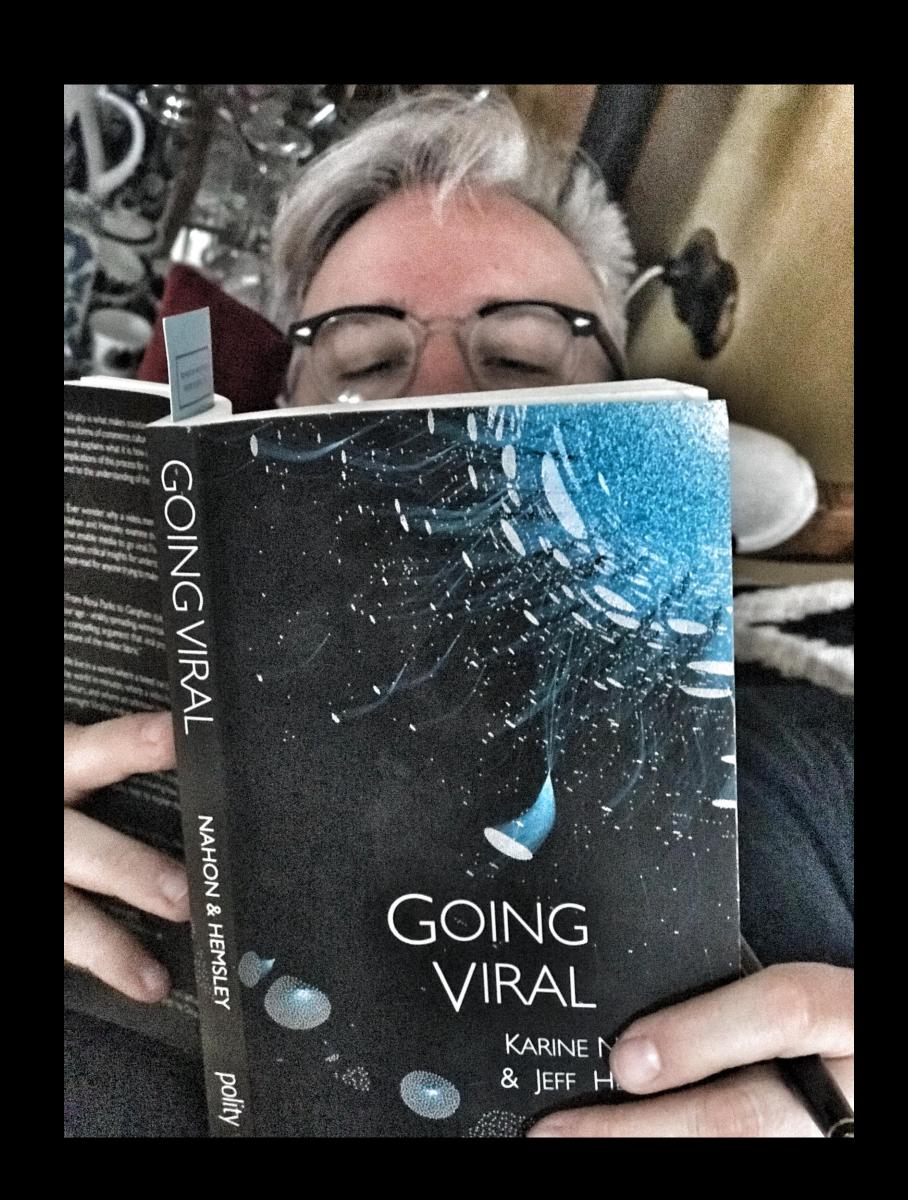
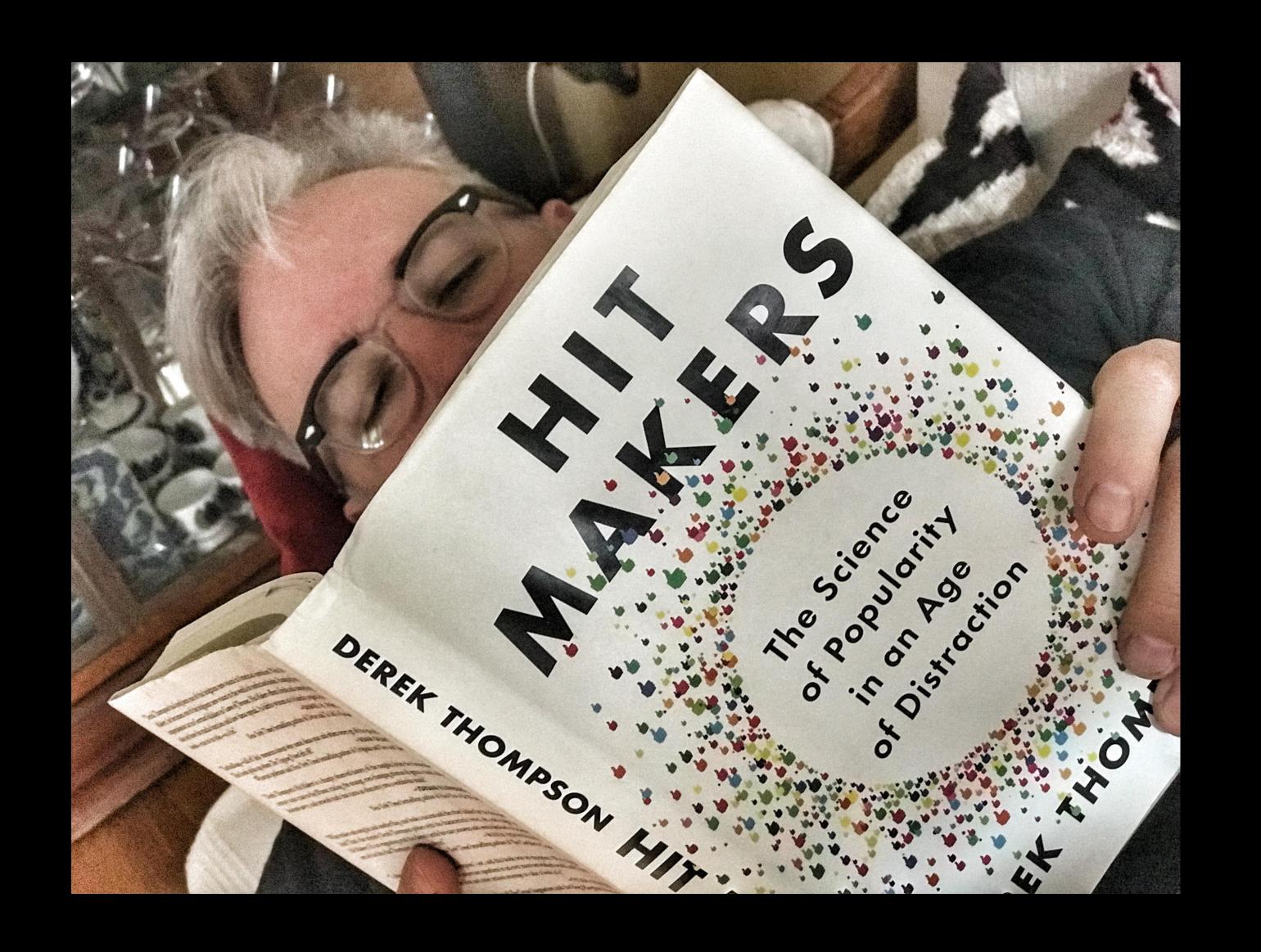


# INFECTIOUS! When Brands Go Viral

IE Professor Brian Hallett February, 2018











HOW
DOES
VIRALITY
HAPPEN?

## People love to share!

Open your phone.

Look at the three last things you shared.

### Answer these questions:

- 1. Who did it come from?
- 2. Why do you trust them?
- 3. Why did you share it?
- 4. Did you share it with your own network or with another network?
- 5. What does it say about you?

The internet is a Brand assassinating technology

flooding the world with information and drowning out the signal of advertising for many products

in all sorts of markets - music, film, art and politics - the future of popularity will be harder to predict as the broadcast power of radio and television democratizes and the channels of exposure grow.



# Is advertising broken, or is it rich with possibilities?

## Questions during this journey

### INFECTIOUS

How much of virality of controllable?

To what extent is it predictable?

Is it a process that can be designed or does it emerge out of the whims of the crowd?

What are the roles of networks and social structures?

How can Brands create content which goes viral?

How can Brands control the process of sharing for maximum impact?

What is the secret to making products that people like - in music, movies,

television, books, games, apps, across the landscape of culture?

Why do some products fail in these marketplaces while similar ideas catch

on and become massive hits?

WE ARE LIVING THROUGH AN INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION IN ATTENTION.

And it's all about me!

People use about one third of their personal conversations to talk about themselves.

Online that number jumps to 80 percent.

Human beings have shared since the beginning of time.

Human beings have shared since the beginning of time.

Homo Sapiens - 200,000 years old.

Prehistoric art - 50,000 years old.

**Cuneiform in Sumeria - 3000 BCE** 

Hieroglyphics ancient Egypt - 3000 BCE

Printing Press - 1440 AD

Morse Code - 1844

Telephone call - 1876

Radios, TVs, VCRs, Celphones, Internet - 10 years each

Around the fire.
Around the radio.
In the cinema.
In the living room with the TV.
With the computer.
With the phone.

Sharing is not new.

### ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK

The song that, more than any other, brought rock and roll into mainstream culture around the world

## ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK



"Blackboard Jungle"

## **CONTENT SHIFT**

Infrequent

Big

**Broadcast** 

Frequent

**Small** 

Social

### People love to share!

100 million conversations about brands every hour.

Great vacations.
Great shopping deals.
Reviews and critiques.
New movies, music, culture.
The latest recipe.



CONTENT MIGHT BE KING

BUT DISTRIBUTION IS THE KINGDOM.

# Gatekeepers

What are they?

# Gatekeepers

Gatekeepers are people, collectives, companies or governments that, as a results of their location in a network, can promote or suppress the movement of information from one part of a network to another.

### YOUR ARE A GATEKEEPER



Information can go through

Information stops with me

**Bridging networks** 

### HOW DO WE DEAL WITH INFORMATION OVERLOAD?

### **GATEKEEPERS**

**SOURCES WE AGREE WITH** 

INFORMATION THAT
CHALLENGES OUR VIEW OF THE
WORLD IS MORE DIFFICULT TO
COGINITIVELY DEAL WITH

FINDING THE RIGHT INFORMATION TAKES TIME AND EFFORT

SATISFICING IS THE IDEA THAT ONCE WE HAVE SOMETHING GOOD ENOUGH WE STOP SEARCHING

### HOW DO WE DEAL WITH INFORMATION OVERLOAD?

## GATEKEEPERS

**BROWSERS** 

**SEARCH ENGINES** 

**SOCIAL NETWORKS** 

**BLOGS** 



## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE EXPOSED TO A LINK?



Do we WATCH?

CONTEXT

CONTENT

**FORM** 

SOCIAL FORCES

**IDENTITY** 

**STANCE** 

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE ARE EXPOSED TO A LINK?



Do we FORWARD?

PRESENTATION OF SELF

Branding Strategy: Who is your audience?

For something to go big, it has to be interesting to those beyond your immediate audience - the audience of your audience.

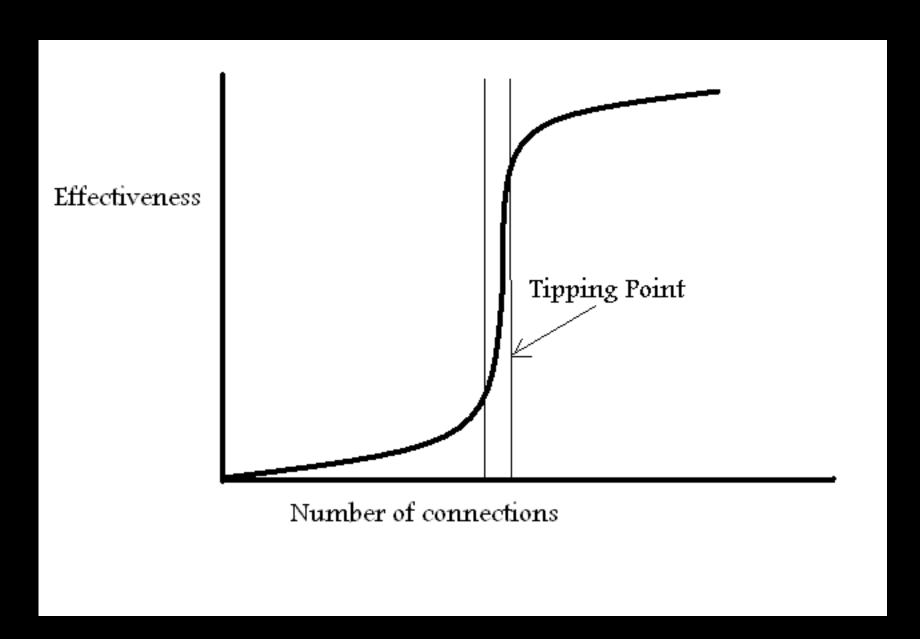
# VIRALITY

"Virality is a social information flow where many people simultaneously forward a specific information item, over a short period of time, within their social networks, and where the message spreads beyond their own [social] networks to different, often distant networks, resulting in a sharp acceleration in the number of people who are exposed to the message."

- "Going Viral", Nahon and Hemsley

### GLADWELL'S "THE TIPPING POINT":

THE POINT WHEN THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE, COUPLED WITH THE INERTIA OF DIFFUSION, PROPELS THE INNOVATION DEEPLY INTO THE NETWORK



**VIRALITY** 

SPEED VS. NUMBERS Virality is about the way information spreads more than numbers.

It can reach millions or hundreds.

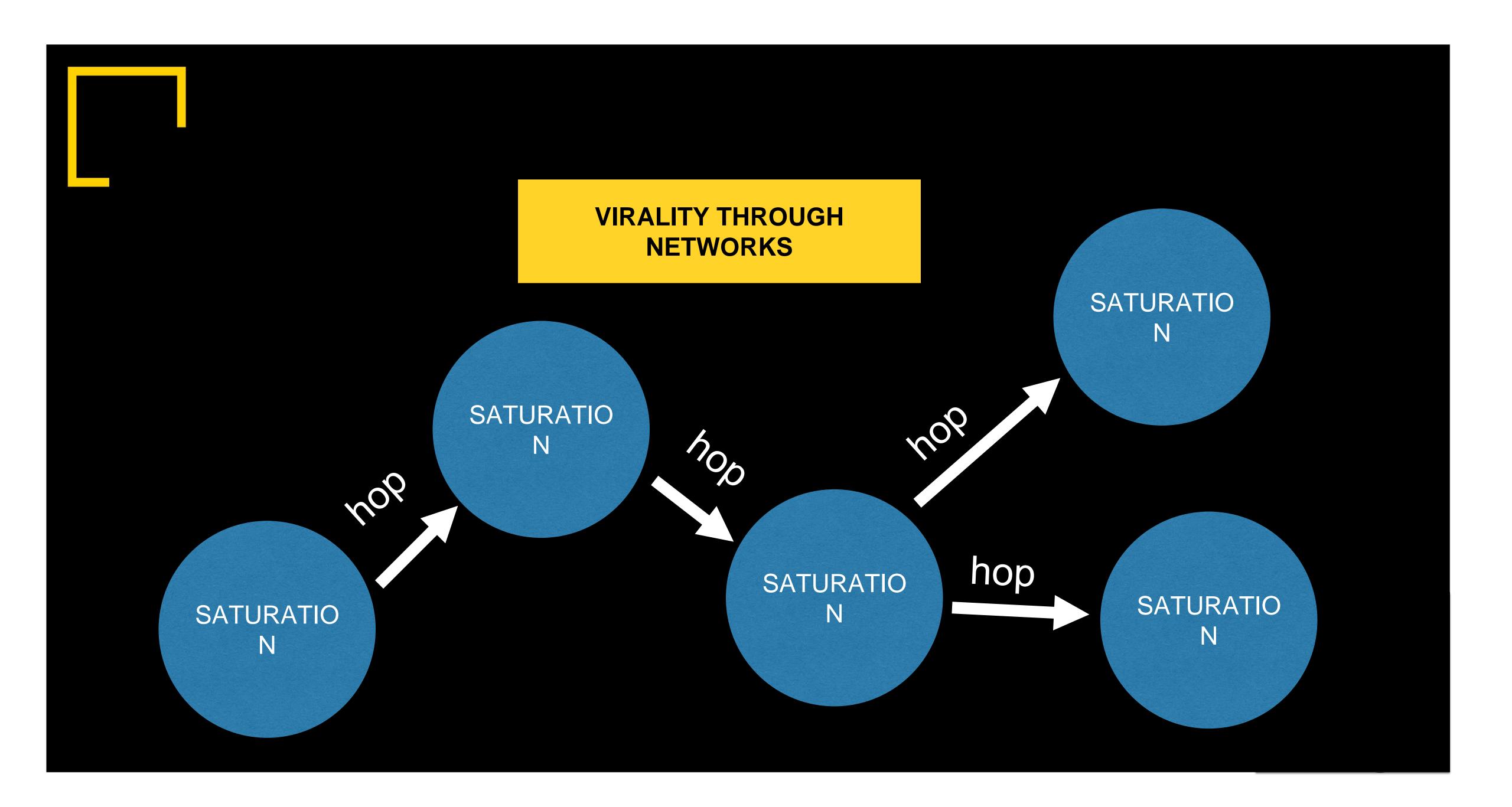
#### **VIRALITY**

**Numbers** 

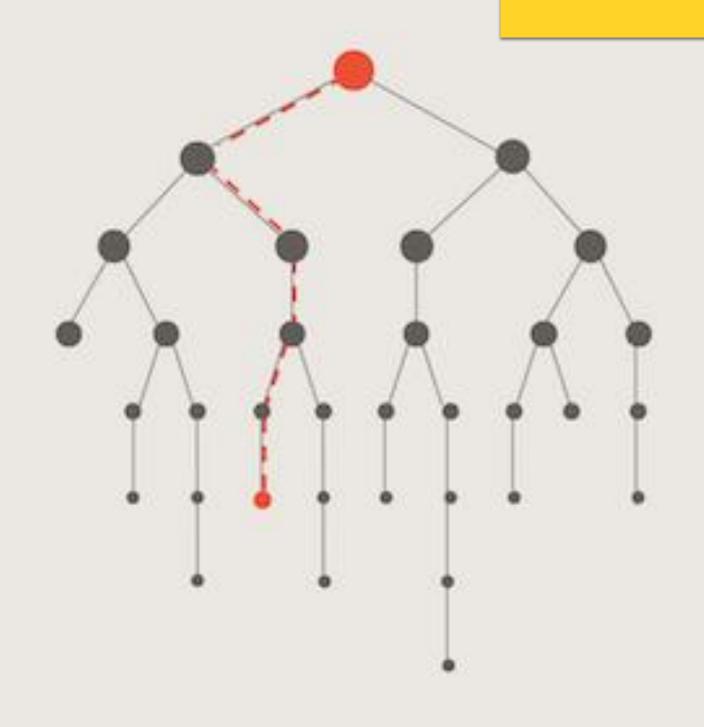
The reach in terms of numbers of people exposed to content

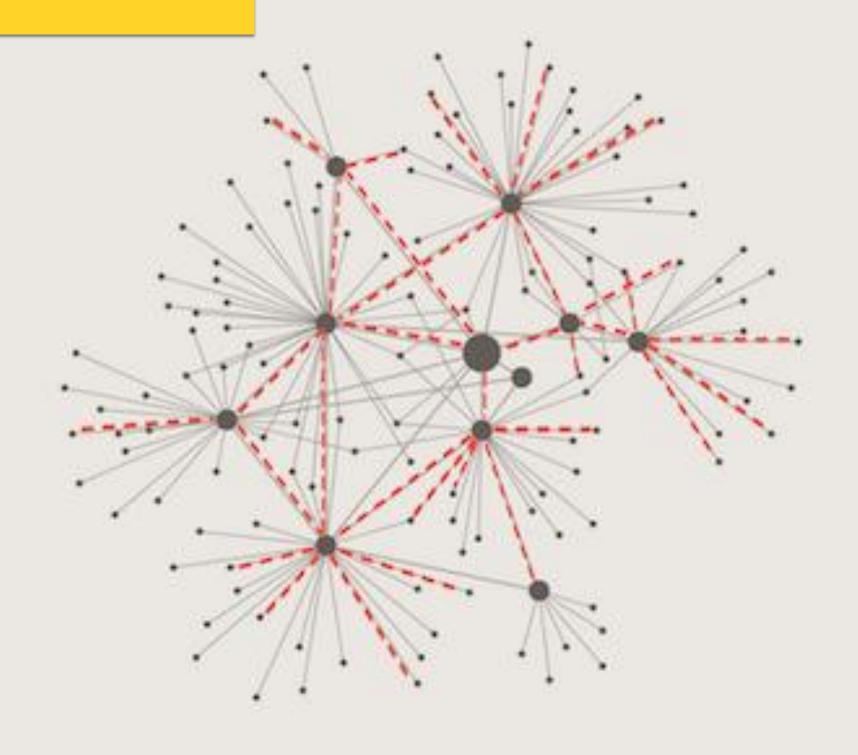
**Networks** 

The reach in terms of the distance the information travels by bridging multiple networks



# VIRALITY THROUGH NETWORKS





TRADITIONAL HIERARCHIES

INFORMATION MOVES SLOWLY COMMAND AND CONTROL

RESPONSIVE NETWORKS

INFORMATION TRAVELS FAST LEARN AND ADAPT



## **Strong Ties**



Our own inner circles of friends, family, classmates, and so forth.

These are our own personal network.

Weak Ties



The spaces between clusters, where links are sparse, are called network holes and are bridged by weak ties.

You and Beyonce both have 100 STONG TIES



SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

#### CREATED THROUGH COMMON INTEREST IN CONTENT

INTEREST NETWORK ONLY LAST AS LONG AS THE CONTENT KEEPS COMING

INTEREST NETWORKS

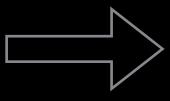
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

#### WHAT VIRALITY ISN'T

**MEMES** 

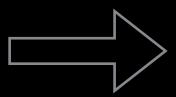
**UNITS OF CULTURE** 

**WORD OF MOUTH** 



**TELLING OTHERS** 

INFORMATION CASCADES



**FOLLOWING OTHERS** 

	SOCIAL SHARING	SHARP ACCELERATION	REACH BY NUMBERS	REACH BY NETWORKS
VIRALITY	YES	YES	YES	YES
WOM	YES	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
MEME	YES	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED
INFORMATION CASCADE	NO	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED	NOT REQUIRED



#### CELEBRITY & OPINION LEADERS

**OBJECTIVE** 

**INFLUENCER** 

LARGE AUDIENCES

**TECHNICAL** 

**IDEAS** 

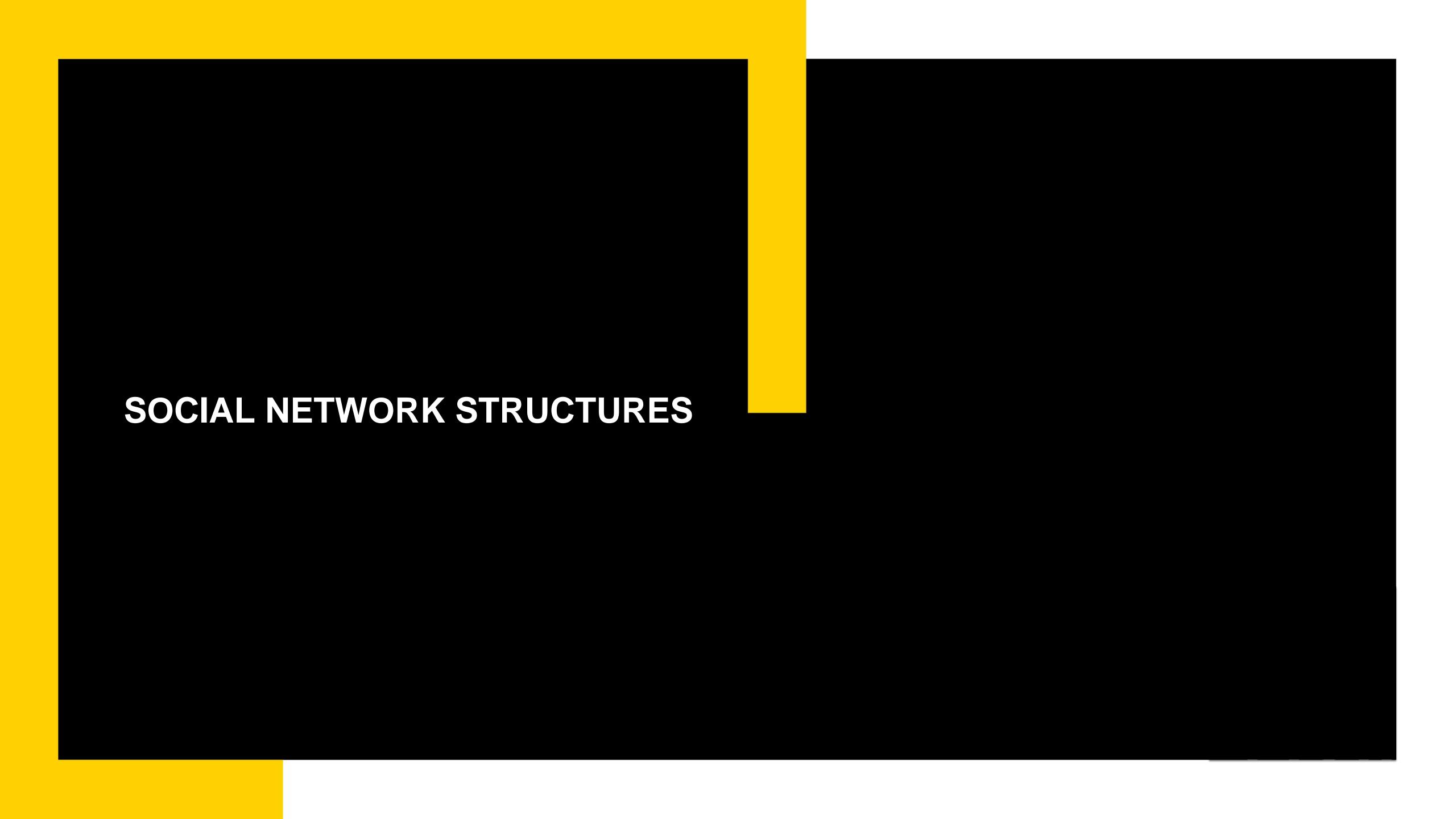
EXPOSURE TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

**CELEBRITIES** 

**TOPIC EXPERT** 

**PERSUADERS** 

CONNECTOR



#### SOCIAL NETWORK STRUCTURES

**TWITTER** 

**FACEBOOK** 

INSTAGRAM

# HASHTAGS

**OPEN / 140 CHARACTERS** 

**CLOSED / UNLIMITED** 

PHOTOS / NO SHARING CAPABILITY

SET THE BOUNDARIES OF INTEREST GROUPS

#### CONCLUSION

REMARKABLE!

RIGHT CONTENT

RIGHT SOURCES/NETWORKS

**RIGHT MOMENT** 

**VIRAL EVENT** 

## VIRAL STORIES

The Familiar VS The Surprising!



# The Disrupters

Who are they?



Old Spice | The Man Your Man Could Smell Like





**EMOTION** 

**INFORMATION** 

CONTEXT

EMOTIONAL COMPASSION

CONTEMPT

**INFORMATION** 

**HUMOR** 

**SURPRISE** 

NOVELTY

RESONANCE

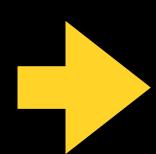
**QUALITY** 

CONTEXT

SALIENCE: WHEN SOMETHING IS IMPORTANT IN THE MOMENT

#### The LOEWY RULE

MAYA



Most Advanced Yet Acceptable

Something new, challenging, or surprising that opens a door into a feeling of comfort, meaning or familiarity.

Neophilic

**Curious to discover new things** 

Neophobic

Afraid of anything that's too new

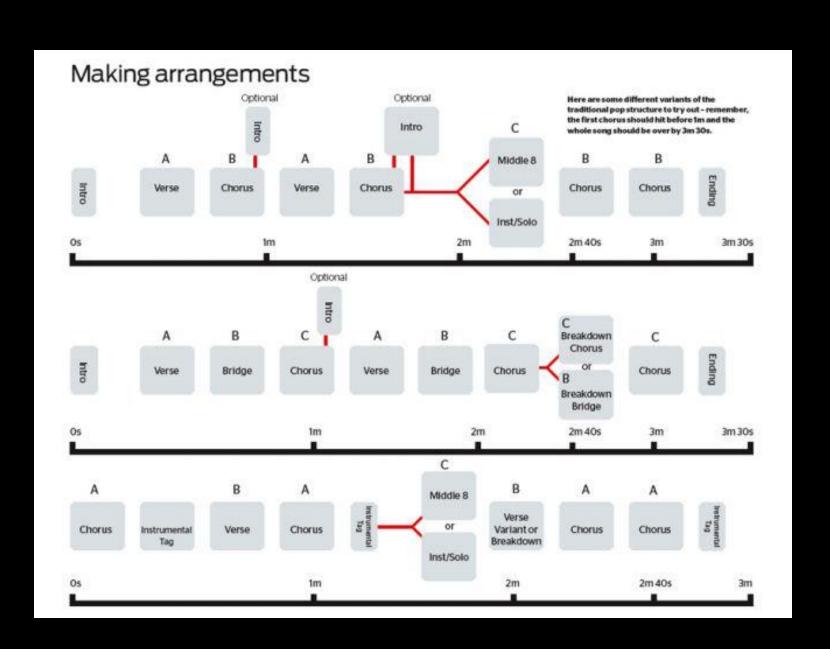
Hit makers are the architects of FAMILIAR SURPRISES



AAAB-AAAB-CCC-BB-A

#### POP MUSIC STRUCTURE

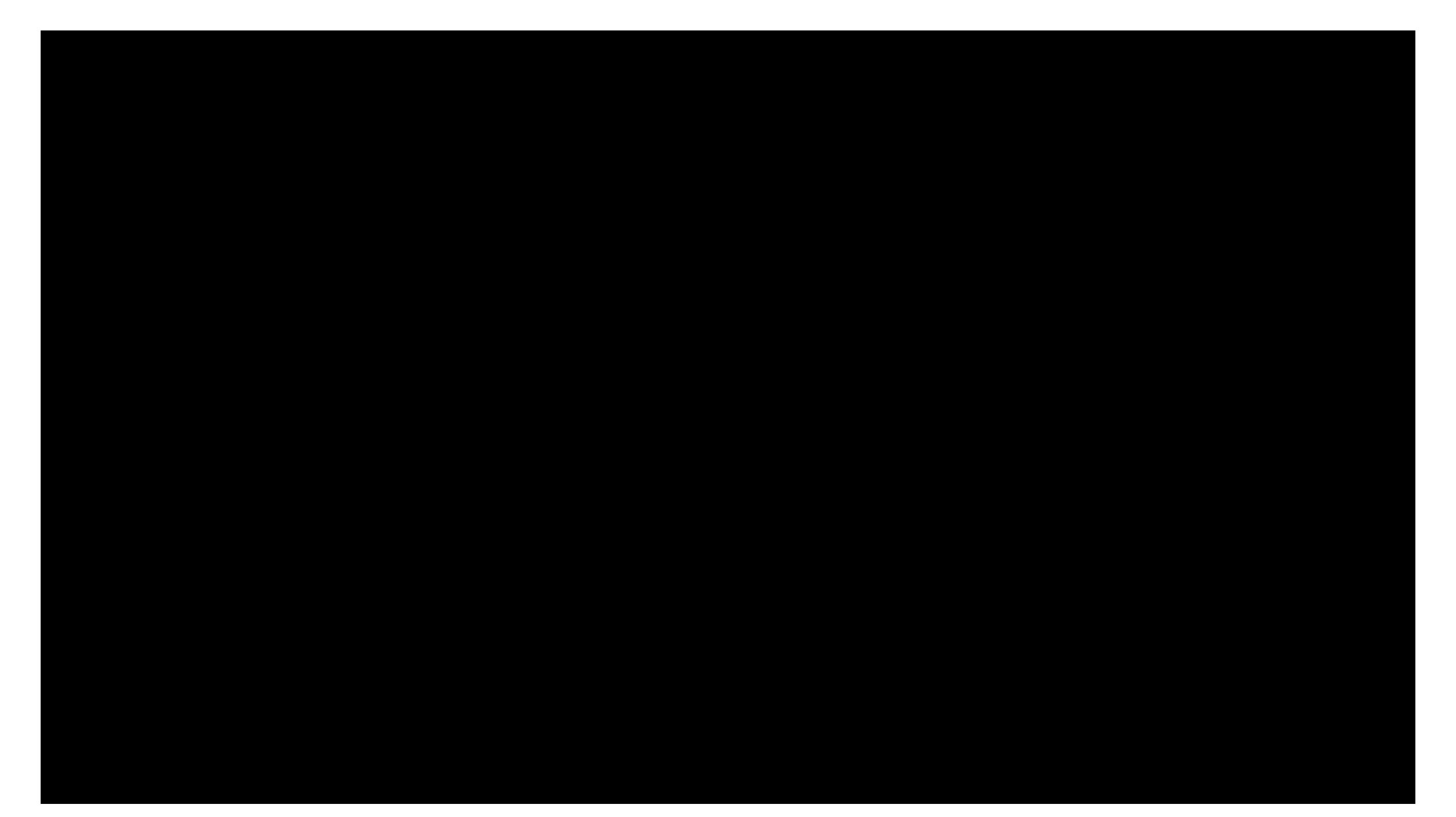
Verse Verse Chorus
Verse Verse Chorus
Bridge
Chorus
Chorus
Chorus....



AAAB-AAAB-CCC-BBB







What's the lesson?

Virality isn't born. It's made.

Six Tips for Contagious Branding





### Social currency

We all want to be cool. Smart. Remarkable. Give people ways to achieve symbols of status.

## Social currency

#### INFECTIOUS



"Please don't tell."

## Social currency



Leverage Game Mechanics

## Social currency

vente-privee

The "Insiders" Game



### Triggers

The more often people think about a product or idea, the more it will be talked about.

Top of mind leads to top of tongue.

## Triggers



### Triggers

What are the Brand you might think about at these moments?

- Monday morning on your way to work.
- Friday afternoon on your way home.
- Saturday morning.



### Emotion

Rather than function, focus on feelings.





#### Public

Make things more observable, which will make them more popular.

Monkey see. Monkey do.

### Public





#### Public

Do you look at the number of reviews? How many are there?

Restaurants.

Movies.

Products.



# Practical Value (mixed with humor)

PooPourri





#### Storytelling

People don't just share information, they tell stories.

Embed ideas and products in stories that people want to tell.

### Storytelling





#### Storytelling

While people focus on the NARRATIVE

INFORMATION comes along for the ride.

Build a TROJAN HORSE.

#### Stories

The Fun Theory

22,905,044 views





The Fun Theory

Is it valuable?

## Lessons for your Brand?

#### Effective Viral Content Strategy

What is the essence of the BRAND?
How can we make the familiar SUPRISING?
How can we do something REMARKABLE?
How can we employ EMOTION, INFORMATION & CONTEXT?
Who are the GATEKEEPERS?
How can we reach the AUDIENCE of our Audience?

Who? What? Where? When? How? Why?

#### THANK YOU!

#### Follow me...

- F Facebook: @Brian Hallett Studio
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