



From all of us to all of you - The Top 10 viral ads of 2008

The Top 10 viral ads of 2008 featuring gems such as Guy Ritchie's Nike ad and Budweiser's Wassup reworked for Obama.

Dear Reader,

Coming back from the holidays, we decided to give you all a warm welcome back to your jobs and phase you slowly back into the rhythm by presenting a Top 10 of the viral ads of 2008, we recently compiled for Revolution. Use it as creative inspiration, professional benchmarks or simply just as an enjoyable 10 minutes of your day.

Methodology

The list is based on data collected from five popular video sharing sites (Youtube, Dailymotion, Metacafe, Break and Vimeo). To determine the most popular video of 2008, we first created our own shortlist based on creativity. We then checked across the sites to get the 'peoples verdict'. This actually meant that we had to drop some and let others in, which only proves that strong content can not stand alone in the digital spaces. Something like proper content distribution strategies is also necessary to ensure the content will find its way to the audience. The views of all videos were calculated in relation to time online, to overcome the problem of some videos having longer time online to generate views. Therefore, the indicator for popularity is total number of views divided by time online. This gives an approximated average, which is the closest possible to a generic metric. It should be noted that the data collection was done in early December, so the videos have generated more views by now. A lot of the online content benefits from this continuous content distribution, also known as the long tail. On the list, you might notice a skip from the first two to the remaining eight, from hundreds of thousands of views per day to tens of thousands. Wassup and Diesels party invitation are both new and have not reached the long tail yet.

Top 10 virals for 2008 “The people’s verdict”

1. Wassup anno 2008

Brand: N/A
Creative: Charles Stone III.
Average views / day: 306,416
Total views: 6,189,125



Charles Stone III has with Wassup 2008 given his contribution to the U.S. Election. After the huge success of his 1999 hit viral “Budweiser Wassup”, he reassembled the characters from the original commercial to show their lives at the tail end of the Bush administration. Things have certainly changed since the first video. The film ends with a call for political change and an exhortation to vote on Election Day. Perfectly timed and still building on the prior popularity as well as the momentum of the Presidential Election, the video generated more than 4 mio. views on Youtube within the first two weeks. Adding to this number, an impressive 12,000 text comments and 19,000 ratings really started something. The numbers speak for themselves in the winner of the list!

[Watch Wassup anno 2008](#)

2. SFW XXX Party Invitation

Brand: Diesel
Creative: The Viral Factory
Average views / day: 116,387
Total views: 6,497,507



Diesel and The Viral Factory collated clips of 80’s porn into a humorous new video to celebrate Diesel’s 30th anniversary. The clip is titled SFW XXX - short for “safe for work”, the opposite of NSFW or “not safe for work” – an acronym used to tag online porn. The campaigns controversial nature created and brought huge amounts of attention, but did Diesel tread on thin ice? It begs the inevitable question of how far can you go and what limits of controversial are acceptable? The campaign added amusing animations and used toned down sound effects for a far more tasteful and amusing version of the potentially inappropriate scenes. At the end of the day, the campaign is a great example of how to strike a balance between creating attention and conversation without crossing the line.

[Watch SFW XXX Party Invitation](#)

3. Kobe Bryant jumps over an Aston Martin

Brand: Nike
Creative: N/A
Average views / day: 37,681
Total views: 8,553,382



The content of the video is great, because it just on the verge of unbelievable, but not over. Did Kobe Bryant actually jump over the car? Nike managed to generate more than 7,5 mio. views over the first running weeks of the campaign, just on Youtube. More than 1,5 mio. additional views came from spoof videos or responses to the campaign, discussing the answer to those questions. Several of the spoof videos link to the original ones, creating a more vibrant user experience as well as better results for the campaign. Whether or not the Nike Hyperdunk shoe actually makes you jump higher or not, Nike definitely succeeded in bringing something new to the table. Bryant’s own popularity, however, does probably not hurt either. Although Bryant finishes the clip by insisting people not to try the stunt at home, it’s probably clever not to feature Nike’s motto: “Just do it” in this specific clip.

[Watch Kobe Bryant jumps over an Aston Martin](#)

4. Extreme Street Football

Brand: Electronic Arts
Creative: Wieden + Kennedy
Average views / day: 34,670
Total views: 10,400,565



Wieden & Kennedy are the creative masterminds behind this campaign. The creative director Mark Bernath says: “We wanted the different pieces of work to make the consumer say, ‘Did I just see, what I think I saw?’” and they truly lived up to that ambition. The whole campaign consists of several pieces, among them the viral videos, TV, banner and

print elements, all leading to an interactive experience at the microsite. The video features a mix of capoeira and parkour moves combined with soccer kicks in a very impressive way. Some moves seem too improbable, but others could very well be real, and that makes it a very interesting conversation starter that pulls the audience closer to the brand.

[Watch Extreme Street Football](#)

5. Take it to the next level

Brand: Nike

Average views / day: 28,029

Total views: 5,937,406



'Take it to the next level' was directed by popular movie director Guy Ritchie and is a very creative alternative to traditional advertising from Nike. Made to inspire football obsessed teens, the film is a first-person journey up the football ranks - from being discovered by Arsenal in a youth match to a life-defining moment playing on the national level. Along the way we experience success (finishing a cross from Cesc Fabregas) as well as frustration (getting burned by Ronaldinho). The film celebrates playing the game with purpose and passion. It shows what it takes to become a modern, brilliant footballer - to take your game to the next level. It won gold at the Cannes 2008 Festival, and there is no question why.

[Watch Take it to the next level](#)

6. Tiger Woods 09 – Walk on Water

Brand: Electronic Arts

Creative: Wieden + Kennedy

Average views / day: 26,568

Total views: 2,550,394



Game trailers usually turn out to be very popular as there is a huge community of active and engaged gamers online and this is no exception. This game trailer for the golf game PGA Tour '09 is a video response to a YouTube video, posted by a fan last year. The fan named a particular scene in the game "The Jesus Shot", and EA's response is that it was no coincidence and demonstrates that Tiger Woods is just that good. Being the second movie from Wieden + Kennedy and EA on this list, it could be argued that with enough money, you can buy everything. The answer is most likely more related to these companies unique understanding of their target group and ability to actually create something with a true relevance to them. This viral is truly innovative, since EA communicates directly to one of their users and integrates it into a piece of commercial content. It could be argued that this video held a much larger potential than 2,5 mio. views, and was only distributed poorly, although this might sound overly ambitious.

[Watch Tiger Woods 09 – Walk on Water](#)

7. Bean Counter

Brand: Apple Macintosh

Creative: TBWA/Media Arts Lab

Average views / day: 23,451

Total views: 820,662



The classic battle between Microsoft and Apple Macintosh is brought up in this very amusing clip. Microsoft's latest operating system – Vista – has, as you may already know, had quite a few bugs after release. There are no special effects, no epic music and no disco lights in this one. It is strictly a really good piece of content, because people can relate to the message. The point of the clip, whether Microsoft should decrease their ad spend on Vista and increase their bug-fixing budget, is something most users can find relevant to discuss, since they are the ones eventually paying for the ads. If Mac really has a much lower ad spend is probably not a part of this discussion.

[Watch Bean Counter](#)

8. Samsung Omnia i900 Unboxing

Brand: Samsung

Creative: The Viral Factory

Average views / day: 21,465

Total views: 2,082,054



The “unboxing” genre is a trend where fans and bloggers record themselves opening their new gadget for the first time. The great thing about this clip is that it’s a spoof to the often anticlimactic “unboxing” genre. The spin of this clip is the parade of a miniature marching band and baton-twirling ladies who spring forth from the high-tech box and it all lead to the unveiling of Samsung’s new Omnia i900 cell phone. Although many users were probably looking for product specs and features, when they found the video, it has proven really popular. This would also be the context, in which you want to build a relation to your target group. A great twist to the usual unboxing videos.

[Watch Samsung Omnia i900 Unboxing](#)

9. Fate – Leave Nothing

Brand: Nike
Creative: Wieden + Kennedy
Average views / day: 21,208
Total views: 929,010



David Fincher directed this Nike spot working with Wieden + Kennedy. It tells the story of the life-long rivalry of American football players LaDainian Tomlinson and Troy Polamalu, as their destinies clash in an NFL football game. The soundtrack is a remix of “L’estasi Dell’oro”, (The Ecstasy of Gold), by Ennio Morricone, written for ‘The Good The Bad and the Ugly’ and adds an epic dimension to the video. When a video is placed on 9/10, it looks bad, but don’t forget that all of these videos are the cream of the crop from 2008, and this one is no exception.

[Watch Fate – Leave Nothing](#)

10. Adam and Eve

Brand: Central Beheer
Creative: DDB, Amsterdam
Average views / day: 12,072
Total views: 2,136,497



Eve wanders through the Garden of Eden, mesmerized by the beauty around her. When she meets Adam for the first time he looks stunning, at first. Eventually, she finds out something is not as she expected. Adam is gay. The “Just call us” tagline suggests that there will be support in the moments when things just don’t go right. The video was actually banned due to sensitivities in the gay and religious communities, but on the internet those types of bans have a way of creating more attention.

[Watch Adam and Eve](#)

The list was a short glimpse of some of the excellent content from 2008. When we return next month, we will look ahead into 2009 and concentrate on current virals or coming trends.

Happy New Year!

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Kind regards,

Frederik Thestrup

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