



Sep 26, 2007

Case Study #:

[How Blog Advertising Helped Video Series Go Viral](#)

SUMMARY: Blogs are key in generating online buzz to make a viral campaign successful. You may even want to consider advertising on blogs to kickstart online word of mouth.

DuPont put together a series of videos and followed this approach, being very careful about not looking self-serving. They ended up attracting tens of thousands of views at a fraction of what traditional media would have cost and increased brand awareness in ways they didn't expect.

CHALLENGE

“We were interested in tapping a younger, curious online audience that was likely to take part in blogging and extend our brand awareness,” says Gary Spangler, E-Business Leader, DuPont Electronic & Communication Technologies. “The dilemma we faced was in creating compelling stories about DuPont science that would resonate with an online audience.”

Spangler and his team became ardent on using blogs after learning more about viral’s ROI efficiencies compared to mass advertising, as well as the medium’s deftness at creating interactivity between a brand and the public.

“In the blogosphere, people are open about expressing their opinions on what they like and don’t like. We wanted that feedback. We didn’t want the videos to appear to be self-serving. The broad range of people on blogs was also attractive, as we felt we could reach both the design engineers and the consumer public.”

Spangler wondered if they could buy ad space on blogs in an effort to make an online video series go viral while not turn off bloggers or their intended audience.

CAMPAIGN

Spangler and his team researched the blog landscape and decided to center their campaign on a five-part video series called 'DuPont Science Stories.'

Here are the five steps they took to launch the videos, advertise the effort on eight carefully selected blogs and measure the campaign's effectiveness:

> Step #1. Determine campaign goals

Since buying into blogs was uncharted territory for them, the team outlined four initial goals:

- o Create general public awareness about their products
- o Encourage bloggers and their audiences to lead discussions and tell others about what interested them
- o Combine insight and talking points so that the marketing team was prepared for whenever they might need to respond
- o Measure effectiveness with specific numbers on video views, links, blog comments and press reviews

> Step #2. Create the video series

Next, they began to put together the series of two- to three-minute videos by taking the most appropriate archival film and mixing it with new footage. They sifted through hours of television spots from the 1950s and '60s before coming up with rough drafts and added new footage during post-production editing.

> Step #3. Identify target blogs and buy video space

To get the media coverage they wanted, Spangler worked with two blog advertising networks to launch the video series on eight sites:

- o Two general interest - Boing Boing and Digg
- o Three science-centric - SEED Science Blogs, Science Blog and Kircher Society
- o Three targeted-content - Boompa, Left Lane News and Building Blog

Because advertising on these blogs was relatively new, Spangler encouraged the bloggers to comment on the final video cuts. The versions were approved without changes.

Spangler's team also uploaded the videos to YouTube, Google Video and Blip.tv. "We were really interested in seeing the reaction by the media and public in terms of a company like DuPont showing up on these Web 2.0 spaces. We didn't know what the initial response would be."

At the same time, they housed the video segments on a microsite, issued a press release and included a total of five mentions in their three different weekly employee newsletters over the course of a month.

> Step #4. Enable easy viral forwarding

To encourage the viral aspect, they set up a tab on the online video player with three buttons at the bottom of the screen:

- o Email - to let viewers easily forward the video to friends
- o Get code - so bloggers could copy the videos from the microsite or the eight blogs
- o Get link - to let Webmasters capture the hotlink

In each case, the video screen was reduced to about half the size as the footage continued to play while users could input the needed information.

> Step #5. Online focus groups

To gauge the effectiveness of the video series, Spangler and his team gathered an online focus group to data-mine survey participants who frequented the eight blogs they targeted.

From this, they interviewed people before narrowing the interested individuals to 258, who fit into three categories:

- o Age 18 to 44
- o Active Internet user
- o Visited a science Web site or blog or read a science magazine in the past month

"It is really difficult to measure things like interest and sentiment, so we had to do something very concrete in terms of learning how the videos were working," Spangler says.

RESULTS

All the pre-campaign work and ad buying paid off. In the first seven days, 50,047 viewers watched the videos on the eight targeted blogs and the Science Stories microsite.

They also had 1,823 views on YouTube, and 72 blogs and Web sites linked to the microsite. 608 people added comments to those sites, and DuPont received critical praise in news outlets, including CNN, Business Week, Forrester Research and Ad Rants.

“It cost a fraction of what traditional media would have to get that kind of engagement,” Spangler says. “And it better informed us on how we can use video in our overall marketing mix.”

Feedback from the focus group data was also promising. After seeing the video:

- o 90% recalled the DuPont brand without being solicited
- o 93% said they thought they learned something new
- o 92% “liked” the videos
- o 88% thought they were interesting to watch
- o 62% said they were likely to tell someone else about them

In a further breakdown of the last data point, 76% of the coveted demo of buzz-generating 18- to 24-year-olds said they planned to tell their friends about the videos.

Meanwhile, in a tighter demo-age breakdown on the viral question, not surprisingly, the younger the respondent, the more buzz they said they would create: 75% of 18-to-24-year olds said they would tell someone else, and 67% of 25-to-44-year olds said the same.

“The word of mouth, based on what people said and our calculations, was 99,014 people in addition to the 50,047 who viewed the videos. We believe that the audience was interested in science and were a targeted group for us to create awareness with.”

Four big lessons Spangler says he learned from the test:

Lesson #1. Companies can market through blogs.

Lesson #2. Good content -- even from a traditional marketer -- presented well can generate word of mouth. “It’s not only chickens and fizzing soda bottles that get the buzz.”

Lesson #3. Media and the public expect to see your firm’s videos on YouTube, Google Video, blip.tv, etc.

Lesson #4. Video can be an effective form of communicating scientific contributions.

Gary Spangler spoke at this summer’s ad:tech conference in Chicago. For upcoming conferences, go to <http://www.ad-tech.com>

Useful links related to this article

Creative samples from DuPont's video series:

<http://www.marketingsherpa.com/cs/dupont/study.html>

Taylor Nelson Sofres - helped set up and run the focus group:

<http://text.tns-global.com>

Denuo, a Publicis Strategic Media and Advertising Consulting - contributed various points of

consultancy, including media relations:

<http://www.denuogroup.com/>

Federated Media Publishing (FM Networks) - blogs network used for the paid ads:

<http://www.federatedmedia.net/blog/>

Blog Ads - blogs network used for the paid ads:

<http://www.blogads.com/>

BrightCove Inc. - provided video technology:

<http://brightcove.com/>

BuzzMachine by Jeff Jarvis - buzz guru who consulted on the campaign:

<http://www.buzzmachine.com/>

Amanda Congdon/RocketBoom - provided campaign guidance:

<http://www.rocketboom.com/stories/>

DuPont's microsite:

<http://www.stories.DuPont.com>

DuPont:

<http://www.dupont.com>

Word of Mouth Marketing Association:

<http://www.womma.org>

- [Home](#)
- [SherpaStore](#)
- [Your Email Account](#)
- [Q&A](#)
- [Search Library](#)
- [Advertise with Us](#)
- [Store Affiliates](#)
- [Sitemap](#)
- [Privacy](#)
- [About Us](#)

Questions? Contact Customer Service at (877) 895-1717 (outside the US and Canada please call (401) 247-7655), service@sherpastore.com

[Web Analytics Powered by Omniture](#)

© 2000-2007 MarketingSherpa, Inc., ISSN 1559-5137

Editorial HQ: MarketingSherpa Inc 499 Main St., Warren, RI 02885