**. People often imitate those around them. Psychology science named this "social proof".<sup>12</sup> It describes a social phenomenon about people who copy the actions and behaviors of others, to act the same as them in a given situation. There are a few types of social proof, first – expert social proof – it might be a doctor who recommend medicines, a prominent blogger who just put his new collection on the market or any expert in any area who exerts influence on others.

The second – celebrity social proof – superstars are walking advertisements, whatever they publicize or recommend, they get a lot of attention.<sup>13</sup> We can notice evolution of influence marketing, especially because Instagram new stars were born. People want to watch how their favorite influencers spend the day, what they eat, where they buy clothes, where they are going for vacation. Some sources declare that influencer marketing is the fastest-growing online customer-acquisition method.<sup>14</sup> An example of good celebrity – influencers campaign is

12 B. Feldman, *Social Proof: Your Key to More Magnetic Marketing*, <https://neilpatel.com/blog/social-proof/> (accessed: 3.01.2019).

13 S. Hum, *I'll Have What She's Having: 26 Examples of Social Proof Used in Marketing*, <https://www.referralcandy.com/blog/social-proof-examples/> (accessed: 3.01.2019).

14 E. Knightley, *20 Influencer Marketing Statistics that Will Surprise You*, <https://digitalmarketinginstitute.com/blog/20-influencer-marketing-statistics-that-will-surprise-you> (accessed: 3.01.2019).

M&M's. The company lets customers decide what kind of flavor they should offer them next. They had three options to choose. M&M's asked over 20 influencers to join and share a campaign in social media. They amplified the message across their social platforms and geo-targeted posts to involve people across the USA.<sup>15</sup> The results surpassed all expectations – more than 1 million people voted for their favorite flavor. They built up over 269 million social media, PR and influencer impressions; 216 influencer partner posts and 14,4 million social engagements.

The third type of social proof is user social proof. Bright Local company conducted a customer study to answer the question how reading consumers reviews determines if a business is good or not. They found out that 88% of customers believe and follow these opinions. Furthermore, 85% of them read at least ten reviews before they trust some company. It shows that people choose product carefully and they want to make sure it is going to meet their expectations. Previous customers should not have any intentions to lie, so others trust them and base on their opinions.

The next type of social proof is wisdom of the crowd. This formula realizes how people follow the mass. Bestsellers, “people who bought X also bought Y”, top 10 – people what to see what is popular, what crowds decide is interesting, they want to follow them to make a right decision. A perfect example of this kind of social proof comes from the 1960's when people all over the world bought over 50 million of Elvis Presley's record. Despite that they wanted to sell more, so they decided to make an advertisement using psychological and marketing tricks to make people buy more. The title they put on the album is a classic social proof – 50,000,000 Elvis fans can't be wrong.

The last form of social proof is wisdom of friends. People trust their friends and family recommendations more than strangers. Some customers realize that sometimes influencers are not really using products that they promote, or some opinions and comments are made by companies which sell some product. Because of that customers are more careful and only trust friends, who typically have no interest in recommending products. In marketing, this type of social proof is used in numerous cases. For example, TripAdvisor when you try to look for a restaurant or hotel, they give you recommendations what your friends tried before and it might interest you too. They say “Your friends have visited this!” – they know if stars and opinions of others are not going to get your attention, your friends are a better option. You can always call and ask how they liked it and ask for details, you can't do this with random online opinions.

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15 Influencer Marketing Hub, *12 Influencer Marketing Examples That Prove Influencer Marketing is Digital Marketing's Next Big Thing, Now*, <https://influencermarketinghub.com/12-influencer-marketing-examples/> (accessed: 3.01.2019).



**Figure 5.** Social proof and Elvis Presley's album

**Source:** B. Feldman, *Social Proof: Your Key to More Magnetic Marketing*, <https://neilpatel.com/blog/social-proof/> (accessed: 3.01.2019).

The fifth Jonah Berger's principle is **Practical Value**. People like to share value and practical information to help others. Customers exchange useful opinions to save others' time and energy. If you know that your friend is interested in some specific field, and you know about some great deal, you will probably send a message to this person. Parents send some coupons, easy recipes, useful articles about taking care of the house to their children who have just moved out from family's houses. Groupon (service with virtual coupons) is a good marketing example how to help people save money by using their vouchers. They offer discounts on almost everything – from trips to cooking workshops. People like to share something that sounds like a good deal. Scrolling Groupon we can find a lot of different services, some of them might be something that our relatives or friends were looking for, so why shouldn't we text them and send an offer? These actions make companies more popular and because of word of mouth they immediately get more trust from potential customer, because the brand was recommended by someone they believe.

The next key factor in the steps framework are **Stories**. It is one of the most efficient way to share information and ideas. Customers don't want to see boring commercials, this does not get their attention and does not make them buy a product. They want to be given some kind of entertainment. In the story the most important features are narrative, characters and plot. The product should be in the background, just to let customers know who prepared this production and who provided them with so many emotions.

In 2017 Samsung wanted to draw closer their service across India, because people there needed to go sometimes 50 miles just to have a minor repair of some device.<sup>16</sup> Samsung decided to buy 535 vans to drive to customers who needed service. And it is what the commercial is about. A driver gets a call about a broken television and he needs to go there to fix it, but he doesn't realize that the way there will be full of obstacles. The story is very interesting from the very beginning, and we can see a little bit of real India. The driver is very calm and helpful, which shows us that he is not angry to drive that far. When he finally arrives, he sees a blind girl, and then many blind kids who are waiting for the Samsung service to fix their TV because they want to see their housemate singing in a popular contest show.<sup>17</sup> The story is very touching and surprising. The company introduced their new service in a very smart way and customers responded very positively to this kind of promotion. The campaign got over 150 million views.<sup>18</sup> The CEO of Samsung, India Ranjivjit Singh summed up this campaign saying: "Our new initiative of expanding to rural India, right up to the taluka level, helps us in taking care of our valued customers, wherever they are", he said. "The new campaign video gives a glimpse of yet another initiative toward our 'Make for India' commitment. We are very happy to receive an overwhelming response from consumers across India, who have given a big thumb up to the campaign".<sup>19</sup>

Social currency, triggers, emotion, public, practical value, stories – all these factors can make commercials catch on. It is a good idea to analyze cases of other companies and try to find these dimensions there. Then, it will be easier to create something new. These factors are the ones that will help your advertisement go viral.

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16 T. Nudd, *Ad of the Day: See the Sweet Samsung Ad That's Become a Major Hit in India*, <https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/ad-day-see-sweet-samsung-ad-thats-become-major-hit-india-175484/> (accessed: 21.12.2018).

17 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=779KwjAYTeQ> (accessed: 21.12.2018).

18 T. Nudd, *The 10 Most Watched Ads on YouTube in 2017*, <https://www.adweek.com/creativity/the-10-most-watched-ads-on-youtube-in-2017/> (accessed: 21.12.2018).

19 *Ad of the Day: See the Sweet Samsung Ad That's Become a Major Hit in India*, <https://princestreet.co/post/155726289919/ad-of-the-day-see-the-sweet-samsung-ad-thats/amp> (accessed: 21.12.2018).

## 4. Advantages and disadvantages of viral marketing

Using this kind of promotion method has a lot of pros and cons. The company, as a prime mover and creator of advert, needs to prepare a message which people will repeat and share. It is very important to create publicity that is going to be consistent with another firm's action. On this basic level, enterprise should also estimate a risk connected with sharing such load-bearing commercial. Discussion in a team responsible for this decision should play down all second thoughts and help to make best resolution.

One of the biggest advantages of viral marketing is a relatively low cost to reach potential customers. Viral spreads for free, there are people just interested in communicating to share the message. When a company shares a viral video, post, or image in Social Media, they do not need to pay any money to publish it. The only thing they need to pay for is preparing an advert. Depending on what kind of commercial it is going to be (video, mem, picture), costs will differ, especially when they want this to look professional. Comparing viral marketing to, for example, television, the former is much more profitable. The cost of production in many cases may be the same, but if you want to make the advertisement available on TV, you need to be aware of the huge costs associated with its existence in a given broadcasting time. There are no restrictions on the Internet as to the duration and specific times of display, which is why there are no costs to distribute information on the Internet, so in this area it is a definite advantage.

The second advantage of creating a sharing-potential message is building an emotional and strong relationship with the recipients. When the message is interesting in some way: funny, surprising or serious, paying attention to important things, customers start to perceive the brand in a completely different way. They identify with it, they get familiarized from a more human side, begin to like it – these effects are obviously the goal of any company deciding on this type of campaign. They are so important because receivers are much more likely to talk about something they like, what they are convinced about, which made them want to share it with others. This approach of customers, in the long term, may result in a better reception of other advertising messages of the company, also existing outside the Internet. Such behaviors strengthen the value and position of the brand. One virus can solve the problem of long-term development of opinions, one campaign that will catch the community and become a virus. The great advantage is that in a very short time, the company can boost sales through massive sharing and opinions circulating in the virtual and real world.

Strong emotions are one of the most important building blocks. Christmas time is a good moment to connect people and show them something that will really involve them. Some companies look for some social subjects, the other ones for touching stories, but everybody wants people to watch and talk about it with

others. When the commercial is really good, receivers feel strong emotions, and they want to share their feelings with friends and families. The easiest way is to share a video in their Social Media, write some comment and wait for people's reaction to talk about it. A good example might be John Lewis company. Every year in December, they show a beautiful commercial, and for some of their loyal customers it is a symbol of Christmas. People all over the world wait for this just to feel Christmas atmosphere and watch some valuable story. Despite the fact that advertisement never promotes their products, during this time their number of orders is significantly increasing. Furthermore, they can build a strong relation with customers, who will always recommend their products.

The next asset is an opportunity to reach new customers. Due to the lack of control over the spread of advertising, the message is not addressed to a specific group of people. Therefore, the advertisement will reach different market segments, not just the target ones. It may turn out that this procedure will expand our target group, which will increase our market share.

Although there are a lot of benefits of viral marketing, all are burdened with a considerable risk. The first thing is about distribution. If a company decides to share something on the Internet, it must be aware of the fact it will not be withdrawn. Nothing is lost on the Internet, everything that appears there once can be downloaded and shared by anyone in any place in the world. So, if something goes wrong, as it was predetermined, you can delete the message from the channels over which you have control, but the other corrective actions will be inconclusive. The company must be ready for the fact that the advertisement can be misinterpreted by a certain group of recipients, so the viral effect will be opposite to the intended one. Customers, instead of recommending products and services of a given company, will start to dissuade from them. Then, even the most professional brand image built over the years can be destroyed, and will be very difficult to rebuild. Moreover, untrue rumors can be shared and repeated over and over again, and because you can still find the source of confusion, there is a high probability that nobody will forget about it soon.

The disadvantage is also the fact that each piece of information we send can be modified. It works in a similar way to a dead phone – people pass a string of sentences, but they can forget or misunderstand something, so the final version can be completely different from the original one. However, it is worth bearing in mind that not only through the Internet activity, the company may fall victim to the Internet crisis.

Another minus of viral marketing are fake news. Unfortunately, not only the company or the brand can create information about themselves, but also its competitors. As it was written above, something like this cannot be controlled and consumers can get to know our company from the side we would not like to show. A good example is a joke made by an online artist on very popular pop singer, Justin Bieber. They figured out that they can characterize one of them as a singer and take

a photo of him eating burrito. The joke was that he would eat in sideways. Then, they sent a photo to popular gossip sites, so they could share it on their channels. They did not have to wait long for the reactions. Internet sites and online users have massively shared the photo, laughing and commenting that the star cannot eat Mexican delicacy correctly. All the most important media in the United States (and not only) shared information as a funny news item of the day. The Internet went crazy. Justin Bieber's picture was everywhere, that day everyone was talking only about it. You can claim that the joke did not harm anybody. However, this virus could damage the image of a Canadian singer as a brand, or simply privately offended him. Nevertheless, apart from ethical issues, this message is a perfect example – how to engage the audience. People have reacted so emotionally that they started to upload photos in their Social Media when they eat burrito the same way as Justin Bieber. Their involvement and reception of the message certainly exceeded the expectations of creators who had not expected such a large-scale response.

To sum up, viral marketing has a lot of advantages and disadvantages. This kind of communication form can bring benefits, but is also related with a risk. It is very important to answer the question if publicity is going to be consistent with the strategy and business concept and what kind of risk this type of communication involves. It is self-evident that enterprise can prepare a few scripts with answers what to do if something goes wrong. This sort of insurance will allow to act quickly in the moment of crisis.

## 5. Conclusion

After having considered all the points, it is clear that nobody can make a viral advertisement without the help of the public. Despite the fact that knowledge of all available tools might help us create a viral-potential message, everything depends on people. The public is the only force that may decide if they are going to share something and make it popular or not. The purpose of the article was to show the concrete factors that make things go viral. According to Jonah Berger's book – *Contagious. Why Things Catch on?* we can definitely indicate six variables – social currency, triggers, emotion, public, practical value and stories. All case studies attached to these factors are supposed to help us understand the phenomenon. It is easier to believe that we can prepare a viral potential message by seeing successful campaigns where these tools were used. It is always a challenge to create something fresh and unusual, but in this example, it is a necessity. Everybody wants new entertainment, and when we prepare something special, we know it is not a good fortune when it gets popular, it was hard work to include all the factors – the things that make people share.

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